

LET THE A'UWĒ-XAVANTE KEEP DREAMING

How Brazil's FICO corridor violates the cultural integrity and consent rights of the A'uwẽ Xavante Peoples, and what international human rights law requires.



Executive Summary

This advocacy brief is published by Cultural Survival in partnership with A'uwẽ Xavante leaders, communities and A'uwẽ Xavante Indigenous organizations (Xavante Warã Association¹, communities within Areões Indigenous Land, Mobilization of Cerrado Indigenous Peoples [MOPIC] and Rede Cerrado). It is adapted from, and published alongside, a submission presented to the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), 19th Session, Geneva, 2026, amplifying the A'uwẽ Xavante's calls for the protection of their rights, territories, and self-determination.

What this brief shows:

- **The A'uwẽ right to cultural integrity, protected under ICCPR Article 27, UNDRIP, ILO Convention 169 and the American Convention, is inseparable from their territory and the resources that sustain material and spiritual life.**
- **Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is not a bureaucratic formality but the procedural guarantee of that substantive right. Where a project would substantially compromise life and culturally significant activities, international law requires consent, not mere consultation.**
- **Brazil violates both: it has fragmented and coerced "consultation," misrepresented A'uwẽ consent, and allowed the destruction of the cultural substrate the law exists to protect.**
- **The only lawful remedy is immediate suspension of FICO and connected infrastructure, followed by a genuine FPIC process through A'uwẽ inter-territorial assemblies with binding authority to refuse.**

¹ The Xavante Warã Association is an Indigenous-led organization that brings together A'uwẽ-Xavante communities and leaders from across their territories to defend the collective rights, lands, culture, and way of life of the A'uwẽ-Xavante people.

Introduction: The Contradiction at the Heart of FICO

“Any project that affects one of our territories is a problem for the entire A’uwẽ Xavante people.”

— Hiparidi Top’tiro, A’uwẽ-Xavante leader

As Brazil presents itself to the world as a climate leader, it is driving a “clean energy” export railroad straight through the ancestral territory of the A’uwẽ (Xavante) people, without their Free, Prior and Informed Consent. This brief argues that the harm is not only procedural. By fragmenting consultation and concealing cumulative impacts, the State is dismantling the material and spiritual basis of A’uwẽ cultural survival itself.

The Ferrovia de Integração do Centro-Oeste (FICO, EF-354) is marketed as efficient, low-carbon transport for grain and rare-earth minerals bound for Asian and European markets. For the A’uwẽ, it is an existential threat: it cuts their territory in two, crosses sacred rivers and burial grounds, and advances on a consultation process that A’uwẽ leaders –and Brazil’s own Federal Public Defender’s Office (DPU)– describe as institutional harassment.

“We are talking about a railway that will boost regional development, reduce logistical costs, relieve highways, and significantly contribute to a cleaner and more efficient transport matrix.”

— Guilherme Theo Sampaio, Director-General of Brazil’s National Land Transport Agency (ANTT), own translation.

FICO is one piece of a continental export architecture, linked to proposed bi-oceanic rail corridors connecting the Atlantic and Pacific for Asian markets³. Its footprint on Indigenous Peoples is vast and its construction is already well advanced⁴. An Indigenous Component Study (ECI) approved in 2013 concluded that FICO was unviable because of its impacts on A’uwẽ life; subsequent licences were nonetheless issued without proper consultation⁵. The planned route skirts the northern edge of the Areões Indigenous Land in an undemarcated zone between A’uwẽ Xavante Indigenous Lands Areões and Pimentel Barbosa, and passes through A’uwẽ Xavante Indigenous Lands Parabubure and Marechal Rondon.

² Government of Brazil, Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres – ANTT (2025, June 24). *Ferrovia que ligará Goiás ao Mato Grosso tem 35% das obras concluídas e já transforma realidade no centro-oeste*.

³ On the bi-oceanic corridor and its risks to Amazonian Peoples and ecosystems, see Mongabay (2026) *Peru-Brazil Bioceanic railway brings too much risk to the Amazon, experts warn*.

⁴ The FICO is expected to disturb 24 Indigenous Lands within the Legal Amazon (23 in Mato Grosso, one in Rondônia) and to cross 105 springs and tributaries of the Xingu, Tocantins-Araguaia and Tapajós basins. See Portal Amazônia (2025, April 24). *Ferrovia de Integração Centro-Oeste afetará 24 terras indígenas*.

⁵ Azanha, G. (2013). *Estudos Etnoecológicos dos Impactos nas TIs Parabubure-Culuene, Areões, Pimentel Barbosa e Marechal Rondon, Povo A’uwẽ Xavante* — Componente Indígena do Processo de Licenciamento da EF-354.

FICO IN NUMBERS

31,000+

Indigenous people affected, from 20+ distinct ethnic groups

25,000

A'uwẽ Xavante people facing an existential threat from the corridor

2013

Indigenous Component Study (CI-PBA) deemed the project unviable, licensing advanced anyway

35%

A'uwẽ Xavante people facing an existential threat from the corridor

105

springs and waterways crossed by the railway across 3 river basins.

30%

of Brazil's biodiversity is found in the Cerrado, the most biodiverse savanna in the world.

24

A'uwẽ Xavante people facing an existential threat from the corridor

The “Ró” Is the Body of the People

To understand why this is a human rights emergency and not a routing dispute, one must begin where the A'uwẽ begin: with the Ró. In the words of A'uwẽ leaders before the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Ró – the Cerrado and all the beings within it – is not a resource to be zoned. It is the A'uwẽ Xavante world: the source of food, dreams, rituals, and the A'uwẽ future⁶.

“The ‘Ró is our world, from which we get our food and which is also the source of our dreams, memories, rituals, and our future. Thus, the ‘Ró is sacred to us.”

—Xavante Delegation Intervention submitted to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2024

The Ró is not metaphor; it is the architecture of a culture. Ceremonial life depends on the material world the railroad would sever. As A'uwẽ leader, Hiparidi Top'tiro told the same 2024 UN Permanent Forum, agribusiness and its attendant megaprojects pollute the rivers used for rituals and poison the game animals on which ceremony depends: without game, the A'uwẽ cannot perform their wedding ceremonies⁷. One planned highway (BR-080) would pass directly over Sörepré, the A'uwẽ “mother village” and the burial place of their ancestors; hydroelectric dams are planned on Öwawë (Rio das Mortes), their sacred river.

⁶ Intervention submitted by Xavante Associations Warã, Etêniritipa, Pimentel Barbosa, Ö'a'a, MOPIC and Cultural Survival, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 23rd Session, New York, 15–26 April 2024 (Theme 5(g)). <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/xavante-leaders-speak-out-23rd-session-unpfii>

⁷ Statement of Hiparidi Top'tiro, Xavante Warã Association and Cultural Survival, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 17th Session, New York, 16–27 April 2018 (Item 10, dialogue with the Special Rapporteur). Top'tiro also reported that ten A'uwẽ had died run over on the BR-070 and BR-158 highways that cut through their lands.

⁸ Intervention submitted by Xavante Associations Warã to UN Permanent Forum, 2024 (n. 5). The A'uwẽ continue to demand the return of Sörepré, Areões, Wedezé and other territories.

Cultural Integrity and the Consent It Requires

Brazil is bound by a dense and mutually reinforcing framework of international, regional, and constitutional obligations. Nevertheless, the right to cultural integrity is at the center, because it is the right that most completely captures what FICO destroys, and because international jurisprudence makes FPIC the indispensable safeguard of that right. The associated violations of self-determination, territory, life, health, and a healthy environment follow from and compound this core breach.

The Right to Cultural Integrity in International Human Rights Law

The foundational guarantee is Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)⁹, to which Brazil has been a party since 1992: persons belonging to ethnic minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with others, to enjoy their own culture. The UN Human Rights Committee has authoritatively interpreted this right to extend to the material basis of culture; in particular, the land-based and resource-based activities, such as hunting, fishing, and ceremonial practice, that are constitutive of Indigenous ways of life¹⁰.

Regionally, although the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR) does not name a “right to cultural identity” as such, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has protected it through an evolutionary reading of the rights to property (Article 21) and life (Article 4), beginning with *Mayagna (Sumo) Awas Tingni v. Nicaragua* (2001), which recognised the communal property of Indigenous Peoples grounded in their own customary law and their special relationship with ancestral land¹¹. In *Yakye Axa v. Paraguay* (2005), the Court held that the right to life itself is impaired where a State deprives an Indigenous community of access to its traditional territory and the means of subsistence and cultural reproduction bound to it¹².

This line matured in *Kichwa Indigenous People of Sarayaku v. Ecuador* (2012), where the Court treated the right to cultural identity as a right protected by the Convention and central to consultation¹³, and in *Kaliña and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname* (2015). It culminated in *Lhaka Honhat (Our Land) Association v. Argentina* (2020), the first contentious case in which the Court found autonomous and judicially enforceable violations, under Article 26 ACHR, of the rights to a healthy environment, adequate food, water and cultural identity¹⁴.

⁹ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (1976). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

¹⁰ UN Human Rights Committee (1994). General Comment No. 23 on Article 27 (Rights of Minorities), UN Doc. CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.5, paras. 3.2 and 7 (culture may manifest in a particular way of life associated with the use of land resources, including traditional activities such as fishing or hunting; positive measures of protection are required).

¹¹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Mayagna (Sumo) Awas Tingni Community v. Nicaragua, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of 31 August 2001, Series C No. 79, para. 149.

¹² Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Yakye Axa Indigenous Community v. Paraguay, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of 17 June 2005, Series C No. 125, paras. 137, 147, 167–168 (special relationship with territory; right to a dignified life).

¹³ Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Kichwa Indigenous People of Sarayaku v. Ecuador, Merits and Reparations, Judgment of 27 June 2012, Series C No. 245, paras. 159, 212–220 (cultural identity; State duty to consult as a general principle of international law).

¹⁴ Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Indigenous Communities of the Lhaka Honhat (Our Land) Association v. Argentina, Merits, Reparations and Costs, Judgment of 6 February 2020, Series C No. 400, paras. 195–289 (autonomous rights to a healthy environment, adequate food, water and to take part in cultural life, including cultural identity). See also *Kaliña and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname*, Judgment of 25 November 2015, Series C No. 309.

The dedicated instruments confirm and amplify this protection. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) guarantees the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of culture (Article 8), to practise and revitalise cultural and spiritual traditions (Articles 11–12), to maintain the distinctive spiritual relationship with traditionally owned lands, waters and resources (Article 25), and to maintain and control cultural heritage (Article 31). ILO Convention No. 169, ratified by Brazil and incorporated into domestic law, obliges the State to respect the special importance of the Peoples’ relationship with their lands and the cultural and spiritual values it carries (Articles 4, 5, and 13)¹⁵.

Cultural Integrity Is Inseparable from Territory and Its Resources

For Indigenous Peoples, cultural integrity cannot be reduced to language or folklore detached from land. It is territorially embodied. The Inter-American Court has repeatedly held that the relationship with ancestral territory is the very foundation of cultural identity, transmitted across generations and essential to a people’s survival as a distinct people.

The Ró is the substrate of A’uwẽ Xavante ceremonial, spiritual and social life. The game animals required for marriage and other fundamental ceremonies, the rivers used for ritual, the burial grounds at Sõrepré, the springs that feed three river basins and the dreams that inspire ceremonial song and life itself in the form of babies, these are not collateral to the culture; they are its load-bearing structure. A project [complex?] that crosses 105 watercourses, floods the sacred Rio das Mortes and routes a highway over the “mother village” strikes directly at the protected cultural interest. The documented collapse in A’uwẽ Xavante health, driven by forced dietary change – including state-sponsored agribusiness projects within their demarcated territories – degrades the land that feeds them, is the measurable signature of that cultural rupture..

Cultural Integrity, Free, Prior and Informed Consent, and Associated Violations

Because cultural integrity is territorially embodied, the procedure through which the State authorizes projects on Indigenous lands is not a mere formality; it is the determinant of whether the substantive right itself can survive. International law accordingly calibrates the stringency of the required procedure to the gravity of the anticipated impact, escalating from consultation to consent precisely where interests of cultural significance are engaged.

¹⁵ UNDRIP, GA Res. 61/295 (13 September 2007), Arts. 8, 11–12, 25, 31. ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989), ratified by Brazil through Legislative Decree No. 143/2002 and promulgated by Decree No. 10.088/2019, Arts. 4, 5, 13. The American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (OAS, 2016) similarly affirms, in Article XXV, the spiritual, cultural and material relationship with traditional lands.

¹⁶ See *Awas Tingni*, n. 9, para. 149; *Yakye Axa*, n. 10, para. 135; *Sarayaku*, n. 11, paras. 145–147, 155.

¹⁷ On the A’uwẽ “nutritional transition” and associated disease burden (diabetes up to 60%, metabolic syndrome ~66%, childhood anaemia ~61%), see Górká, K. (2025), “Colonial shadows – a systematic review of the Xavante health transformation,” *International Journal for Equity in Health* 24(1):81, [doi:10.1186/s12939-025-02430-5](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-025-02430-5); and Welch, J. R. et al. (2020), “The Xavante Longitudinal Health Study in Brazil,” *American Journal of Human Biology* 32(2):e23339, [PMC7154686](https://doi.org/10.1002/ajhb.23339).

The standard finds its most explicit articulation in *Ángela Poma Poma v. Peru* (2009). There, the UN Human Rights Committee held that, under Article 27 of the ICCPR, State measures that substantially compromise or interfere with the culturally significant economic activities of a minority are permissible only where the affected community has enjoyed effective participation in the relevant decision-making, participation that, the Committee was careful to specify, requires “not mere consultation but the Free, Prior and Informed Consent” of its members, and only where the measure neither denies the community the enjoyment of its culture nor is disproportionate to a legitimate aim. Herein lies the doctrinal pivot: where a project would deprive a culture of its material foundations, the right to cultural integrity transforms the State’s duty to consult into a duty to obtain fully informed consent.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights reached the same conclusion by a parallel route in *Saramaka People v. Suriname* (2007). For large-scale development or investment projects liable to have a major impact upon Indigenous territory –such as to threaten the people’s survival as a distinct collectivity– the Court held that the State must not merely consult but secure the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of the people concerned, in accordance with their own customs and traditions. That obligation is inseparable from two further safeguards: the prior conduct of *independent* and technically competent social and environmental impact assessments, and the guarantee of reasonable benefit-sharing. UNDRIP enshrines the same threshold: Article 19 requires States to obtain FPIC before adopting measures that may affect Indigenous Peoples, and Article 32(2) requires it prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands, territories or resources, particularly in connection with the development or use of water and other resources.

A railway traversing 105 watercourses, hydroelectric dams upon a sacred river, a highway routed over an ancestral burial village, and the deforestation of a constitutionally protected reserve constitute, on any reasonable assessment, projects of “major impact” that engage the very survival of the A’uwẽ as a people. They fall squarely within the consent thresholds established in *Poma Poma* and *Saramaka*. Consent, whether freely granted or freely withheld, is therefore the governing legal standard, and consultation, however conducted, cannot be substituted for it.

**STOP THE MEGAPROJECTS
FRAGMENTING RÓ, THE A’UWĒ
XAVANTE TERRITORY!**



How Brazil Breaches Both the Substance and the Safeguard

Brazil's conduct breaches this standard on two distinct yet mutually reinforcing levels. Procedurally, FUNAI, the very organ entrusted with safeguarding Indigenous Peoples, together with the construction company INFRA S.A. and its contractors, has dispensed fragmented and selective information to individual leaders of separate territories, rather than to the people as a whole acting through their own representative institutions. This is not an administrative imperfection but a deliberate methodology: one that obscures the cumulative impact of the multiple works and fractures the unity of communities that share a single territory and a single decision.

Opposition has been met with pressure and restrictions on leaders' freedom of movement, while State agents have publicly misrepresented the A'uwẽ as having "accepted" the Indigenous Component Plan (PBA-CI) despite its rejection by many of their assemblies. The Federal Public Defender's Office (DPU) has characterized this conduct as reaching the level of "institutional harassment."

Substantively, and more gravely still, the State is permitting the destruction of the very cultural substrate that the consent requirement exists to protect. Construction has advanced to 35% completion across sacred waters and burial grounds, even as the defective process unfolds. The breach of the safeguard and the breach of the underlying right are therefore not separate grievances but a single, compounding wrong; the consultation was deprived of substance in order that the territory, and with it the culture it sustains, could be irreversibly extinguished. It is on this basis that the scholarly community of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America (SALSA)¹⁸ and the A'uwẽ leadership alike demand that the State desist from both.

Associated and compounding violations: Self-determination and Autonomy

By imposing an export-oriented model of development that fragments A'uwẽ territory and conscripts the people into a commodity chain to which they never consented, the State violates the A'uwẽ's right freely to pursue their own economic, social, and cultural development. That right is guaranteed by Articles 3 and 4 of UNDRIP, Article 7 of ILO Convention 169, and common Article 1 of the ICCPR and the ICESCR, the very principle of self-determination upon which the Inter-American Court grounded its interpretation of the right to property in *Saramaka*, holding that members of Indigenous Peoples may not be deprived of the natural resources necessary for their subsistence. The A'uwẽ themselves frame the stakes in precisely these terms: the railway, in the words of one leader, "divides our ancestral territory in half" and "produces divisions and war among us."

¹⁸ SALSA (2026). *Salsa Declaration On Fico And A'uwẽ (Xavante) Rights To Free, Prior And Informed Consent*.

Lands, Territories, and Demarcation

The planned route traverses an undemarcated zone between the Areões and Pimentel Barbosa Indigenous Lands and severs ancestral cemeteries and sacred sites, even as Brazil has failed to complete demarcation within the deadlines fixed by its own Constitution. This omission violates Article 231 of the Federal Constitution — which recognizes Indigenous Peoples’ originary rights over their traditionally occupied lands and declares null any act directed at their occupation or possession — together with Article 14 of ILO Convention 169 and Article 21 of the American Convention as construed by the Inter-American Court. In *Sawhoyamaxa v. Paraguay*, the Court confirmed that Indigenous land rights derive from traditional occupation rather than from formal title, and subsist even where the lands have passed into private hands; in *Xucuru v. Brazil*, it held the State internationally responsible for an unreasonable delay in demarcation and for the consequent failure to guarantee juridical certainty over ancestral property.

This violation is compounded by Brazil’s persistence in the so-called “temporal landmark” thesis (*tese do marco temporal*), which restricts Indigenous land claims to areas occupied on 5 October 1988, the date of the Constitution’s promulgation. The thesis is incompatible with both Brazilian constitutional law and Brazil’s international human rights obligations. The Federal Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional in September 2023 in the *Xokleng* case, affirming that Indigenous territorial rights are originary —preceding and existing independently of the State, whose role is confined to their declaratory recognition— and reaffirmed that holding in December 2025 when it struck down the corresponding provisions of Law No. 14.701/2023, which Congress had enacted in defiance of the 2023 judgment. Internationally, the thesis is irreconcilable with Article 21 of the American Convention as interpreted in *Awas Tingni* and *Sawhoyamaxa*, which grounds Indigenous rights in traditional occupancy and holds that those rights subsist notwithstanding dispossession, and with Article 14 of ILO Convention 169. For the A’uwẽ, whose territories were progressively fragmented through twentieth-century State expansion, any attempt to condition recognition upon presence at an arbitrary 1988 cut-off would serve only to ratify the very dispossession that international law forbids.

These principles are particularly relevant in cases involving Peoples who suffered historical displacement as a result of State-led colonization and infrastructure expansion. Therefore, this conclusion is reinforced by the extensive evidence of A’uwẽ Xavante occupation and use of these territories, which is well documented, widely known within Brazilian society, reflected in regional toponymy, and consistently asserted by the Xavante themselves. The A’uwẽ situation is graver still, for Brazil compounds these failures with the active advancement of non-consensual railway, highway, and hydroelectric works across the very lands awaiting protection.

¹⁹ Inter-American Court of Human Rights. *Sawhoyamaxa v. Paraguay*, Merits, reparations and costs, Judgment of 29 March 2006.

²⁰ Inter-American Court of Human Rights. *Xucuru v. Brazil*, Preliminary objections, merits, reparations and costs, Judgment of 5 February 2018.

Life, Health, and a Healthy Environment

The destruction of waterways and of the traditional food systems they sustain engages the right to health (Article 24(2) of UNDRIP; Article 12 of the ICESCR, read with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' General Comment No. 14, which requires States to address the underlying determinants of health, including a healthy environment and access to traditional sustenance) and the autonomous right to a healthy environment recognised by the Inter-American Court in *Lhaka Honhat v. Argentina* and in Advisory Opinion OC-23/17. It engages, further, the right to life in its qualitative dimension, the right to a dignified existence (*vida digna*) articulated in *Yakye Axa*, which the Human Rights Committee has confirmed, in General Comment No. 36, to be imperilled by environmental degradation. That this dimension is lethal rather than abstract is borne out by the death of the A'uwẽ leader Silvério Tserebu'rã Tserenhib'ru Xavante in December 2025, hours after he had told State officials, "We do not want the railroad." According to a recent comparative UN study, A'uwẽ Xavante have the greatest prevalence of diabetes, among other diseases, caused by State and corporate projects, of any Indigenous population worldwide. This is the result of dietary degradation since sedentization and state agribusiness projects within Xavante Indigenous Lands.

Duty to Regulate Business and to Provide a Remedy

Finally, Brazil has failed to discharge its duty of due diligence in respect of the corporate actors driving the FICO project, effectively abdicating to private economic interests a decision-making authority over Indigenous territory that is, in law, non-delegable. Affected communities, meanwhile, are left without any effective domestic remedy: licensing proceeds in defiance of an unfavourable impact study, and the available administrative and judicial avenues afford no timely or meaningful redress. This dual failure breaches the State's duty to protect under the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, together with its obligations to respect and ensure Convention rights and to afford judicial protection under Articles 1(1), 2 and 25 of the American Convention.

The legal conclusion is therefore unequivocal and cumulative. The conduct of FUNAI and of the entities exercising delegated public authority is attributable to the Brazilian State, which stands in breach of ILO Convention 169, the UNDRIP, the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the ICCPR and the ICESCR, the American Convention on Human Rights as authoritatively interpreted by the Inter-American Court, and its own Federal Constitution. The licensing process as presently conducted is constitutionally defective, administratively voidable, and internationally actionable; only the immediate suspension of the works and the conduct of a genuine consent process can restore the State to conformity with its obligations.

**LET THE
A'UWÊ-XAVANTE
KEEP DREAMING**

Recommendations – What Justice Requires

The remedy consistent with these obligations is singular and immediate: suspend the FICO railway and all connected highways and hydroelectric projects affecting A'uwẽ territories, and conduct a genuine FPIC process through the A'uwẽ's own inter-territorial assemblies, with full disclosure of cumulative impacts, independent prior impact assessment, and binding authority to approve or reject. Effective reparation must include measures to restore the health, environment and cultural integrity already harmed.

To the Federal Government of Brazil:

- Immediately suspend FICO railway construction and the Agro A'uwẽ Xavante project until genuine FPIC is obtained from all affected communities through their own governance institutions, and until demarcation and titling are complete.
- Cease all pressure on A'uwẽ leaders and all public claims that they have accepted the PBA-CI; restart consultation with full, culturally appropriate disclosure of every planned project and its cumulative impacts, treating consent as the governing standard.
- Urgently complete the demarcation of the undelimited zone between Areões and Pimentel Barbosa, and prohibit any infrastructure or agribusiness expansion on territories still in demarcation.
- Investigate the allegations of institutional harassment by FUNAI, ensure the safety of A'uwẽ defenders, Elders, and ceremonial leaders, including women and youth, and firmly reject the Marco Temporal doctrine.

To IPHAN (National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage) of Brazil:

- Initiate an urgent Inventário Nacional de Referências Culturais (INRC) of A'uwẽ Xavante living heritage –ceremonial traditions, dream-knowledge systems, oral heritage, and the sacred sites of the Ró, including Sõrepré–conducted with A'uwẽ Free, Prior and Informed Consent through their own representative institutions (Articles 11–12, 2003 UNESCO Convention), to be completed before any further FICO licensing decision.
- On that basis, process on a priority basis the Registro of this heritage under Decree 3,551/2000 (Livros dos Saberes, das Celebrações and dos Lugares), following the Wajãpi Kusiwa and Enawenê-Nawê Yaokwa precedents.
- Publicly disclose whether IPHAN was consulted in the FICO licensing; if not, formally notify IBAMA and INFRA S.A., and require, via a Termo de Referência Específico, a cumulative impact assessment (railway, highways, dams) prepared with A'uwẽ participation, not solely by the proponent.
- Issue a manifestação conclusiva identifying the óbices FICO poses to A'uwẽ cultural heritage, and condition any continuation of licensing on their resolution.

To EMRIP and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

- Condemn all forms of intimidation, surveillance, and restrictions on the freedom of movement of A'uwẽ leaders, elders, and defenders who oppose the FICO project
- Call on Brazil to conduct an independent investigation into the death of A'uwẽ leader Silvério Tserebu'rã Tserenhib'ru in December 2025
- Demand that Brazil establish protective measures, including security, if requested by communities, for all A'uwẽ defenders
- Request authorization from the UN Human Rights Council to conduct or authorize a fact-finding mission to Brazil focusing on the FICO project. EMRIP should mandate the mission to investigate:
- FUNAI's conduct in the consultation process, including allegations of institutional harassment
- Whether the A'uwẽ have given Free, Prior and Informed Consent, or whether consultation has been fragmented and coercive
- The misrepresentation of A'uwẽ consent by State officials
- The cumulative impacts of FICO plus related infrastructure on A'uwẽ cultural survival.
- Use EMRIP's 19th Session to develop thematic guidance affirming that FPIC is the required standard wherever infrastructure would substantially compromise culturally significant activities, and that consultation must reach inter-territorial assemblies of all affected villages, not fragmented leaders.

To Investors, Builders, Supply Chains and Contractors:

- Suspend financing, investment or construction on any project affecting A'uwẽ territories until FPIC is verified under ILO 169 and UNDRIP; operating without it exposes companies to legal liability, divestment and reputational harm.
- Conduct robust human rights due diligence under the UN Guiding Principles across all operations and supply chains, screening every partner and subcontractor for involvement in land grabbing or violence against defenders, and treat FPIC, obtained through legitimate A'uwẽ governance, as a non-negotiable operational standard.



**STOP THE MEGAPROJECTS FRAGMENTING
RÓ, THE A'UWÊ XAVANTE TERRITORY!**

To UNESCO Secretariat of the 2003 Convention and Intergovernmental Committee:

- Receive and formally consider the information submitted by Cultural Survival, an NGO accredited under Article 9 of the 2003 Convention (No. 01332) and by A'uwẽ Xavante organizations, regarding the imminent threat FICO poses to the viability of A'uwẽ living heritage, and consult them on this matter pursuant to Article 8.4.
- Remind Brazil of its treaty obligations under Articles 11–12 to identify and inventory A'uwẽ intangible heritage with the participation and consent of the communities concerned, and examine Brazil's compliance in its next periodic report under the Convention.
- Encourage Brazil to nominate A'uwẽ ceremonial and dream-knowledge traditions to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, including through the extreme-urgency procedure (criterion U.6) following Brazil's own precedent in the Yaokwa ritual of the Enawenê-Nawê people (2011), likewise threatened by infrastructure expansion.
- Apply the UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples, grounded in UNDRIP and FPIC, in all engagements with Brazil concerning heritage affected by the FICO corridor.

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Cultural Survival advocates for Indigenous Peoples' rights and supports Indigenous communities' self-determination, cultures, and political resilience since 1972. We envision a future that respects and honors Indigenous Peoples' inherent rights and dynamic cultures, deeply and richly interwoven in lands, languages, spiritual traditions, and artistic expression, rooted in self-determination and self-governance. For more information, go to www.cs.org