

April 2018

ECUADOR: Protect land and water defenders

Patricia Gualinga is a leader of the Sarayaku Indigenous people. They live in the Amazon region of Ecuador.

The Amazon has nearly 400 billion trees and the largest diversity of birds, fishes and animals in the world. It also has oil. Oil is a resource that powerful companies want to remove from the ground, and sell.

The Sarayaku are very worried that drilling for oil could damage the environment on which they depend for their survival. Oil spills could contaminate their food and water.

They have other reasons to be worried. A company from another country began taking oil from their lands without permission. The explosives the company used put the safety of the Sarayaku in danger.

Patricia Gualinga and other community members have had to be brave to stand up against oil companies that threaten their territory and water.

The Sarayaku have needed special courage when the companies attack them to try and stop their protests.

On January 5, a stranger threw stones at the windows of Patricia Gualinga's home. He yelled things like "We will kill you". Patricia reported the attack to the police but they did not investigate as they should.



Patricia Gualinga in 2011
© Andrew Miller/Amazon Watch

Patricia and other leaders of the Sarayaku community are still in danger. Please ask the government of Ecuador to protect them. Your letter could be a lifesaver!



WHAT CAN I DO?

Please write to the Minister of the Interior. He is responsible for the safety of everyone in Ecuador.

Start your letter with Dear Minister.

In your first sentence, tell him something about yourself. You could mention a river or lake, a park or forest near your home that you enjoy. Or you could tell him how you plan to mark Earth Day 2018 on April 22. Make sure to mention you are writing from Canada.

Then explain your concern about how companies are threatening the environment in the Amazon that the Sarayaku depend on for their survival.

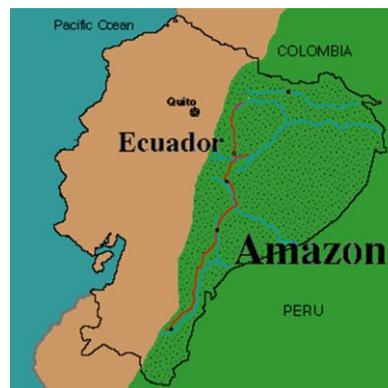
Add your concern for the safety of Patricia Gualinga and all Sarayaku community members who face attacks for peacefully defending their right to a healthy environment.

In your last sentence, ask the minister to fully protect the Sarayaku Indigenous people.

WHERE DO I SEND MY MESSAGE?

César Navas Vera
Ministro del Interior
Benalcázar N4-24 y Espejo
C.P. 170401
Quito
ECUADOR

Postage: \$2.50
Email: cesar.navas@mdi.gob.ec



The Sarayaku Indigenous community lives in Ecuador's Amazon region.
Photo credit: eduweb.com

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Send a copy of your letter to Ecuador's ambassador in Canada.

His Excellency Juan Diego Stacey Moreno
Ambassador for Ecuador
99 Bank Street, Suite 230
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6B9

Postage: \$.85
Fax: (613) 235-5776
Email: embassy@embassyecuador.ca

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Visit <http://amazonwatch.org/news/2013/1120-patricia-gualinga-warrior-for-the-amazon>