

Nota about Proposed Law (PL) N° 191/2020

The Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA) expresses its concern with the recent federal government decision to authorize research and extraction of minerals and hydrocarbons from Indigenous Lands, as well as the installation and operation of hydroelectric dams, transmission and distribution systems, pipelines and other associated infrastructure.

The federal government pretends to be democratic although its actions are authoritarian. In practice, it increases the vulnerability and tension in indigenous territories and populations in the country, while legitimating the historic depredation of their lands and territories by large landowners, land-grabbers, rubber-tappers, miners etc. It renews and reinforces structural inequalities, both political and economic, and very probably the historic antecedents will affect the political accords and the trajectory of the proposed law.

The bill aims to instrumentalize and mercantimize territories, nature, knowledge and information, community social relations, bodies and embodiment, feelings and individual and collective subjectivities. It places at risk the life of isolated local communities and peoples and those of recent contact.

It questions the demarcation processes and the Indigenous Lands already demarcated, denies the right to prior and informed consent and proposes a mechanism for indigenous participation and institutional arrangements that creates space for manipulations, political clientelism, corruption and various types of conflict.

It provides businesses with total guarantees, while leaving the communities affected unprotected and forced to coexist with the social and environmental damages and those to human health generated.

The bill also proposes the economic exploitation of the Indigenous Lands through activities such as agriculture planting and cattle grazing, extractive practices and tourism. It would allow authorizing goldmining and cultivation of genetically modified organisms on indigenous lands.

The Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA) and its Commission on Indigenous Affairs affirm that the Proposed Law 191/2020 should be rejected in its entirety, because its authoritarian nature and content violates the collective rights of the indigenous peoples of Brazil.

Brasília/DF, 19 February 2020.

Brazilian Anthropology – ABA and its Indigenous Affairs Commission – CAI