

# MANIFEST OF REFUTATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF A MISSIONARY AS THE GENERAL COORDINATOR OF ISOLATED INDIANS (CGIIRC) OF FUNAI.

Belem, February 5, 2020.

We, former president of FUNAI and former director of the Emílio Goeldi Museum, a Research Institute of the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovations and Communications (MCTIC) which has been working for about 160 years with indigenous peoples of the Brazilian Amazon, have come to the public, together with the anthropologists subscribed below, to express our vehement repudiation of the appointment of a missionary to coordinate the Funai's post of Coordination-General of Isolated Indians and Recent Contact (CGIIRC).

Our work as researchers has been systematic in promoting the understanding of the past and contemporary sociocultural dynamics, the recognition and maintenance of the linguistic and cultural diversity of Amazonian peoples – about 180 groups, speakers of 120 indigenous languages – the study and documentation, cultural and linguistic record of people threatened with extinction.

Despite our studies, we respect and recognize the right of existence, in its autochthonous form, of indigenous collectives who prefer to remain isolated (data indicate that there are more than 100 groups throughout Brazil, especially in the Amazon), away from the great centers and the western mode of production, inhabiting areas of difficult access and under the constant protection and constitutional responsibility of the official body of the Brazilian State, FUNAI.

We keep special attention for these groups to remain isolated and respected, and that CGIIRC, under the supervision of Funai's Directorate of Territorial Protection (DPT), is the agent capable of maintaining their integrity both physically and culturally.

The appointment of a missionary, even if invested as an anthropologist researcher, goes against the ethical principles and self-determination of these groups and the right to stay away from any religious, cultural or economic manifestation unlike their own.

Latin America, for more than 500 years, has seen fragmented these rights, from missionary presence and posture, with varying degrees of respect for the groups of converts, but with the result of elimination of most indigenous nations here present, many of them more culturally developed than their dominators (classical examples are the Incas, the Mayans and the Aztecs, but in Brazil we have the Tupinambá and the Macro-Jê, which maintained cities with large populations and stratified economy, now missing).

In this sense, we contest with due vehemence the decision to name, as widely reported by the press, a missionary, specifically Mr. Ricardo Lopes Dias, linked to the New Tribes of Brazil Mission (MNTB). We identified, with his appointment, a serious risk to physical integrity and the preservation and maintenance of isolated groups in their original way of life and culture.

We therefore ask for the revocation of this appointment and that of any other that contains a similar profile for CGIIRC.

*Sign:*

Márcio Augusto Freitas de Meira – Former President of FUNAI (2007-2012)

Nilson Gabas, Jr. – Former Director of the Paraense Museum Emílio Goeldi (2009-2018)

*Subscribe:*

Cláudia Lopez, anthropologist, curator of the Ethnography collection of the Goeldi Museum

Lucia Hussak van Velthem, anthropologist, former coordinator of Communication and Extension of the Goeldi Museum

Roberto Araújo, anthropologist, former coordinator of the Coordination of Humanities of the Goeldi Museum