

**CONSEIL NATIONAL DES DROITS DU PEUPLE AUTOCHTONE DE  
NOUVELLE-CALEDONIE  
(NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS OF  
NEW CALEDONIA)  
C.N.D.P.A.**

**Appeal for aid and international solidarity**

Ladies & Gentlemen, Citizens of Planet Earth,

Allow **us** to introduce ourselves : **Kanaky** – New Caledonia, is an Archipelago of the South Pacific of **19,103 km2, inhabited** by a little over 200,000 people, of whom some 90,000 Kanak constitute the indigenous people.

This archipelago possesses **more** than one third of the world's reserves of Nickel and Cobalt.

For more than a **century of French colonisation**, no environmental laws were put in place.

**Kanaky** – New Caledonia has known much Nickel exploitation by French companies, both public and private.

Our recent history has been marked,

- in 1988 by the Matignon Accord, which put an end to civil war and instituted system of transition under French tutelage between representatives of the indigenous people, the Kanak, and representatives of the original plutocracy of mainly European origin settled during the « colonial trading » period.
- then in 1998 a consensual solution **which** set up an evolutionary system of emancipation, placing the indigenous people at its centre – preamble and organic law stemming from the Noumea Accord.

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Kanaky – New Caledonia remains on the UN list of countries to be decolonised.

The transfer of sovereignty, in this phase of **decolonisation** has weakened our capacity to control our natural resources.

The intentional absence of international level environmental regulations has whetted the appetite of mining industry multinationals.

An important majority of the representatives of the indigenous people of Kanaky – New Caledonia has expressed itself, through the voice of the President of the Custom Senate, to signify its opposition to the granting of a prospecting permit on a major laterite massif, the second most important in the world for its metal content and for the quantity of available minerals.

This grant gives the mining company GoroNickel, branch of INCO Ltd , the means to become, in the **short** term, owner of the massif.

If another argument was necessary, here in Kanaky – New Caledonia, Kanak land, the Land does not belong to Man, the **Kanak man** belongs to the Earth. In effect, the Kanak people have a specific relationship with the Earth, which is the very basis of its spiritual, material and cultural existence.

During this transitory period of setting up political and administrative structures, flouting the spirit and the letter of the signed accord, the representatives of the local plutocracy, using complicity, attempt, for « obscure » reasons which stand up to no analysis, to make a free gift of a Nickel lode of inestimable value to the multinational « INCO-GoroNickel ».

By so doing, the indigenous people of Kanaky – New Caledonia, coming out of a phase of European colonisation, are threatened in its vital interests in the short, medium and long terms, by the imperialism of multinational mining companies.

Owing to partisan activism on the part of representatives of the plutocracy, Kanaky - New Caledonia's people were unable to express themselves in the UN

consultation in 2001, 2002 concerning « the preoccupations of each country's people within the framework of sustainable development and global warming »

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At the same time we call upon the French State and the international community to bring us aid and assistance within the framework of this denial of justice.

- The French State, given its historical **responsibility**, **it** was the one to tolerate the absence of environmental regulation, but also contractual, as a signatory to the Noumea Accord, which places the **indigenous Kanak** people, at the centre of the emancipation mechanism. Past and present attitudes **discredit** in an irremediable way the representative appointed by the plutocratic system in place.
- The International community, out of humane solidarity, in mingled respect for human rights and nature conservation rights.

We ask that the prospecting permits granted to the INCO Goro Nickel Company covering the area known as Prony-West be immediately revoked.

Firstly, because it **does not respect** in a clear and unquestionable manner the rights of the indigenous people ;

Secondly, because during this phase of decolonisation which must, in a harmonious manner, associate redistribution of wealth, sustainable development and protection of the environment, it appears to be essentially contrary to the rights of the Kanak, indigenous people, to allow the development of an imperialism of international, monopolistic and destructive capital.

May the regulations on environmental protection, as defined in the Rio (1992), Noumea (1986) and Apia (1976) be applicable in Kanaky – New Caledonia be rendered applicable.

May the whole of the marine ecosystems within the exclusive **Kanaky** – New Caledonia economic region be classified in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Noumea, 15 August 2002

President of the Council

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