

Pataxó Indians Resist Police in Brazil

Contributed by Newsroom
Wednesday, 20 October 2004

The Pataxó Resistance and Struggle Front and the Cassiana community, in the South of Bahia, have protested to the federal institutions against police actions during land restoration that took place on October 7 on the Santa Luzia Ranch, which was reoccupied in June by the Pataxó.

According to a communication signed by the indigenous leaders and addressed to the Public Prosecutor's Office, the National Foundation for Indigenous People (Funai) and the Ministry of Justice, the community decided to remain there.

"We have decided to stay on the land, a sacred right of our people," the document states.

There are 20 families on the ranch, who say that they have decided to no longer accept the presence of the Federal Police from Porto Seguro in their area.

According to the Pataxó from the Cassiana community, the police opened fire on houses in another community that also returned to its land in June.

"There are still gunmen on the ranches neighboring our village who threaten and attack us, as in fact took place on 29 September 2004, when two indigenous people from the Boca da Mata settlement were beaten up and received death threats from a gunman," they warn.

The Federal Police had said that they would return to the area on Wednesday, October 13, to carry out the land rights court order.

"The situation is serious and we are being threatened. This is why we have asked the authorities to take urgent measures to guarantee our rights and our lives," the Pataxó document claims.

Cimi – Indianist Missionary Council
<http://www.cimi.org.br>