

Background Information:

The Mapuche Conflict



Mapuche political prisoners located within the colonial borders of Chile are requesting international solidarity. There is a call for action on August 12. The prisoners are on a hunger strike, which has almost reached thirty days.

The Mapuche are an indigenous nation that successfully resisted Spanish occupation. Wallmapu - or Mapuche country - extends across the nation-state borders of southern Chile and Argentina. Starting in 1861, their lands were usurped by the Chilean state during a violent process that was called the pacification. Mapuche community members were murdered and jailed by the military, and Mapuche conflict with the state continued throughout the 20th century.

After the military coup in 1973, Mapuche community members were targeted by the Pinochet dictatorship, including an attempt to erase Mapudungun, the Mapuche language. After the end of the dictatorship, there was a strong reemergence of the Mapuche conflict, and the movement became increasingly visible. The conflict seeks autonomy from the Chilean state; the state considers the conflict one of its largest threats. Mapuche communities often have local conflicts with multinational forestry plantations and large farm estates that usurped Mapuche territory.

The presidency of Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006) began using the dictatorship-era Antiterrorist Law against Mapuche community members in conflict. The law allows prosecutors to use unidentified witnesses. The witnesses' voices are scrambled, and their faces are hidden by a screen.

There are also cases of Mapuche militants who have been shot and killed by police such as Matías Catrileo and Alex Lemun.

There was another profile hunger strike in 2008. The strike included the participation of Patricia Troncoso; she continued the hunger strike for over 100 days. Due to the length of the hunger strike, Troncoso's case was one of the few moments that the English language press mentioned the Mapuche conflict.

Statement of Mapuche Political Prisoners of El Manzano Prison, Concepcion - **ON HUNGER STRIKE**

The Mapuche political prisoners, currently being held in the "El Manzano" detention centre in Concepcion, inform the Mapuche Nation and public international and national opinion the following:

Beginning today Monday, July 12th, 2010, we begin a liquid HUNGER STRIKE to the final consequences.

The reasons for this drastic and extreme determination is in response to series of situations that we have been denouncing unto the unjust political/judicial procedures that we are subject to and violate all our rights as MAPUCHE and political prisoners.

In summary, we denounce that we have been part of Media Setups carried out by the Public Ministry through Anti Mapuche prosecutors and corrupt police forces. It is in this way that the Chilean State, in defense of the corporate interests in the conflict with our People and in their urge to persecute and annihilate the Mapuche Movement, has criminalized the just cause of the communities, imprisoning and launching themselves against our people; imposing several dictatorial and fascist laws on honest social activists.

At the same time, we also denounce the existence of a strong and grotesque Anti-Mapuche campaign orchestrated by the economic and political Right of this country, who use their means of communication, their prosecutors and politicians with the objective of convincing public opinion.

Due to all of the above, we declare that we will continue our hunger strike unless these just demands are met:

- 1. STOP the application of the Antiterrorist Law with the Mapuche People. This is expressed by the complete Abolition of the Antiterrorist Law legislated by the Pinochet dictatorship.*
- 2. STOP the process of Military Courts on the Mapuche People. Thus is expressed by the complete Abolition of Military Courts in Chile.*
- 3. Freedom for ALL the Mapuche Political Prisoners imprisoned in different jails throughout the Chilean State. This is expressed by:*

Demanding a just and fair Trial.

An end to the political/judicial setups; ending all external and foul procedures, ending the use of faceless witnesses and the end of the practices that violate basic human rights such as extortion, threats, physical and psychological torture and the degrading conditions of detention centers.

Demilitarization of Mapuche zones where communities reclaim their political and territorial rights.

Lastly, we call out on Our People to Mobilize, to protest and struggle for what we think is a just cause; including social and political organizations to remain alert of the situation.

For Territory and Autonomy for Our Mapuche Nation!! Weuwaiñ!!!
Mapuche Political Prisoners of Concepcion

Background Information:

The Mapuche Conflict



Mapuche political prisoners located within the colonial borders of Chile are requesting international solidarity. There is a call for action on August 12. The prisoners are on a hunger strike, which has almost reached thirty days.

The Mapuche are an indigenous nation that successfully resisted Spanish occupation. Wallmapu - or Mapuche country - extends across the nation-state borders of southern Chile and Argentina. Starting in 1861, their lands were usurped by the Chilean state during a violent process that was called the pacification. Mapuche community members were murdered and jailed by the military, and Mapuche conflict with the state continued throughout the 20th century.

After the military coup in 1973, Mapuche community members were targeted by the Pinochet dictatorship, including an attempt to erase Mapudungun, the Mapuche language. After the end of the dictatorship, there was a strong reemergence of the Mapuche conflict, and the movement became increasingly visible. The conflict seeks autonomy from the Chilean state; the state considers the conflict one of its largest threats. Mapuche communities often have local conflicts with multinational forestry plantations and large farm estates that usurped Mapuche territory.

The presidency of Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006) began using the dictatorship-era Antiterrorist Law against Mapuche community members in conflict. The law allows prosecutors to use unidentified witnesses. The witnesses' voices are scrambled, and their faces are hidden by a screen.

There are also cases of Mapuche militants who have been shot and killed by police such as Matías Catrileo and Alex Lemun.

There was another profile hunger strike in 2008. The strike included the participation of Patricia Troncoso; she continued the hunger strike for over 100 days. Due to the length of the hunger strike, Troncoso's case was one of the few moments that the English language press mentioned the Mapuche conflict.

Statement of Mapuche Political Prisoners of El Manzano Prison, Concepcion - ON HUNGER STRIKE

The Mapuche political prisoners, currently being held in the "El Manzano" detention centre in Concepcion, inform the Mapuche Nation and public international and national opinion the following:

Beginning today Monday, July 12th, 2010, we begin a liquid HUNGER STRIKE to the final consequences.

The reasons for this drastic and extreme determination is in response to series of situations that we have been denouncing unto the unjust political/judicial procedures that we are subject to and violate all our rights as MAPUCHE and political prisoners.

In summary, we denounce that we have been part of Media Setups carried out by the Public Ministry through Anti Mapuche prosecutors and corrupt police forces. It is in this way that the Chilean State, in defense of the corporate interests in the conflict with our People and in their urge to persecute and annihilate the Mapuche Movement, has criminalized the just cause of the communities, imprisoning and launching themselves against our people; imposing several dictatorial and fascist laws on honest social activists.

At the same time, we also denounce the existence of a strong and grotesque Anti-Mapuche campaign orchestrated by the economic and political Right of this country, who use their means of communication, their prosecutors and politicians with the objective of convincing public opinion.

Due to all of the above, we declare that we will continue our hunger strike unless these just demands are met:

1. *STOP the application of the Antiterrorist Law with the Mapuche People. This is expressed by the complete Abolition of the Antiterrorist Law legislated by the Pinochet dictatorship.*

2. *STOP the process of Military Courts on the Mapuche People. Thus is expressed by the complete Abolition of Military Courts in Chile.*

3. *Freedom for ALL the Mapuche Political Prisoners imprisoned in different jails throughout the Chilean State. This is expressed by:*

Demanding a just and fair Trial.

An end to the political/judicial setups; ending all external and foul procedures, ending the use of faceless witnesses and the end of the practices that violate basic human rights such as extortion, threats, physical and psychological torture and the degrading conditions of detention centers.

Demilitarization of Mapuche zones where communities reclaim their political and territorial rights.

Lastly, we call out on Our People to Mobilize, to protest and struggle for what we think is a just cause; including social and political organizations to remain alert of the situation.

For Territory and Autonomy for Our Mapuche Nation!! Weuwaiñ!!!
Mapuche Political Prisoners of Concepcion