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D/09/745  
Lien A/09/1515

Dear Dr Lucas,

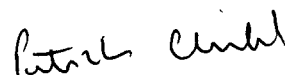
Thank you for your letter of 27<sup>th</sup> April concerning the indigenous people of the Awá Guajá land in the Amazon state of Maranhao, Brazil. The European Commission follows with great attention the situation of indigenous people in the whole of Latin America and is aware of the difficult conditions the Awá people are facing.

To reflect this primary concern, a specific priority has been foreseen in Brazil to finance project proposals to support indigenous people under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

A positive signal has been recently given in Brazil by the Supreme Court decision to back the continuous demarcation of the indigenous reserve Raposa Serra do Sol in a long-standing dispute between non-indigenous rice-growers and the indigenous people of the reserve. This is a landmark ruling whose effective implementation the European Commission will closely follow.

As you know, the EU decided to launch regular Human Rights dialogues with some of the countries of Latin America, including Brazil. The European Commission will strive to make sure that rights of indigenous people will be a regular feature of such dialogues. It will certainly request the EU Presidency that the situation of the Awá people as well as the Raposa Serra do Sul case, be addressed during the next meeting to be held in the coming weeks in Brasilia.

Yours sincerely,



Benita Ferrero-Waldner

*[Signed in the  
Commissioner's absence]*

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