



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Twenty-third session

Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

### **Written statement\* submitted by the Society for Threatened Peoples, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[10 May 2013]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## **Situation of the Mapuche in the Republic of Chile**

Until today, the Mapuche suffer from the expropriation and the loss of their traditional land. There were no compensations.

Society for Threatened Peoples appreciates the fact that first talks between the Chilean Interior Minister Andrés Chadwick and representatives of the Mapuche in the beginning of 2013. The Mapuche must be respected as equal negotiating partners and taken seriously, as stated in the UN ILO convention No. 169 which was also ratified by the Republic of Chile.

President Piñera expressed his intentions to define the recognition of the indigenous peoples in the country's constitution as soon as possible and to initiate a council for the indigenous people to represent their traditions and their culture. But the Mapuche are also demanding political participation. If this dialogue fails, the conflict will intensify due to the great disappointment of the Mapuche.

The 800,000 to 1,400,000 Mapuche are becoming more and more troubled about their unsolved problems. Members of the Mapuche's land rights movement are being treated as terrorists, prosecuted and sentenced to disproportionate prison terms or fines. In these cases, minors are being treated as adults. There have been several month-long hunger strikes with Mapuche natives risking their lives because they see no other way to create awareness of their situation. The Mapuche reported extraordinarily brutal raids, beatings and humiliations in prison.

Protest against hydroelectric power stations in Curraehue

On 30 April 2013, 200 people protested against the erection of hydroelectric power stations in Curraehue in the La Araucanía region. The stations will mostly be built on indigenous Mapuche-Pehuenche territory. The Mapuche claim that the government makes it easier to build such projects on indigenous territory and against the will of the local population. They expect the exploitation and contamination of the ecosystem and consider these projects as an attack of their social, cultural and economic rights. The ILO Convention 169 makes it mandatory that indigenous peoples are consulted before such projects are started.

Society for Threatened Peoples calls on the Human Rights Council to urge the government of Chile to:

- Consult the indigenous population before starting projects such as hydroelectric power stations on indigenous territory,
  - Continue talks with the Mapuche,
  - Abolish the anti-terror laws,
  - Demilitarize indigenous lands.
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