

URGENT ACTION

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS DISAPPEARED

In the morning of 5 June, environmental and Indigenous peoples' rights defenders Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips were reported missing, after last being seen in the Javari Valley, in the Brazilian Amazon, near the borders with Colombia and Peru. They had received death threats in recent days, according to local organization Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley (Univaja). We are calling the Brazilian President, in addition to the Presidents of Colombia and Peru, to urgently mobilize all necessary efforts to find them alive, including international cooperation.

President of Brazil, Jair Messias Bolsonaro

Email: gabinetepessoal@presidencia.gov.br; sgpr@presidencia.gov.br

Postal Address: Pálacio do Planalto, Praça dos Três Poderes, Brasília-Distrito Federal, 70150-900, Brasil

President Bolsonaro,

In the morning of 5 June 2022, environmental and Indigenous peoples' rights defenders Bruno Pereira (Brazilian Indigenous peoples' expert and civil servant) and Dom Phillips (British journalist and collaborator of The Guardian) were reported missing, after last being seen in the Javari Valley, in the Amazon state, near the borders with Colombia and Peru.

They had received death threats in recent days, according to the local organization leading their search, Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley (Univaja).

We are very concerned by the failure of the authorities to locate them and by the lack of international cooperation to urgently deploy search and rescue teams in the area around the borders between Brazil, Colombia and Peru, where they went missing.

We call you to urgently mobilize all efforts to find Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips alive, including international cooperation with Colombia and Peru. Security forces at all levels should provide all necessary contingents and equipment for the search.

The Federal Prosecutor's Office must also guarantee prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations for finding them alive and bring those suspected of criminal responsibility to justice.

We also call on the Peruvian and Colombian Presidents to urgently deploy search and rescue teams to their respective regions that border the area where Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips went missing.

Sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Disappearance

In the morning of 5 June 2022, Bruno Pereira, Brazilian Indigenous peoples' expert and licensed civil servant at the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), and Dom Phillips, British journalist and contributor to The Guardian, were last seen en route between the riverside community of São Rafael and the city of Atalaia do Norte, in the state of Amazonas, in northern Brazil. The two were traveling through the Javari Valley in order to visit and interview an Indigenous Vigilance team, organized to ensure the protection and environmental preservation of the reserve lands.

The Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley (Univaja), the local organization leading their search, reported receiving an anonymous letter threatening Bruno and his collaborator, a week before Bruno and Dom disappeared.

[According to media](#), Univaja also reported that the day previous to their disappearance, three men known as illegal fishermen approached a boat where Bruno, Dom and members of an Indigenous patrol were, and threatened them with fire weapons. [Media also reported](#) that a local fisherman is currently being held by the Military Police as a suspect of their disappearance.

Context

The Javari Valley is located on the border of the Amazon with Peru and Colombia and has 8.5 million hectares of demarcated land, making it the second largest official Indigenous territory in Brazil. The region is home to the largest concentration of Indigenous peoples in voluntar isolation in the world, and its access is only possible by land and river routes. Like other regions of the Brazilian Amazon, the Javari Valley is the scene of intense conflicts led by land invaders associated with mining and illegal logging. In addition, the area is also crossed by drug trafficking disputes, which take advantage of the poorly monitored borders to dominate the drug trade flows between Brazil, Colombia and Peru.

The region has a history of violence and threats against FUNAI public servants, human rights defenders, and non-governmental organizations. In 2019, Maxciel Pereira dos Santos, a FUNAI servant in Tabatinga, was murdered by gunfire. To this day the crime has not been solved.

The Brazilian government, headed by President Jair Bolsonaro, is notorious for its policies of dismantling environmental legislation and its attacks on the rights of Indigenous peoples and other traditional communities. In August 2021, the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) filed a complaint before the International Criminal Court against President Bolsonaro for crimes against humanity and genocide, associated with his encouragement of invasions of Indigenous lands by miners.

The Brazilian state has an obligation to ensure that human rights defenders, journalists, and public servants can carry out their work in freedom and safety. Don Phillips and Bruno Pereira are recognized for their reporting on the Amazon and their commitment to Indigenous peoples' rights.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Portuguese

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 21 July 2022

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Male

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: N/A