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March 5, 2024

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2 Email: justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: Request for communication to the Brazilian government on eucalyptus plantations

We are writing to express our solidarity with the Quilombola (From the Community of Volta Miúda- Caravelas, in the Extreme South of Bahia and others from the North of Espírito Santo) of Brazil who are fighting for recognition of their ancestral territories in the face of expanding eucalyptus tree plantations.

We ask you to express our concern to the President of Brazil and ask him to support Quilombola communities (Quilombos) in their efforts to stop the encroachment of eucalyptus plantations.

Quilombo are communities created by Black people who escaped from and resisted the slavery regime that prevailed in Brazil for over 300 years until abolished in 1888. Quilombos were formed in isolated rural areas of Brazil. The right of Quilombos to legal land title was officially recognized under Brazil's 1988 Constitution, however, the ongoing expansion of eucalyptus plantations violates this right, causing severe harm.

Large scale eucalyptus plantations have been taking over Brazil's native forest landscape and especially the Quilombola Territories of Bahia and Espírito Santo for decades. Brazil-based Suzano, one of the world's largest pulp and paper companies, is a key driver of plantation expansion onto lands claimed by Indigenous, Quilombola, and peasant farming communities.

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These communities depend on healthy lands and water to grow food to feed their families and maintain their cultures but, in addition to displacing communities, extensive monoculture eucalyptus tree production depletes local water sources and often poisons the land and water with pesticides, making it difficult to grow food and raise animals. These plantations disrupt lives and livelihoods, and destroy biological diversity.

The social and ecological problems posed by these plantations will intensify if Suzano begins to plant its recently approved genetically engineered (GE or genetically modified) glyphosate-tolerant eucalyptus trees.

Representatives from the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN), together with delegates from civil society groups in Argentina, Chile, Germany, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, the UK and the US, met with some of these communities in Brazil in May 2023 and heard about the environmental and social impacts of eucalyptus monocultures and related destructive actions by Suzano.

As a government concerned with upholding Indigenous rights and protecting the environment, we call on you to express your concern to the President of Brazil and ask the Government of Brazil to ensure the rights of Indigenous peoples and Quilombola are respected and to stop the expansion of eucalyptus plantations in Brazil, particularly in the Quilombola Community of Volta Miúda- Caravelas and of the extreme south of Bahia and the north of Espírito Santo.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely,



Jenn Pfenning, President
National Farmers Union



Lucy Sharratt, Co-ordinator
Canadian Biotechnology Action Network