

26 February 2013

We, the undersigned, have all worked with Yanomami Indians for prolonged periods at different times during the last five decades. We have closely witnessed them to be a generally peaceable people, who, as many traditional people do, occasionally engage in inter-village conflicts (ritualized raids and duels). Yet the casualties of these culturally controlled conflicts are extremely low if compared with those of the violence and contamination inflicted on the Yanomami by the gold miners and cattle ranchers who invade their lands. We absolutely disagree with Napoleon Chagnon's public characterization of the Yanomami as a fierce, violent and archaic people. We also deplore how Chagnon's work has been used throughout the years - and could still be used - by governments to deny the Yanomami their land and cultural rights.

Dr Bruce Albert, Research Director, Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), France

Dr Catherine Alès, School of Social Sciences (EHESS), CNRS, France

Dr Jean Chiappino, Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), France

Dr Marcus Colchester, Director, Forest Peoples Programme, UK

Dr Rogério Duarte do Pateo, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Dr Kenneth Good, New Jersey City University, USA

Dr Gale Goodwin Gomez, Rhode Island College, USA

Dr Jeffrey Gorham, Brazil

Dr Sílvia Guimarães, University of Brasilia, Brazil

Dr. Gabriele Herzog-Schröder, LMU Munich, Germany

Dr Zeljko Jokic, Australia

Dr José Antonio Kelly, Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil

Dr Marie-Claude Mattei Müller, Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV),  
Venezuela

Dr Marcos Pellegrini, Federal University of Roraima, Brazil

Dr Alcida Ramos, University of Brasilia, Brazil

Dr Maria Inês Smiljanic, Federal University of Paraná, Brazil

Dr Rosangela de Souza Biserra, Federal District Education Secretariat, Brasilia,  
Brazil

Dr Leslie E Sponsel, University of Hawaii, USA

Dr Kenneth I Taylor, USA