



## Call to Action for Indigenous Peoples, Rights of Nature and Life: All Eyes on Ecuador

Statement by Casey Camp Horinek,  
Ponca elder and founding Board Chair of Movement Rights

**Background:** In the early hours of October 12, 2025, heavily armed military forces entered Imbabura province of Ecuador and attacked Otavalo with gunfire and tear gas. This assault follows 19 days of a national strike, during which Indigenous communities have been at the epicenter of state repression. Soldiers forcibly cut the hair of Indigenous Kichwa men — a deeply humiliating and racist act, as long hair and braids are sacred symbols of cultural identity and dignity. More than 112 people have been injured, dozens detained, and at least one community member, Efraín Fuérez, has been killed. We raise our voices to defend Ecuador's legacy as the first country in the world to recognize the Rights of Nature, and to stand with the Indigenous defenders who risk their lives to protect these rights. Defending land, water, and life is a right and a responsibility — not a crime.

*"Many years ago, I was introduced to the idea of a movement called Rights of Nature. As a Ponca woman coming from Indigenous traditions, I initially questioned the value of making laws or policy around Rights of Nature and how it could enhance Indigenous Rights or work with our worldview. However, witnessing the Rights of Nature in practice globally and seeing how they align with both the original Ponca teachings and Western law made it clear to me that the Rights of Nature and Indigenous Rights are interconnected. The recognition in court cases affirmed what we have always known as Indigenous people: humans are not separate from Nature but are part of a single interconnected organism—Mother Earth.*

*Observing our present-day situation politically, environmentally, and always through an Indigenous lens - more than ever, I understand that Rights of Nature is a path forward for humanity to continue its journey on Earth - we are the endangered species if we continue to deny the rights of Mother Earth and Father Sky to exist, thrive, and continue their relationship with all living things, including humans. The threat to life on earth is very real, and when we turn our eyes to places like Ecuador and see the attack on the Indigenous People, we see it as a continuation of the colonization and financialization of Nature itself. We recognize that history has taught us that we were attacked in the Global North in the same way the Kichwa People of Ecuador are being attacked today — hair cut by force, gas attacks on babies and elders, villages under attack — simply so that the extractive industry can continue its reign of terror.*

*Ecuador set the standard for Rights of Nature not just in court, but in practical reality - it is the reason the Kichwa are being attacked. As the fastest-growing environmental movement in the modern history of humankind, Ecuador has become a microcosm of the growth of Rights of Nature, the standard for Rights of Nature, and the future of Rights of Nature.*

*As Movement Rights has always ascertained that it is necessary to align human law with natural law, so we stand with the Indigenous Cosmology that has always understood that we are all related and that Indigenous led Rights of Nature is a solution to the climate chaos that we are experiencing. Rights of Nature and Indigenous Rights are indivisible."*

**Movement Rights Stands with Ecuador - Movement Rights Stands with Nature!**