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| His Excellency Mr Julio Muñoz-Deacon The Peruvian Ambassador Embassy of Peru 52 Sloane Street  LONDON SW1X 9SP | our ref euird/peru  date: 12 September 2014  contact: Stephen Russell  email: srussell@tuc.org.uk |

Dear Ambassador

murder of indigenous leaders

On behalf of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) and six million British workers, I condemn the murder of indigenous leaders Edwin Chota Valera, Leoncio Quincima Meléndez, Jorge Ríos Pérez and Francisco Pinedo, heads of the Ashaninka community of Saweto, within the jurisdiction of the Masisea district.

The four indigenous leaders were shot dead by suspected illegal loggers who have been operating on Saweto community lands. The men killed were fighting for their people's right to obtain titles to the lands on which they have been living for over half a century. The lands, in the Ucayali region, are now being exploited and taken over by outsiders.

Illegal loggers are deforesting the Peruvian Amazon and the national government is taking no effective measures to stop them.

Edwin Chota Valera, head of the Association of the Asháninkas-Ashenínkas Native Communities of Masisea and Callería (ACONAMAC), had filed several complaints with the forestry authority of Pucallpa. The complaints came to nothing and illegal loggers are operating with impunity in Alto Tamaya.

I understand that Edwin also presented a letter to the President of the Council of Ministers on 3 June this year outlining the challenges the Ashánika community of Alto Tamaya-Saweto face by not holding titles to their ancestral territories. It recounted several instances where they have been the target of death threats, and therefore also demanded that the authorities provide adequate protection for the community. Tragically, it seems your government took no action.

The TUC urges the Peruvian authorities to urgently ensure a full, immediate and impartial investigation into these killings, to identify those responsible for these crimes.

The Peruvian government has a duty to guarantee the safety and physical integrity of indigenous and trade union leaders, protecting them against certain elements operating illegally in the logging sector.

I look forward to hearing what action your government is taking.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES O’GRADY

**General Secretary**