

DECLARATION OF TERRITORIES FREE OF MEGAPROJECTS

In the state of Chiapas, the Indigenous Peoples that inhabit the Territories from San Cristobal de las Casas to Palenque, in Mexico; concerned about the recent actions taken by the Government, in an attempt simulate a consent process to legitimate the destruction of our ancestral home with the construction of a highway. In exercising our autonomy and our collective right to self-determination, we unite to express our outright rejection to any megaproject that could affect and dispossess us of our Territory, culture and environment.

We subscribe to the present declaration

WHEREAS:

That Mother Earth and the Territory that we inhabit constitute our way of being as Native Peoples with a culture, a cosmovision, and a unique way of feeling and thinking life as a whole.

That our Territory is part of the cosmos in which all its parts (hills, water springs, animals, waterfalls, wind) are alive, have spirit-ajaw, are united, and are related to each other. They live and coexist in harmony, a harmony that our ancestors cared for and respected; that is our ancestral heritage.

That we, the original Mayan Peoples, are part of the great common home, and that our grandfathers and grandmothers taught us to care for and respect the life that exists there. Maintaining harmony with the Creation, with the humankind, and with God, being the Territory the fundamental core of our existence, identity and wellbeing.

We carry in our hearts that Mother Earth is sacred, she gives us to eat, to drink, she gives us joy to the heart. It is our duty to preserve her balance in our heart and in the universe so that the life left by our grandparents can continue to be enjoyed by our sons and daughters.

The Palenque-San Cristobal highway project is a threat to our territory and affects it and destroys it. It dispossesses us not only from a piece of land, but also from the life that

lives there: springs, animals, diverse trees, and from our identity that makes us Peoples.

That is why the Mayan communities in the affected municipalities adhere to this declaration. Women, men, young people, and elders, after dialogue and analysis

WE AGREE:

First. We declare that our Indigenous Territory, original Mayan peoples, are part of the sacred Mother Earth. That our existence depends on the harmony that we maintain with the life that dwells in it.

Second. We declare that our Indigenous Mayan Territory rejects the Palenque to San Cristobal highway and any project that is not compatible with our way of life, cosmovision and with our care for Mother Earth.

Third. Our territory is declared a living culture and a **territory free of megaprojects**. This protection of the land is protected by international law and in the Political Constitution of Mexico, in the right to self-determination, self-government and autonomy to decide our own way of development or existence and to the preservation of our territorial environments.

Fourth. That every action of the Government of the Federation, the State of Chiapas and the Municipalities must be dialogued and agreed upon with the Original Peoples and communities, in accordance with our word and our normative systems. Therefore, we reject any action that is not taken with the customs and traditional authorities of the community: community assembly and principals. Issues that are guaranteed as prior, free and informed consultation, to obtain consent under the representative and organizational forms of the Indigenous Peoples, and through culturally appropriate procedures, according to the Mexican Constitution, The ILO No. 169 - Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and other international Human Rights instruments.

Fifth. As indigenous peoples, we will take the necessary legal, political, and organizational actions to care and respect for our Mother Earth, for the preservation of our Territories, the defense of our collective rights, as well as our way of life as members of the Indigenous Peoples of Chiapas.

**"The Territory is water, wind, animals,
trees, culture, cosmovision, faith,
It is our Mayan identity."
"Because the Territory is ours"**

San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, March 31, 2025.

Movement for Defending Life and Territory (Movimiento en Defensa de la Vida y el Territorio - Modevite for its acronyms in Spanish. Signed by the peoples, communities and people organized and united for the life of our Territory

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