



# Intolerância religiosa, racismo religioso e casas de rezas Kaiowá e Guarani queimadas

**O.K.**   
Observatório Kunangue Aty Guasu





RELATÓRIO ELABORADO PELA KUÑANGUE ATY GUASU E PELO OBSERVATÓRIO DA KUÑANGUE ATY GUASU (O.K.A) PARA SUBSIDIAR ENCAMINHAMENTOS A RESPEITO DA INTOLERÂNCIA E RACISMO RELIGIOSO, BEM COMO AS QUEIMAS DAS CASAS DE REZA (OGA PYSY) EM COMUNIDADES KAIOWÁ E GUARANI NO CONE SUL DO ESTADO DO MATO GROSSO DO SUL JUNTO À DEFENSORIA PÚBLICA DA UNIÃO E A DEFENSORIA PÚBLICA ESTADUAL DO MATO GROSSO DO SUL (DPE-MS).

DOURADOS-MS, FEVEREIRO DE 2022.

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Burning ceremonial house in Itay, December 29th, 2021. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu



Burning healing house in Guapo'y Village, Amambai Indigenous Reserve, October 2nd, 2021. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu



# **Religious intolerance, religious racism and healing houses burnt down in Kaiowá and Guarani communities**

Report organised by Kuñangue Aty Guasu and Observatório Kuñangue Aty Guasu (O.K.A) aiming to subsidise referrals concerning religious intolerance and racism, as well as the burning of healing houses (*oga pysy*) in Kaiowá and Guarani communities in the south region of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, through Defensoria Pública da União and Defensoria Pública Estadual from Mato Grosso do Sul (DPE-MS)

Dourados-MS, March 2022.

## **Introduction**

During February 7th, 8th and 9th 2022, Kuñangue Aty Guasu (Grande Assembleia das Mulheres Kaiowá e Guarani), the Observatório da Kuñangue Aty Guasu (O.K.A), and Defensoria Pública da União (DPU) via Defensoria Regional de Direitos Humanos (DRDH) and Defensoria Pública do estado de Mato Grosso do Sul (DPE-MS) via Núcleo Institucional de Promoção e Defesa dos Povos Indígenas e da Igualdade Racial e Étnica (NUPIIR) visited three different Kaiowá and Guarani territories, namely: 1) Amambai Indigenous Reserve; 2) Rancho Jacaré Indigenous Land; 3) Resumption of Itay Ka'agwyrusu.

The objective of this journey was to follow-up the recent cases of fires showing evidences of crime against healing houses (*oga pysy*), as well as the aggressions, threats, tortures and homicide attempts against *nhanderu* (male prayers) and femicide against *nhandesy* (female prayers), coming from members of pentecostal churches - more specifically from Deus é Amor Church. In the mentioned localities, we made evidences possible via audiovisual record, data collection, the organisation of reports, and through juridical, anthropological and psychological assistance, as well as the referrals of incumbencies from DPU and DPE so to give a resolution to the reported facts, in the sense of stopping the perpetration of the violation of native peoples rights, materialised through the burning of one of the most sacred symbols of Kaiowá and Guarani ancestry. The consequences of violence include physical, spiritual, psychological and material damages against the guardians of our ancestry, represented by the ancient men and women suffering violence along with a considerable part of their own families.



We are located in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS), where Kaiowa and Guarani people are settled. We are the second biggest indigenous population of the country, totalling 58.000 native inhabitants approximately (SESAI 2019). Moreover, year after year the state of Mato Grosso do Sul is considered one of the leaders of violence against indigenous peoples (see annual report from Conselho Indigenista Missionário).<sup>1</sup> Kaiowá and Guarani peoples are the most affected by the

Ñandesy Dna. Lulu's healing house, Amambai village, Amambai city, 2021. Source: Kuñangue's visit to the territory.

violations of rights and human lives perpetrated in different spheres, including public institutions, private companies, landowners, churches/missionaries and the Judiciary.

Historically, our people were forced to leave native territories and forced to live in eight Indigenous Reserves in MS. All the land belonging to our grandparents, great grandparents and all our ancestors was allotted, looted and stolen, and that is how big farms, cities and huge soy, corn and sugar cane plantations were born. Today, it is clear that we are still dealing with the project of exploitation and destruction of what is left of our lands and rivers, so agribusiness monoculture may be irrigated. Our territories keep being poisoned, also through chemical attacks against our communities.

One of the witnesses present during the burning of a healing house reports, from the top of her advanced age, the forced relocation the community suffered in her region: “We were put into cages and taken to *Apa* river, and there they had private security employed to exterminate us in the middle of the forest, but we survived through praying” - tells a *nhandesy* living in *tekoha* Rancho Jacaré. She shares many memories which show us there have always been numerous attempts to silence Kaiowá and Guarani prayers, along with everything belonging to these traditional people. She heard her companions dying during the forced relocation of her community and after struggling many days to go back to its original

<sup>1</sup> See <https://cimi.org.br/2021/10/relatorioviolencia2020/>

territory, she was finally able to get back. However, there were already many henchmen and armed security people employed by farmers in the region, and part of the forest belonging to her territory had already been exterminated. That's how non indigenous people occupied the sacred territory of her people. She says she was saved by prayers, and thanks to them she was able to get her territory back together with other companions who also survived the forced

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relocation. The *nhandesy* affirms that this isn't the first healing house burnt in her territory and she also reflects about the amount of violence present in the lack of respect and violation of the sacred spaces she would like to leave as a native heritage to her grandchildren: “in the fight for our territory, our prayers make us stronger, for the church won't save us during the resumptions”, comments the *nhandesy*.

Each historical period is related to missionary practices inside our villages, always stimulated by European countries, such as the priceless losses caused by the beginning of colonisation. We ought to remember that Companhia de Jesus and the progression of the jesuits all along the territory presently occupied by the Brazilian State had very warlike characteristics, since the first missions that occupied the region of the Itatines, in the 17th century, in alternation with the offensive of *bandeirantismo* movement. This process was intensified in the 18th century after the Paraguayan War (*Guerra da Tríplice Aliança*). Not by chance, it accompanied the massive banishment caused by the *Cia. Matte Larangeira*, historical sources demonstrated that missionaries should "catechise and adjust indigenous people to Brazilian society" (Eloy Amado, 2020)<sup>2</sup>.

It is evident thus, that the cases of religious intolerance and racism addressed here don't derive from a first contact of Kaiowá and Guarani people with Christianity: they arise from methods, ideologies, political and social relations, as well as from the most striking characteristics of evangelising violence forms, perpetrated by the triad State-Church-Enterprise - after all, what is this Brazilian society to which assimilationism/integrationism intends to "adapt" indigenous peoples? We turn to João Pacheco de Oliveira (2016)<sup>3</sup> to offer a better understanding of our argument:

Extermination and guardianship are the names of two different aspects of colonisation, which in national self-representations appear as antagonistic

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<sup>2</sup> AMADO, Luiz Henrique Eloy. Vukápanavo—O Despertar do Povo Terena para os seus Direitos: Movimento indígena e confronto político. *Revista Trabalho Necessário*, v. 18, n. 36, p. 392-398, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> PACHECO DE OLIVIERA, J. O nascimento do Brasil e outros ensaios. *Pacificação, regime tutelar e formação de alteridades*. Rio de Janeiro: Contra Capa Livraria Ltda, 2016.



elements, but in practice they constitute alternate and cooperative aspects of the colonial action. The expansion of economic and political systems and the forging of the nation always used civilising speeches and criminalised the other, also inculcating narratives and images able to justify repressive actions in the limit of genocide. (p. 19)

As a fundamental principle of our report, we reiterate the harmful and destructive consequences felt and perceived in contemporaneity inside the *tekoha*, the very causes of the transformations and the ethnocide practices resulting in the actions of missionaries and in the forced evangelization/conversion process - such as the relocations - which seems to keep the paradigm of guardianship and integration together, which appears to be especially in force after the emergence of Serviço de Proteção ao 'Índio' and Localização de Trabalhadores Nacionais (SPI/ILTN,

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later called SPI), in 1910, whose logic is replicated today by the political actions of Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI), represented by its current president<sup>4</sup>.

With the emergence of SPI Indigenous Reserves were created as confinement spaces aiming to make indigenous lands available for colonisation. Along with the reserves, the State also created figures as the Captain and the Post Chief, established to generate internal mechanisms of control, approved and coordinated by the State, assuming the role of the police/militia, imposing a rigid hierarchy and mediating the interests of the State inside the Reserves.

In many cases, the captaincy is responsible for mediating the actions of the churches inside Indigenous Lands, which are frequently composed by pastors who are part of the captaincy's power system managed alongside with the Brazilian State (Ferreira, 2013)<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, captaincies are in direct dialogue with companies which, through the action of *cabeçantes*<sup>6</sup>, conduct masses of indigenous people through the new compulsory/supersaturating working modalities, concerning sugar cane extraction, meat processing and apple harvesting in south, among others - many of which were recently reported, through audiovisual records and formal complaints, as working places and companies where slave labour was used.

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<sup>4</sup> Marcelo Augusto Xavier da Silva.

<sup>5</sup> FERREIRA, Andrey. **Tutela e Resistência Indígena: Etnografia e História das Relações de Poder entre os Terena e o Estado Brasileiro**. São Paulo: Edusp, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Community members coordinating a group from the community to work outside their territories

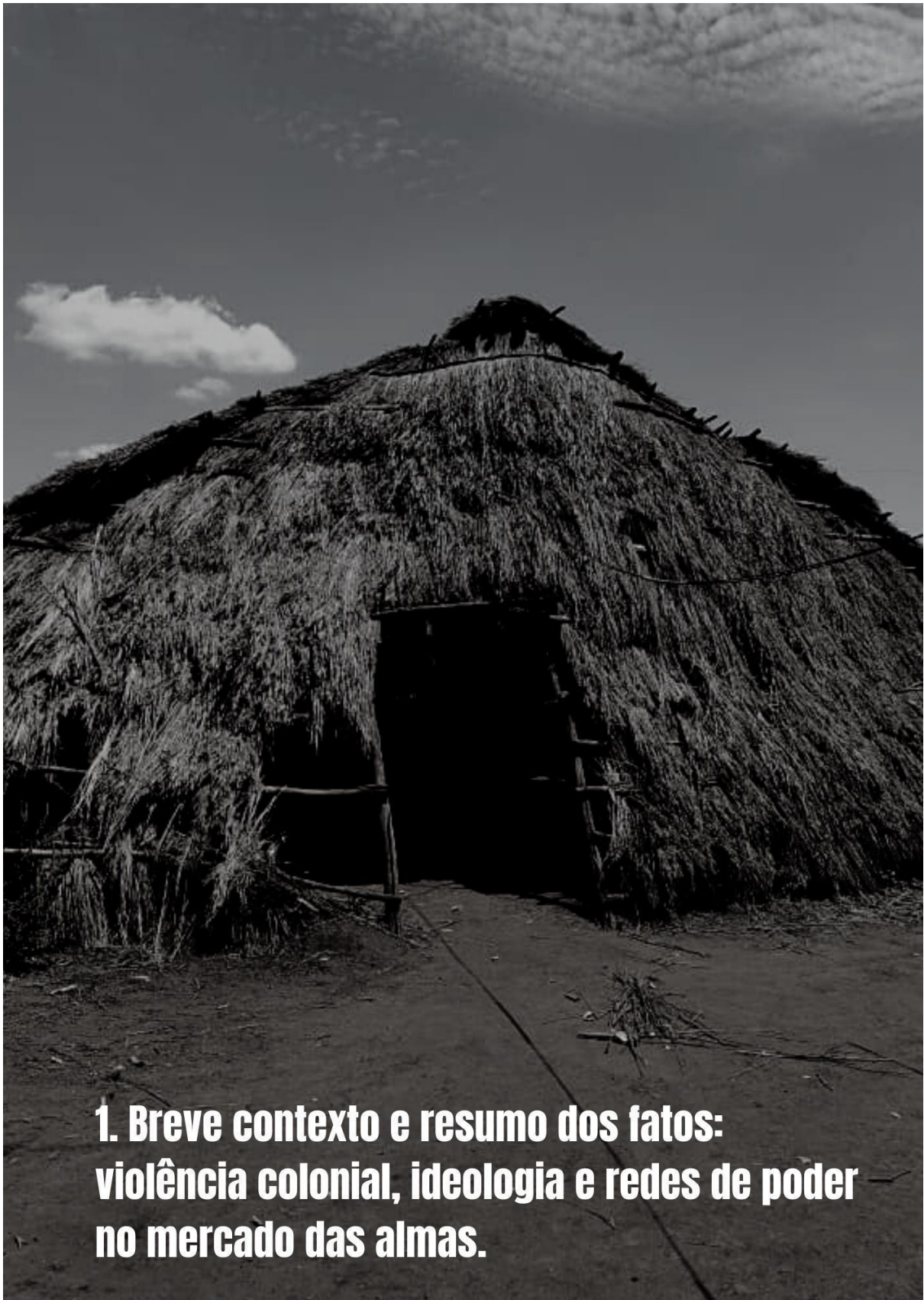
The burning of healing houses and the persecution, threatening and torture suffered by *nhanderu* and *nhandesy* are not disconnected from the historical reality of our people's decimation. The term “índio” itself, taught in history classes of our schools is one of the consequences of colonialism, for classifying hundreds of native peoples is a demonstration of the colonial exercise of power. The evangelising history is a process of erasing our own history and its consequences to our ways of life are very serious, since all the rules already mentioned above, established by the pentecostal church Deus é Amor and the Bible itself, become instruments capable of modifying indigenous communities in exchange for the idea of the “salvation of the soul”. It is responsible for silencing and erasing our history: for the genocide of our people. The colonial violence between native peoples, the Church and the State is a necessary debate, for demonising our traditional ways is part of the catechism process since the religious missions. Catechism now follows even more strict religious rules and doctrines, such as those coming from pentecostal church Deus é Amor and along with Brazilian government discourses, it still contributes to divide indigenous peoples - a process expressed in the precept “Deus acima de tudo, Brasil acima de todos” (God above everything, Brazil above all).

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This makes the evangelising process even stronger, for the current president encourages the access of missionaries to indigenous territories, as well as of military forces, and they both started occupying indigenist public institutions, such as Fundação Nacional Do Índio.

In 2016, United Nations special rapporteur Victoria Talli-Corpus, after her visit to Brazil, observed in her report that the indigenous peoples of the country live under total violence and in the absence of rights, among them the violence against indigenous women and children (UN 2016).

The words and narratives of the ancient women interviewed by Kuñangue Aty Guasu and by O.K.A along with DRDH directly exemplify this argument. Therefore, these are not *internal conflicts*: they show us the most cruel faces of colonialism.



**1. Breve contexto e resumo dos fatos:  
violência colonial, ideologia e redes de poder  
no mercado das almas.**

**1. Brief context and summary of facts: colonial violence, ideology and networks of power at mercado das almas**



Kuñangue Aty Guasu, created in 2006, actively supports the construction of traditional medicine houses/ healing houses / prayer houses in distinct *tekoha* of Kaiowá and Guarani people, in different southern regions of Mato Grosso do Sul. The houses are traditional heritages from Kaiowá and Guarani people: a place of healing, of encounters, of gatherings, of sacred rituals and of connection with the ancestry of our people. The *nhandesy* and *nhanderu* affirm that the houses, according to the ancestral point of view, represent our body and since ancient times they embody big collective housing spaces, sheltering a complex network of practices and knowledge. Some of the Kaiowá and Guarani rituals resisting the epistemicide of our people's native sacredness still happening inside these traditional spaces (*oga pysy*), are: 1) *jerosy puku* and *avati kyry*, which compose the baptism of the corn; 2) *jeroky guasu*, in reference to great religious rituals; 3) *nhemongarai*, the baptism of children; 4) *kunumi pepy* and *kunhã tai*, rituals of the boy and the young girl.



Building of ceremonial house in the indigenous territory of Laranjeira Nhanderu I, Rio Brilhante city, January of 2022. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's O.K.A.

The practices and knowledge related to self-care, as well as to the natural healing through the use of herbs cultivated in the field or near riverbanks, also known as the Kaiowá and Guarani traditional medicine, are also carried out inside these spaces. Among the houses founded by Kuñangue Aty Guasu, is the traditional medicine house placed in the Amamba Indigenous Reserve - MS. This is one of the spaces that are constantly menaced by members of the Church as demonstrated in the following survey, which contains information that is

already part of the database from the Report *Corpos Silenciados, vozes presentes: A violência no olhar das mulheres Kaiowa e Guarani* produced by Kuñangue Aty Guasu.<sup>7</sup>

The physical structures, as well as their spiritual guardians and grounds, *teko jara* (guardians of our ways of existing) and prayers are at risk in consequence of the evangelism process that is spreading very fast in Kaiowá and Guarani territories. The numeral churches existent in our territories, known as **Pentecostal Deus é Amor**, are extensions of a national office from São Paulo. In other words, new church models existing in Kaiowá and Guarani territories are from São Paulo; they preach rules and a violent doctrine, mainly concerning indigenous women's bodies and decide what women should or shouldn't be/follow. Therefore, under the influence of the church they rigorously follow the rules that disrupt the Kaiowá and Guarani traditional sacredness (*ore reko* - our way of existing), and through the assimilation of this doctrine, they start judging the prays, the traditional clothings and houses as if they were part of “Devil's work”.

There is a network of pentecostal church branches inside all Kaiowá and Guarani territories: all these small religious units are in each municipality where they also practice the Lord's Supper ritual, which means drink the blood and eat the body of Jesus Christ. These rules and doctrines violently distort the thoughts, experiences and Kaiowá and Guarani ways of life. According to the information obtained in territories where the healing houses were burnt, there are factors indicating that members and pastors of these churches are responsible for it, also delivering degrading, racist and violent speeches regarding the healing houses. They use the narrative that the healing house, our traditional space, is an *evil* place and needs to be exterminated, creating an isolating gap between the traditional and the *karai* pentecostal worlds.

In other words, the *karai* doctrine colonises our traditional ways of life and healing houses become forbidden places. The hate speech expands itself until it gives place to the burning of the healing houses and to threats of homicide against *nhanderus* and of femicide against *nhandesys*. These speeches keep being repeated among relatives who are not members of the pentecostal church themselves, but who talk a lot about the sorcery as an evil coming from the healing houses. They also mention the act of “throwing oneself at Jesus Christ's feet” as an act of “salvation of ones soul”: Jesus Christ is supposedly coming back and people would need to choose between heaven and

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<sup>7</sup> See: <https://www.kunangue.com/mapeamento-da-viol%C3%Aancia>

hell. Therefore, these colonised, indoctrinated minds, ruled by Pentecostal Deus é Amor Church start occupying positions of power and decision inside the community as leadership figures and so on. They are thereby established as violators of our original rights as native peoples, violating not only our traditional sacredness but all those who follow the *ore reko*.

In all the cases approached here, narratives arise from the recent fieldwork carried out by Observatório da Kunangue Aty Guasu, created in January 2022, together with the extensive Kuñangue Aty Guasu work which started sixteen years ago. Basic notions expressed in the territories indicate the existence of **external articulating agents** - in general, *non-indigenous* pastors/managers/missionaries - who promote the practices of violence described here and stimulate the grooming of people residing in the villages as a method of outsourcing the violations.

In the year of 2021, Kuñangue Aty Guasu monitored **six healing houses** that **were burnt** due to religious racism. Before the event, verbal intimidations/threats regarding these traditional spaces were made, coming from distinct places, including from people who apparently lived inside the community itself.



Medicine house burnt down, indigenous territory of Ytai, municipality of Douradina, December 29th, 2021. Source: Kuñangue Aty

Guasu social media.

Kaiowá and Guarani people recognize in the *karai kuera reko* - the non-indigenous way of existence - different elements introduced by colonial institutions and structures,



which include the **church as a disruptive factor also responsible for creating divisionism in the interior of the villages**. The introduction of churches provokes the distancing and prohibition of the traditional way of life and brings *karai* (non-indigenous people) ways of life closer.

The burning of traditional healing houses brought many consequences to the *nhandesy*, also reaching the collectivity as a whole - their physical, spiritual and psychological bodies, contributing to the extermination of ancestral medicine and of traditional practices performed by midwives, prayers and ancient Kaiowá and Guarani women. There are no **psychosocial studies** about the impacts of this violence on the health of the *nhandesy* and other traditional communities members, caused by the burning of the healing houses. Sensibility is thus very necessary: a sensitive listening to the *nhandesy words* - who are the most affected by this violence and whose narratives are the most important to a detailed diagnosis of **religious racism and intolerance**.



When these traditional spaces are exterminated/burnt, there is a great material loss in terms of investment. Because of advanced soil deforestation and exploitation, raw materials are no longer available, so part of the physical structure used in the construction of the healing house needs to be

Building of *Oga pisy* in the indigenous territory of Ñanderu Marangatu, Antônio João city, January of 2022. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's territory visit.

purchased by Kuñangue Aty Guasu. Through collective fund-raising Kaiowá and Guarani women leading KAG (Kuñangue Aty Guasu) are able to gather the necessary resources to be used in the reconstruction of the healing and traditional medicine houses. All the expenses are accordingly registered and validated via invoices.

As a consequence of the biodiversity socio-environmental devastation in MS, provoked by agribusiness and extractivism, *sapé*, one of the most important materials used in the coverage of this traditional building, is at risk of extinction. The little which still remains can be found along highways and private spaces, and Kuñangue invests in fuel, food, freight and tools to guarantee the materials for the construction of the healing houses in Kaiowá and

Guarani territories. The expenses concerning each traditional space are around 20 to 25 thousand reais, during a construction period of three to six months. Therefore, when the healing houses are burnt, beyond the spiritual, ancestral, physical, psychological violence, there are also material/financial damages.



Kuñangue Aty Guasu denounced it and claimed through the report *Corpos Silenciados, vozes presentes: A violência no olhar das Mulheres Kaiowa e Guarani*, as well as through all its final assembly reports, the continuous investigation of all violence against girls, young women, women and *nhandesy* inside these sacred spaces. Through these documents, Kuñangue Aty Guasu makes Kaiowá and Guarani women visible, as well as their claims against pentecostal churches for inciting hatred against their culture, specially against their traditional care practices and those who perform them,

Abused woman during data collection for Making Violence Visible Map.

such as the *nhandesy* and *nhanderu*.

Other churches are also mentioned, including in the Anthropological Reports already made by NUPIIR (Núcleo Institucional De Promoção E Defesa Dos Povos Indígenas E Da Igualdade Racial E Étnica), such as Missão Evangélica Presbiteriana Caiuá, which is a church directly related to the aggressors of one of the *nhandesy* from the Amambai Reserve. According to the report, in relation to *nhandesy* Lúcia - Christian name *Kunha Yvoty*: "the Presbyterian religion didn't accept the fact that she would perform traditional Kaiowa practices, such as chants, prayers and dances, and that she would also take care of women from her community, specially pregnant women, an activity that has always been part of her existence as a person [...]" (Anzoategui & Maciel de Souza, 2017)<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> DE SANTANA ANZOATEGUI, Priscila; DE SOUZA, Jéssica Maciel. Laudo Antropológico dos autos nº 0900011-84.2020. 8.12. 00004 (Medida Protetiva de Urgência-Lei Maria da Penha-Ameaça) e autos nº 0001193-33.2020. 8.12. 0004 (Descumprimento de Medida Protetiva), do Poder Judiciário do Estado de Mato Grosso do Sul. Ver: <https://caterinas.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Laudo-antropologico.-Dona-Lucia-finalizado.pdf>

In 2021, Kuñangue received a lot of material coming from different *tekohas* registered by the families of the victims of religious intolerance. On the videos, it is possible to visualize women being bitten, tortured and threaten; in the audio records the hatred and its encouragement become clear. There, ancient women and men are accused of being "sorcerers, witches and *macumbeiras*<sup>9</sup>" and of being responsible for the deaths and illnesses reaching indigenous Kaiowá and Guarani communities. This hatred speech has been contributing to the increase of violence in the territories.

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The big chiefs of these churches reaching Kaiowá and Guarani indigenous territories and the chiefs in territory who practise these actions against our traditional ways must be investigated for demonising our traditional Kaiowá and Guarani ways of living, as already reported. This is followed by violent attacks against our traditions and the places where we practice them - such as the healing houses. Evidence suggests that they are responsible for teaching the values carried out by their followers, who are acting against traditional women, specially those who maintain the indigenous culture alive: such as the *nhandesy*. According to the reposts obtained in the field, they are said to be "witches" and therefore they should be **killed**.

The Federal Constitution of 1988 (CF88) guarantees the **fundamental right to freedom of religion** which was expressly ensured by the letter of the law, once this freedom is part of the list of fundamental rights. The item VII of article 5 stipulates nobody will be deprived of rights due to religious beliefs or philosophical or political convictions, unless they are evoked to exempt someone from legal obligations imposed to all, refusing to comply with alternative ways of rendering the services fixed by the law.

Therefore, we requested Ministério Público Federal to open an investigation, monitored by Kuñangue Aty Guasu, and we request DPU and DPE to work accordingly in order to render all those involved in these actions responsible, including those behind the violent religious racism (religious leaders, community leaders, institutions etc).

In Kaiowá and Guarani communities exist a great number of affiliates of Pentecostal Deus é Amor Church, whose central office is located in São Paulo. Those who attend this church are pointed out by the victims as one of the main agents of religious racism,

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<sup>9</sup> It is important to deconstruct this word, once it is being used in a pejorative form and it has no connection to what is being produced about it. Macumba means an ancient percussion instrument of African origin, once used in *terreiros* of Afro-Brazilian cults.

practising religious intolerance and stimulating the burning of healing houses. It is urgent to start a dialogue with those church leaders and with this national religious network whose followers are inside our communities, for each community has its own leader and this person should also comply with the protection of traditional spaces. In part of the collected cases, leaderships/captaincy are involved in the fires, either by omission or encouragement. Since they are connected to these religious spaces, we understand these leaderships/captaincy should also be investigated.

In this report, we intend to offer a brief understanding of the elements necessary to comprehend the problem presented in the sections "introduction" and "brief context and summary of facts". Subsequently, we bring religious racism and religious intolerance elements, as well as its legal support and the updated list containing the healing houses burnt down. In the third part, we report a compilation and a systematisation of materials collected during the three days spent in territory and we indicate some potential victims we were in contact with along our trajectory. In the fourth part, we present the public document reporting the religious intolerance crime. In the fifth item, we show some of the visual memories of themes approached in this report. Finally, by way of conclusion, we present recommendations and referrals about this theme that is so important and painful to our communities, which is the burning of our sacredness, the deletion of our histories, memories, chants, prays, experiences, of our Kaiowá and Guarani way of being.

## **2. Religious racism and religious intolerance**

The Penal Code has no typification for "Religious racism", although it is mentioned in Law n.º 7.716 law, dated January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1989 and amended by Law n.º 9.459 on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1997. These laws deal precisely with discrimination or prejudice based on race, color, ethnicity, religion or national origin.

There are no reports of religious freedom violations in the country, in 552 years, practised in indigenous communities against our traditional way (language, customs and traditions). Yet, there is abundant data about religious racism in African origin religions<sup>10</sup>, which can serve as a benchmark for the cases covered in this report.

On that basis, we address the burning of ceremonial houses, the violence in our communities, who the great leaders of these churches located in indigenous territory are. We bring unprecedented data on racism and religious intolerance in indigenous communities, which will provide segments to fundamental referrals to traditional spaces, to threatened *nhandesys* and *nhanderus*, and to all those involved.

To deconstruct racism and to seek support and protection for victims of religious intolerance in Brazil, before an evangelical bench who moves in the National Congress<sup>11</sup>,



before a president who preach his white heroism, with Christianization discourses “God above all, Brazil above everyone”, before a country which calls itself laic. It’s been a long and unsuccessful battle of all the several religions who fight against hate, phobia and violence practised against their ways of organisation. Racism and religious intolerance against six burned ceremonial houses and countless ravished women together with their families. Furthermore, three of the twelve ceremonial houses built with collective efforts and Kuñangue Aty Guasu support were burned (one in Amambai and another two in Rancho Jacaré).

The ways of organising, rituals, medicinal cures, spiritual care, traditional knowledge, sacred instruments, that are now brought into question, are demonised by a conservative structure that is gaining strength in the Brazilian National Congress, mainly by evangelical caucus and rural caucus members. We hope to demonstrate on the following pages how prejudice against our traditional rituals is followed by racism and racial injury against our people.

It seems that this particular church fights a spiritual war against the figure of the “devil”, whose manifestations vary. Through a strict regimen, all its followers cannot frequent traditional spaces and live their indigenous people's customs and traditions. This undermines/weakens e causes a distancing from *ore reko* (our way of being), even because it affects female shamans of our communities, deemed as “witches” and all sorts of other pejorative adjectives.

We understand that demonising our sacred chants, churches weaken Kaiowá and Guarani forms of resistance. Sacred chants are fundamental elements for an objective and subjective strengthening of our communities.

We want to clarify that we are not judging any religion: we respect the freedom of each one who believes in these churches. What we question is the lack of respect, the persecution, discrimination, hate against our traditional ways. It is necessary to respect our indigenous way of being.

10. See statistic data and other information in:

<https://www.nexojournal.com.br/expresso/2022/01/21/O-que-%C3%A9-racismo-religioso.-E-qual-seu-efeito-nas-crian%C3%A7as>

11. <https://www.politize.com.br/bancadas-tematicas/>

From November 2020 to February 2021, during in field construction of the **Violence Map (Mapping Violence?)**, we reported 21 beating, torture, psychological violence and persecution of female shamans and *nhandesys* who practice traditional care cases. They were judged in public, their houses burnt, they were expelled from the community, humiliated, condemned as “witches” and “sorcerers”.

Videos circulated on virtual networks with scenes of extreme violence against these women. Kuñangue Aty Guasy sought legal support, reporting to the Federal Public Ministry, launching public demonstrations, repudiating all acts performed (see section **Documentos protocolados pela Kuñangue Aty Guasu nas instâncias jurídicas** section in this report).

Judicialization of the accused was done, but so far no case was referred concretely by these practices against our traditional way.

Our cries for help on the protection of our sacred, our mothers, grandmothers, female shamans, midwives, have already echoed around the world. We insist that all crimes committed against our bodies, our way of being, continue to be investigated, as we ask all authors, great leaders of these churches to be held accountable.



Kuñangue Aty Guasu's Annual Event, Brasília, August of 2022.  
Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's audiovisual team.

## 2.1 Updated list of burned ceremonial houses (February 2022)

<i>Tekoha</i>	<i>Burned Oga Pysy</i>	<i>Burned Chiru</i>	<i>Nhanderu/  Nhandesy</i>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Year</b>
Rancho Jacaré	1	1	Cassiano	Laguna Carapã	2014
Jaguapire	1	1	José Benites	Tacuru	2014
Kurusu Amba	1			Coronel Sapucaia	2015
Apyka'i	1			Dourados	2016

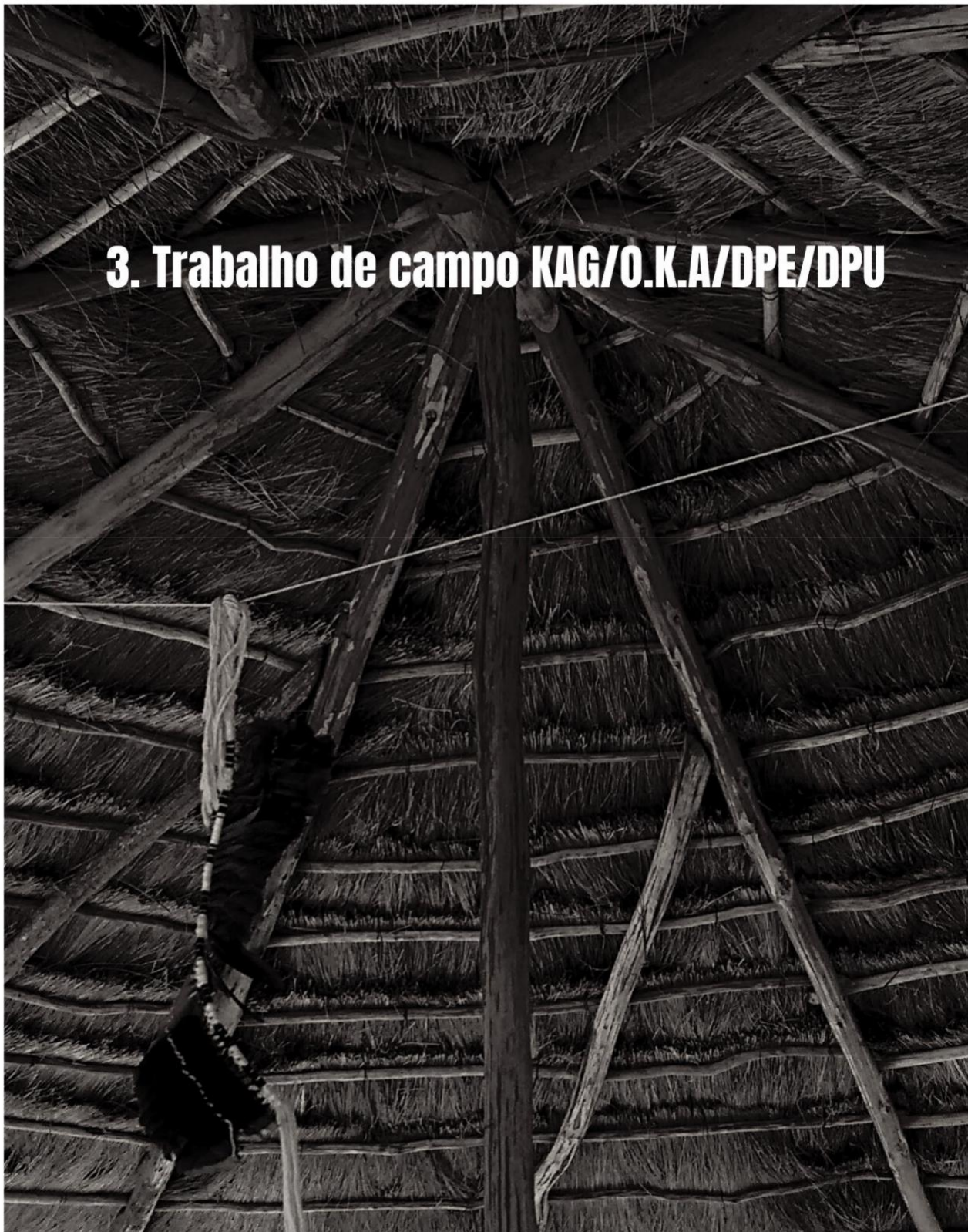
Jaguapire	1			Tacuru	2018
Jaguapiru	1	1	Getúlio	Dourados	2019
Guaiviry	1			Aral Moreira	2020
Avaete	1		Iracema Oliveira	Dourados	2021
Rancho Jacaré	1		Martina Almeida	Laguna Carapã	2021
Takuapiry	1			Coronel Sapucaia	2021
Amambai	1		Nilza	Amambai	2021
Rancho Jacaré	1		Cassiano	Laguna Carapã	2021
Guapo'y	1			Amambai	2021
Jaguapire	1			Tacuru	2020

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Laranjeira Nhanderu	1		Luis	Rio Brilhante	2020
Itay	1	1	Joel	Douradina	2022
Jaguapire	1				2020



### **3. Trabalho de campo KAG/O.K.A/DPE/DPU**







**GUAPO'Y , AMAMBAI-MS.**

### 3. KAG/O.K.A/DPU/DPE Fieldwork

What follows is a list of burned ceremonial houses which we helped to build and are located in our territory. This territory was selected for the start of the fieldwork and surveys conducted by Kuñangue Aty Guasu, O.K.A. e DPE/NUPIIR in the order listed:

**1. Ceremonial house of Amambai Indigenous Reserve (Guapo'y Village) burnt down on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021;**

**2. Ceremonial house of Rancho Jacaré Indigenous Land (Laguna Caarapã municipality) burnt down on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021; On August 19<sup>th</sup>, shaman Cassiano's house (residential) had also been burned down.**

**3. Ceremonial house of reclaimed Itay Ka'agwyrusu (Douradina municipality) burnt down on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021.**

It is widely known, therefore, that the *ogá psy* connect different kinships to each other throughout the large Kaiowá and Guarani territory. It can be defined originally linked to the word "[...] *oga ypy sy*, 'mother house of the origins,' intended for ritual use and as a symbol of ethnic differentiation [...], the most appropriate place to keep the *chiru*" (Mura, p. 334). The construction of knowledge in anthropology, in the case of the study of Guarani and Kaiowá peoples' reality, has direct links to the word and existence of elders and shamans such as the *nhandesy* cited here.

#### 3.1 Amambai Indigenous Reserve-MS – Guapo'y Village

February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Amambai Indigenous Reserve was named Reserve in 1915 by the SPI (Indigenous Protection System) and consists of an area of 2.441 hectares, with a population of approximately 8,000 people, located in Amambai-MS municipality.

Anthropological records and studies conducted by indigenous and non-indigenous researchers (Valiente & Pereira, 2017)<sup>12</sup>, confirmed through dialogue with the local captaincy and vice-captaincy, point to the existence of at least 60 churches operating in the Guapo'y village, mostly Pentecostal. In this locality, the main threats and violations resulting from direct aggression against sacred Guarani and Kaiowá symbols observed in this fieldwork are subdivided between the recent burning of *nhandesy* Nilza's ceremonial house and the case of *nhandesy* Kunha Yvoty, current guardian of the 1<sup>st</sup> house of traditional medicine in the Amambay Indigenous Reserve. Regarding these facts, we will now present our analysis, experience and records carried out to support the actions for reparation and punishment of the real culprits responsible for the introduction of Pentecostal churches into Guarani and Kaiowá territories.

### 3.1.1 *Nhandesy* Dna. Nilza Roa, 46 years, Kaiowá and Guarani ethnicity

The *nhandesy* Nilza is one of the companions threatened for practising the traditional way of being. Through Kaiowá and Guarani chants and natural/traditional medicine, she cares for other *nhandesy* and *nhanderu* from the surrounding area of Amambai and other regions of our people when they are ill: she is a *hechakary* (female shamans who perform the healings through chants, with the great spiritual guardians, such as *Jary Guasu* and *Ñande Ramõi*).

In addition, Ms Nilza is an aggregator in her community, as she takes care of a large number of relatives, including children. In Ms. Nilza's *tekoha*, there is a field (*kokue*), which contributes to the sustenance of the people, maintained by the existence of her figure. The ceremonial house is a fundamental element in the life and care of Ms Nilza, as it is the space par excellence in which this *nhandesy* carries out all these affectionate and caring activities: the *ogá pysy* keeps the community life going. Ms Nilza also told us that, in the past, the ceremonial house was a dwelling place, with hammocks. There were baptisms in this space - of seeds and children, as well as care for the sick.

For these diverse and significant reasons and despite the economic difficulties, Ms Nilza built the ceremonial house with all the resources she had. As there is no wood in the region, she spent R\$1,300 on eucalyptus and other small materials and Kuñangue Aty Guasu supported part of this process with food and resources to buy the missing wood. These facts also illustrate the profound imbalances and impacts caused by the ecology and diversity devastation in the region, given the impossibility of the ancestral use and management of certain varieties of trees originally used for the construction of the *ogá pysy*.

In other words, with the destruction of the surrounding forests, it becomes necessary to spend financial resources to raise the house and use inappropriate wood that is not properly resistant for the structure. The same occurs with the use and preparation of the “sapé”, given the difficulty of finding it in quantity in the region, involving large freights and displacements for its handling and sustainable extraction. Originally, for example, Aroeira was a tree used as base wood for the construction of the ceremonial house.

The ceremonial house was burnt down in September 2021, which is a crime indication. According to sources found by Kuñangue Aty Guasu and the O.K.A, the person who burned the house belongs to the indigenous community, and mobilises a very strong discourse that Dona Nilza's ceremonial house was a space of evil practices, witchcraft, "macumbaria", a discourse equally mobilised by the **God is Love Church**. Dona Nilza was deeply shaken, psychologically affected, and fears a second attack on her family and on the space that she is struggling to rebuild again, because the threats continue. According to the captaincy of the Amambai community, the facts were ascertained and there was a report made by FUNAI. However, the captaincy did not have the report it supposedly itself articulated for the FUNAI registry. Dona Nilza does not have a copy of it either, and it is not known what was forwarded.

The local captaincy, therefore, claims to have supposedly established the facts, but failed to forward them - there would be no plan in practice to ensure the protection of the *nhandesy* women under threat of femicide or even of the protection of the traditional house. The captain said that before assuming the Amambai captaincy he was a pastor of the **God is Love Church**. The vice-captain continues to act as pastor in the same church.





There have been political promises from members of parliament from the Amambai municipality, but to date, at the time of writing this report, there has been no return. Every time the Kuñangue Aty Guasu visited Ms. Nilza, she was under many threats, intimidated, fearing for her life and that of her family and wanting to leave for her own survival, without any security, judged and condemned for being a *hechakary*.

Without the space of the ceremonial house in Amambai, Mrs Nilza says she has enormous difficulties in continuing to care

*Nhandesy* Dona Nilza's *Oga Pysy* being burnt down (October of 2021). Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's Social Media.

for other people or to perform rituals that are important for the Kaiowá and Guarani culture, such as the *Jerosy Puku/Avati Kyry* (white corn baptism). In summary, the burning of the ceremonial house means an irreparable ancestral loss, a violated original right, because together with the burned ceremonial house, the fire consumes other ancient objects from generations of shamans who have already passed away, which were left as inheritance to the current female shamans.

It becomes evident, when we analyse the slowness and negligence in ascertaining the facts on the part of local authorities, the existence of a relation between power networks involving the Church in question, the captaincies, the public authorities and large landowners of the region - each case also comes with clear links to the advance of leasing for soybean plantation, for example, as we shall see with the *nhandesy* Kuña Yvoty.

12. VALIENTE, Celuniel Aquino; PEREIRA, Levi Marques. Una breve descripción acerca de los kaiowá y guarani evangelicos en la reserva de Amambaí (2017): elementos historicos y sociopoliticos. **Revista Euroamericana de Antropología**, n. 4, p. 22-29, 2017.
13. For example, *petiy' ,tembeta'y, tajy, yvyraro, arueira kyre*.

### 3.1.2 *Nhandesy* Kuña Yvoty

Kuña Yvoty is one of the Kaiowá and Guarani people's *nhandesy* that Kuñangue Aty Guasu has been directly accompanying since 2017. It is located in Guapo'y, in the Amambai Indigenous Reserve-MS. She is the first *nhandesy* to have a traditional medicine house in MS, with support from Kuñangue Aty Guasu and other partners.

The elderly Lucia Assis Morais, 79, is a Guarani and Kaiowá indigenous woman who practices her traditional knowledge of medicinal plants, childbirth with pregnant women, cures, chants and prayers in the language of our people, and this has made her very respected by welcoming other women. In the daily struggle to maintain her identity and continue her ancestral practices, she uses her knowledge of the earth, fire, air and water in favour of the life of her people.

Accused of witchcraft by evangelical relatives linked to the Caiuá Presbyterian Evangelical Mission for practising her indigenous religiosity and having a traditional ceremonial house, she seeks support from a network of solidarity for socio-environmental and gender justice. One of her aggressors is her brother-in-law and neighbor, Rosenildo Alves Franco, who has already been convicted of domestic violence against her. Her life is still at risk.

At the beginning of 2021, Dona Lulu suffered domestic violence<sup>14</sup> on the part of her brother-in-law, married to her sister. According to what we found out, he carries a gun and plants illegally through leases - including for the cultivation of grains such as soybeans - using pesticides in the Amambai Indigenous Land (MS). Because of their proximity to the village captain, the local indigenous police, set up like a militia, threaten and try to



*Nhandesy* Dna. Lulu in the middle of traditional medicinal plants of her *tekoha*, Amambai village, Amambai city, December, 16th 2021. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's Fieldwork.

coerce the elderly woman into abandoning her residence, her territory and her traditional knowledge. Ms Lulu begs for safety:

I have come to tell you that I am suffering because of the disrespect shown to my chant. Here inside the village, I suffer. They are favouring the man who attacks me, they are covering up for the aggressor. I cry to you for help. People persecute me, call me a “macumbeira”, a witch, a monkey, a bugio, but I don't harm anyone. I am suffering a lot. Get him away from us. I need help to get the aggressor away from my house, where I live.

The report, one of the first to be anchored in the Maria da Penha Law for indigenous issues in the State, reveals in interviews with indigenous women from Amambai that more

than 60 Pentecostal churches are operating in the region. Because they do not accept indigenous religiosity, members of the Pentecostal churches invest in violence to try to "convert" them. One of the elderly woman's grandchildren suffers a lot of prejudice for being LGBTQIA+. According to the document, many indigenous families have become adept to Pentecostalism in this process, as in the historic Jesuit missions that participated in the ethnocide of peoples in the vast territory currently occupied by the Brazilian State.

Contained in the anthropological report that deals with the specific case of the nhandesy Kuña Yvoty:

It was at this juncture that many extended families converted to Pentecostalism; however, this Karaí (non-Indians) religious system was not incorporated in its entirety, as the number of churches multiplied, each one taking on a format of the extended family or kinship group, giving new meaning to these new spaces linked to faith. Most of the research that addresses this theme refers to the expansion of Neo Pentecostal churches in the Dourados Indian Reserve (RID). (Anzoategui & Maciel de Souza, 2017)<sup>15</sup>

14. Nowadays Ms. Lulu is protected by protective measures. The process is in the hands of the State Public Defender's Office.

15. DE SANTANA ANZOATEGUI, Priscila; DE SOUZA, Jéssica Maciel. Laudo Antropológico dos autos nº 0900011-

84.2020. 8.12. 00004 (Medida Protetiva de Urgência-Lei Maria da Penha-Ameaça) e autos nº 0001193-33.2020. 8.12. 0004 (Descumprimento de Medida Protetiva), do Poder Judiciário do Estado de Mato Grosso do Sul. Ver:

<https://catarinas.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Laudo-antropologico.-Dona-Lucia-finalizado.pdf>

Kunangue aty Guasu published a report denouncing persecution, torture and beating practiced by members of church Deus é Amor and others actives around Brazil and in our territories:

*Those women have their hair cut by knife, carry deep bruises on their heads and in other parts of the body. On the sentences of neopentecostais, their knees can be seen bloodstained, their houses are burned, they are thrown out of communities and carry traumas of brutal psychological violence with them, fearing to be burned alive, hanged and killed. They're insulted of being witches and wizards, according to the document.*

Videos directed to Kunangue Aty Guasu on 8th of August of this year, shows men who went to the ceremonial house of nhandesy to threaten her. Five days later, the Court of Justice determined an online session to reconcile which was not possible due absence of both sides. On 20th of August, the substituted judge who is acting on 1st jurisdiction of Amambai, Sabrina Rocha Margarido João, requested the conclusion of the legal proceedings.

Nhandesy Lulu is an important person for being a shaman and a midwife. She is being threatened by a relative who doesn't accept her tradition, her chants. She has been called a witch, and is antagonized for practicing her tradition within the territory. Legal action has been made, however the justice is still slow. It is difficult to see her without going around her territory. She welcomes the people and is an important person within the territory. She is an elder and many of rights have been curbed: women rights, elderly rights, a right to practice her religion – there are several stolen rights..

Kuna Yvoty is counselor of Kunangue Aty Guasu, Kaiowa and Guarani Women's Council, and participates in meetings of women to strengthen the fight by indigenous women rights. She guides the young, shows the best path, and believes in the collective organization of teko porá (the well-being). To become a nhandesy, the guardian of culture and traditional knowledge, D Lulu dedicated her life to study the knowledge and blessings which bring cure, a very admired and valuable action amongst indigenous peoples.



The importance of not tagging the case as a simple fight between neighbors and the need of effective protection to the Nhandesys concerns the need of the accountability of the Brazilian State, as for the previous and next cases, due the complicity, promotion and articulation of these aggressions by intervention and internal destructuring in the communities. That includes the lack of responsibility of municipal and political forces, for instance, in Amambai, D Lulu's reliable therapist was fired.

*Nhandesy Dna. Lulu's healing house's entrance, Amambai village, Amambai city, December 16th 2021. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's Fieldwork.*



Other women reported to be afraid just by being members of Kuñangue Aty Guasu or by searching for a more democratic leader. Like other testimonies collected (listen to audios of nhandesy in Amambai, Rancho Jacare and Itay in this report), there is in Dna. Lulu's case, a pattern of slander against her, in this case connecting her figure to soy plantation: this nhandesy would be doing witchcraft and must be killed. For this reason Dna. Lulu says she does her chants whispering because she does not feel comfortable inside of her own house. She also does not feel safe with the security of the territory. Dna. Lulu says she's pleased with the legal support she's been receiving because this prevents further aggressions.

### 3.1.3 Meeting with “capitania” of Indigenous Reserve of Amambai (Aldeia Guapo'y)

To introduce the reports regarding the meeting with **capitania** of Reserva of Amambai, it is important to come back to the definition of **capitania** and the undeniable fact of the relation between this system of power and the indigenous institution which established them, Indigenous Protection Service (SPI). It is a category linked with the condition of village, reserve and limitation of Guarani and Kaiowa, according to Valiente e da Palma (2017, page 131):

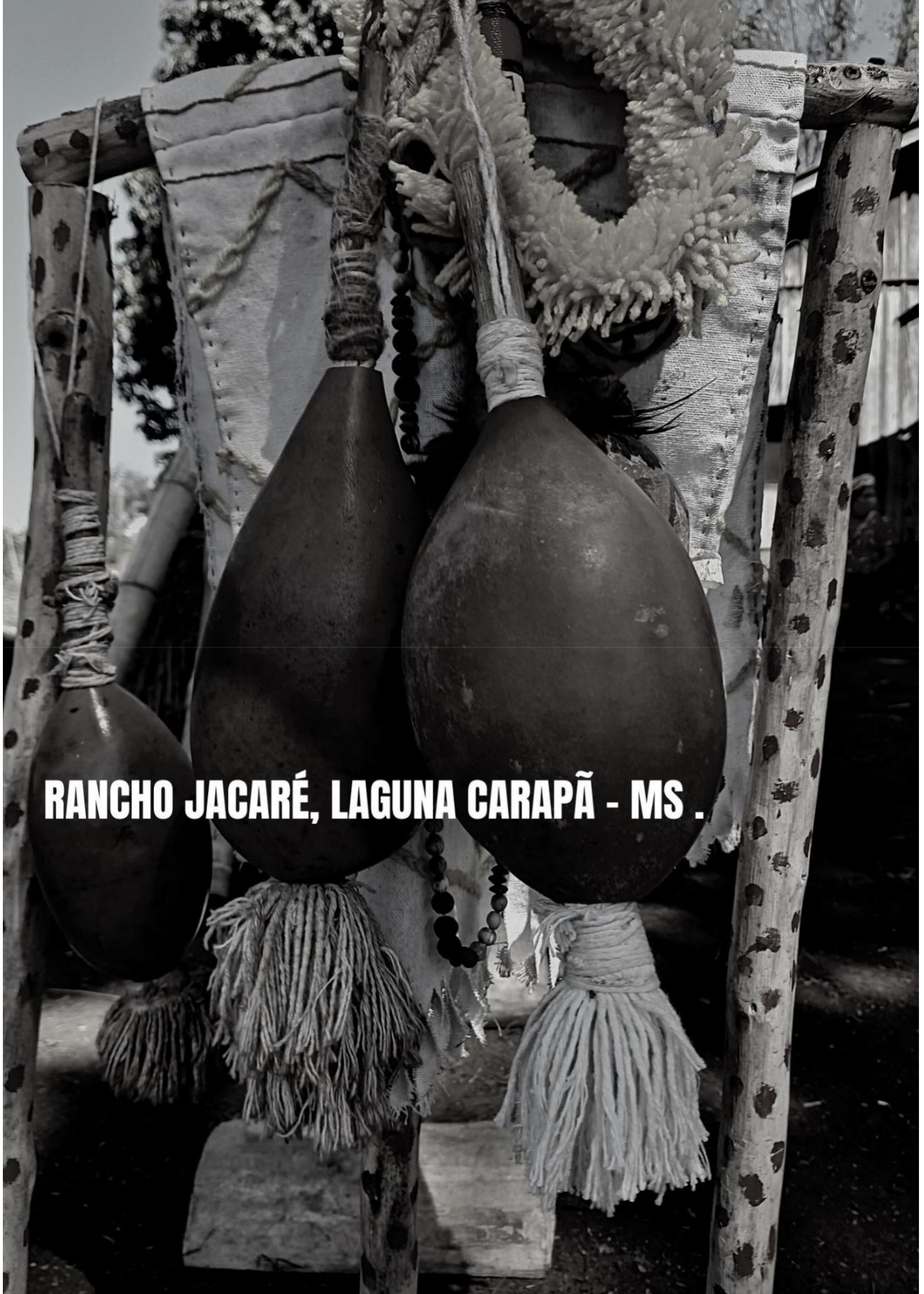
A student interviewed known as Kunumi Vera ndaju, who also works as public agent in the territory, declared that “the Captain joined the Kaiowas to substitute Ñande Ru. He got in using force and strictness with us to obey the rules that they created (Indigenous institution). Kunumi added that, in the past, each family had their Ñande Ru, and only he managed each family of Kaiowa, advised the young ones and taught them to act respecting the next one. Moreover, according to him, “the Captain made the Ñande Ru of each family disappear”, creating a unified source of power. Once taken away from the villages, a lot of Ñande Ru returned to their tekoha, however the farm had already occupied the place. As soon as they went back they were evicted and taken away to the reserve. This happened many times, until many of them gave up on returning to tekoha and decided to stay at reserve even without practicing their lifestyle.

The reports addressed by the authors are also connected to another topic as reported by nhandesys: the effects of forced removals, as we will discuss later. It is important to note the disappearance of the *ñanderu* in each family as a fact that enhances the reading of the role presented here as a disintegrator of the churches, even if, discursively, they preach the opposite. It is the representation of a new model of power, representation and control that has been working in regards to **capitania** with the public and private power since the institution of this territorialization model in order to delete the Guarani and Kaiowa.

The **capitania** can be specialized according to the analysis of the Public Prosecutor Marco Antonio Delfino de Almeida and the historian Thiago Cavalcante (2019), who deal with “the historical motivation of the ‘protection’ process and the consequent motivation of colonial structures to achieve the desired economic goals (page 41). The captain's “civilizing role” must be highlighted:

For the SPI agent, the captain should impose the standards of the capitalist rural work organization. He's someone who should be willing to obey the indigenist agency's determinations, not be ‘turbulent’ in the face of

orders from the chief of the office. Indigenous people were expected to abandon their practices and dedicate themselves to intensive agricultural production, leaving aside what was not part of the “civilized” world or the “market” world. The captain should exercise his power based on coercion to impose the civilizing project of the state. However, there was a limit point in this organization, because in order for it to be successful, the captain should maintain a good level of acceptance within the community. (Delfino de Almeida e Cavalcante, 2019, pages 56-57)



**RANCHO JACARÉ, LAGUNA CARAPÃ - MS .**

### 3.2 Indigenous area of Rancho Jacaré, municipality of Laguna Carapa, MS

Nhandesy Martina is from Guarani and Kaiowa people. Kuñangue Aty Guasu has gone along with her case, since 2017, that nowadays has been watched by O.K.A. She has been living in Rancho Jacare, municipality of Laguna Carapa, MS. In 2021, meeting the demand of nhandesy Martina Almeida, the ceremonial house was built, next to her house. The construction was possible by of Socio-environmental house background, mediated by Tonico Benite with support of Kuñangue aty Guasu. This traditional space, once ready, made possible several articulations, rituals and meetings. Dona Martina fought for the conquest of the indigenous land Rancho Jacaré from the beginning. She says that the ceremonial house is fundamental in the fight for the territory as well as they are inheritances that she intends to leave for her grandchildren and children and churches are not for that, because they are not part of our sacred, they were imposed by Karai ( non-indigenous). Martina's ceremonial house was burned down 2 months after it was inaugurated. She says that she continues to receive threats and so that this does not happen again, the ceremonial house needs to have cameras, a series of protection for these spaces. She stated that when the elderly are removed from their place in the territory they become sick to death, and this happened during the exploration of the territories Kaiowa and Guarani during the Cia Mate Laranjeira.

It is important to remember that the process of taking Rancho Jacaré up again was made in the midst of the military dictatorship. Before the ceremonial was burnt, she says that the members of church were the ones who threatened and said they would burn it, because the people have to go to the church. That way, even before the inauguration of the house there were already threats and at 11pm the house was burnt on 21st of October of 2021, and since then, she has been receiving threats. An incident report was recorded at Laguna Carapa, where those involved were summoned, heard and released and the threats continued against D Martina. The local leadership, D Roberta Vihalva, watched all the process of construction and defends the reconstruction of the house in order to strengthen the community. Roberta asserts the ceremonial houses are important because it is inside them that the community protection rituals take place, it's the strengthening of our traditions and they help the community to be healthy: "because the connection between the sky and the land are connected by chants, songs and ceremonial houses".

She says that the young people today are little involved with the ceremonial house and that there is a great involvement in the karai's world.

Of course we need to access karai's world in order to survive, but we never have to forget our ancient world, because we came from there. She's a leader today, and we need more women in this fight, we need more women who understand about laws, about ceremonial houses - Roberta's speech.

Roberta says that it is a complicated matter because the attacks to ceremonial houses come from relatives as well and all these burnt houses must be investigated, because there are no investigations about them and everyone talks about speeches of demonization of the ceremonial houses, the chants, of Kaiowa and Guarani tradition as a consequence of what is preached inside of churches.

According to our surveys, there is a network of Pentecostes churches that act in each territory. A commission of pastors, for example, names of pastors who work in Dourados were mentioned in other territories, and they are inside these communities using the name of Pentecoste Deus É Amor (God is Love). The same name was mentioned in other Kaiowá and

Guarani territories, so the pastors in indigenous Reserve of Dourados are the ones who lead in other communities. When we walk through the indigenous territories we clearly see the symbol of Pentecostes Deus É Amor in almost all Guarani and Kaiowa territories. Roberta concludes saying that these facts should be investigated, measures must be taken against the aggressors of nhandesys, she makes it clear that she goes to this church but that she understands that her Kaiowa and Guarani ancestrality is her root, although this is a individual feeling because the collective one is the demonization of the tradition. She reports a lot of violence with indigenous women at Rancho Jacaré.

Roberta and Martina are women who together face the male chauvinism at Rancho Jacaré. Martina due being a nhandesy and Roberta due being vice leadership of tekoha.

Who brought us the chants were the great spiritual chiefs, that according to our great shamans sent through the rechakary.

Each word which composes a chant has a deep meaning native/ancestor.

The chants heal, they heat the hurt soul, bring happiness, frighten away the evil, the chants bring people together, the chants connect us to several other worlds, physical and spiritual worlds, the chants...the chants of Guarani and Kaiowá!

The Guaxire is a moment of entertainment!

The jehovassa is to clean our path!

The nhembo'e is to cure the people!

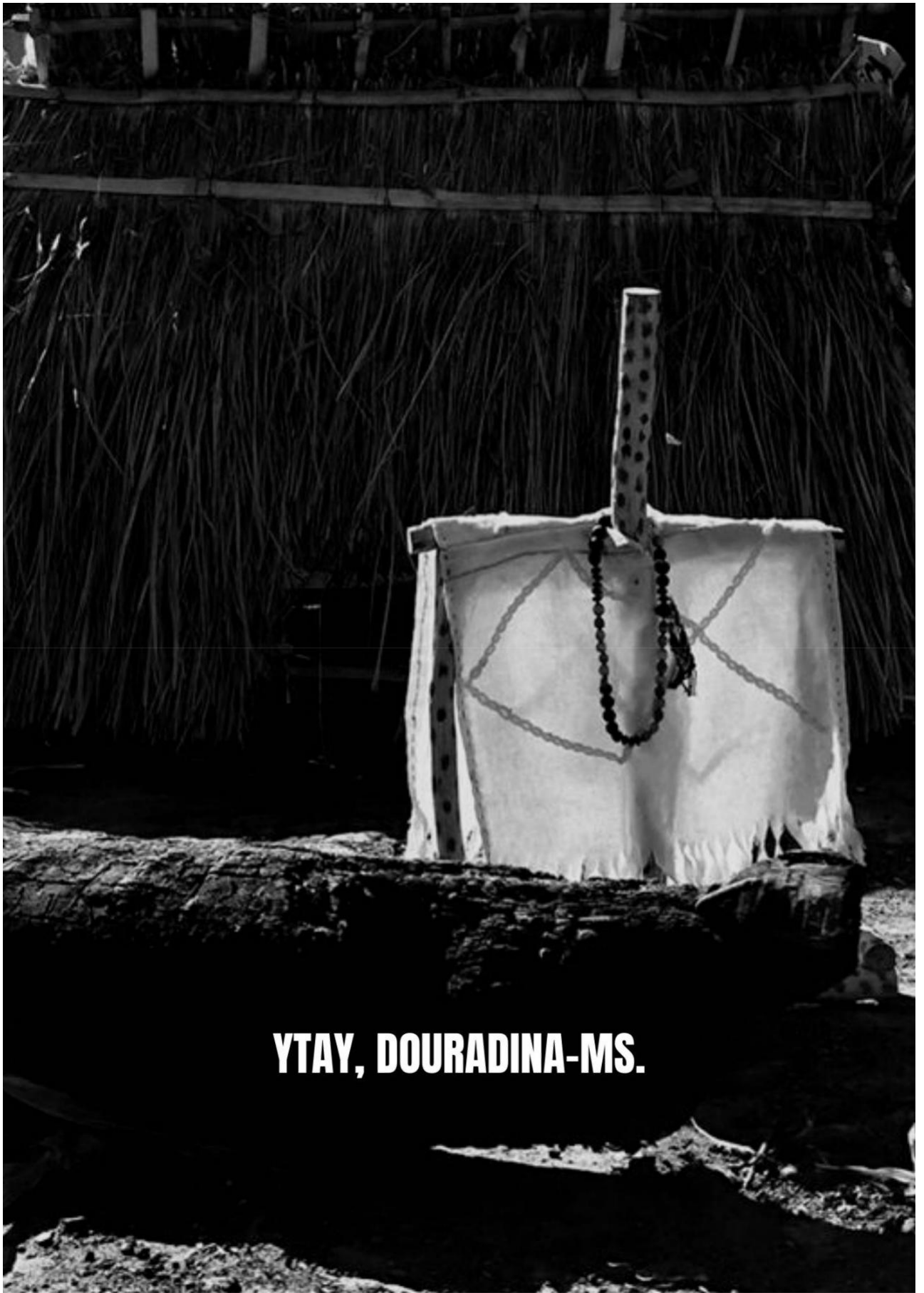
And so many others....

We need you to know this world of ours, and here we present to you our chants in other ways, with the tools of the world Karai, with the technology.

It is not because our people use your technology that we are not original peoples anymore. And yes, they are ways of giving visibility to our native world. It is necessary to respect our traditional space, we do not go around attacking the believers and destroying the churches, respect the ceremonial houses... Nhandesy Martina







**YTAY, DOURADINA-MS.**

### 3.3 Reclamation of Ytay ka' agwyusu – municipality of Douralina- MS



Chant in Itay Ka'agwyusu, February, 9th 2022. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu's audiovisual team.

Nhandesy Mboy Poti Rendiy -Teresinha Aquino 60 years old is from Guarani and Kaiowa people which Kuñangue Aty Guasu has watched daily, since 2021, and it's currently being watched by O.K.A team. She is at the reclaimed territory of Ytay, in the municipality of Douralina, MS. In this territory the situation is complex: it involves the same family and the community, split between the church and the sacred tradition. The ceremonial house of Ytay was burnt on 29th of December of 2021. Check the report of nhandesy to Kuñangue Aty Guasu and O.K.A:

Didn't I come here because I wanted to? This reclaimed territory was made for our grandsons and our great-grandsons. My partner Joel asked me: shall we together reclaim that land? We organized and joined to make this one. This land is from Nhamoi Paulito. She is Paulito's granddaughter. There were a lot of rituals here. I don't know until when I'll wait for land demarcation. Everyone who reclaimed Ytay again is dying. Even if the government doesn't want to guarantee our rights, we will resist to exist here. The indigenous reserve is different from a reclaimed territory, different experience. They are better adapted. The ceremonial house is an inheritance from ancestors that will take care and protect the communities. This is a way to bring us health because it seeks for the Guarani and Kaiowa ancestrality, as our ancestors lived. Pai Kuara has the ceremonial house and it's the extension of our Pai Kuara's protection. There's no more "taquara" or know-how to build more ceremonial houses. For this reason it is so important to keep standing these sacred houses.

She comments on witchcraft accusations. The people linked with the Pentecostes Deus É Amor and their relatives used to say that there is harm inside ceremonial houses and that she used to light candles inside the ceremonial house. She declares these statements to be

slanders. These verbal attacks contributed to the burnt of the ceremonial houses. She says that building is very complicated once not all material exists in nature and finalizes by saying that police did not check the facts as they should.

They need to respect the nhandesy and nanderu's ceremonial houses. It is a sacred space. Zezinho Aquino e Adatalina da Silva are the ones who are threatening to burn the ceremonial house, together with Daiolina, Crislaine Vera and Adilson Jorge and they did it – reported by Nhandesy Teresinha Aquino.

Nhandesy's daughters are the ones who daily kept up with all the process of construction and the burnings as reported to Kuñangue Aty Guasu and O.K.A. There are worries about the demonization of the only sacred space in that area, the spread of churches and the disputes for roles and leadership in the communities are the reasons for conflicts. They comment about the absence of judiciary, specially public institutions which act directly with indigenous people, as FUNAI. They fear for Nhandesy's lives who are threatened to death. The daughters assert that it is a very hard reconstruction; the ceremonial house due material cost, and the raw material due the devastation which happens in MS, it is quite difficult to find sapê.

We strongly resist, there is a lot of racism and prejudice, I asked my partner how much we will resist.. – Nhandesy Teresinha.

At the reclaimed territory of Ytay, the religious racism and religious intolerance as so strong that the pastors of Lagoa Rica community, in video recorded and watched by Kuñangue Aty Guasu, assert to have had a “vision” that the ceremonial house should be burnt for practicing “witchcraft”. This is a clear enticing to hate and intolerance in the presence of our traditional cultural symbols and it needs to be investigated and people must be held accountable. The religious intolerance is so serious that the community, through this ideology of being against traditional care , started to attack/wreck/destroy the tomb of a nhanderu who was buried in the entrance of the reclaimed territory, which shows the community's refusal about religious external intervention. According to Alberto:

There are 9 churches in Lagoa Rica and 3 of them are Deus É Amor , the remaining are a mixture, they are “managed“ by non-indigenous people of Douralina, Nova Alvorada and Itaporã. There are indigenous pastors as well (6). The chief there is Olisorio, who comes here, he is a pastor. Just Deus É Amor is intolerant, as the believers used to say: ”our doctrine is very strong”.

The ceremonial house burnt in Ytay community had the participation of people linked in Lagoa Rica and relatives who joined to plan and execute the crime

Between 28 and 29 of November Adilson constitute the church group, made a meeting and participated: Lisorio, Celio, D Izete, Iba, Adilson (pastor) and Anselmo (pastor) (the witnesses have photos and will send us). On that day, when the house was burnt, there was a shoot , she got scared and couldn't leave the house and when she left she saw the ceremonial house burning (at that moment the translator got emotional and said that she is not to be able to talk about this matter because is still grieving and another person starts the translation). I had courage to face and felt fear at the same time, because they have weapons. They take a shot up to intimidated us. Due this shock I have forgotten my mobile. I smelled gasoline, a very strong smell. They spilled gas and shot at it to catch on fire. We have videos of their attempt to put out the fire (referring to young people) but where there was gasoline it was difficult to

put out. The ponchito (traditional garment to the rituals) that was in the ceremonial house - it was exactly where the fire started. (Eugenia's sister)

The main point of how serious the burnings of ceremonial houses in Ytay is that people were sleeping in that space when the shots and the fire started, which could have caused serious injuries and even deaths by carbonation. People who experienced the burning of a ceremonial house in their own words are "traumatized".

And that to this day they have the after-effects from that day, they got traumatized. They sleep during the day and wake up at night, alert. Those 3 young people were sleeping inside the ceremonial house on the day it was burnt. Since Mr Joel died, the young ones did not sleep well because they stayed up watching for safety in the face of attacks, however by tiredness they slept while the house was burning. (Eugenia's sister)

The aggressions which were so far characterized only by threats and persecution became sadly true with the burning of this ceremonial house. This violent act is marked in the community's life, highlighting the young ones who faced the criminal attack and still carry the after-effects of this experience. They changed the routine by fear and had to do the security of the place, being vigilant at night and sleeping just a bit during the days.

Roberto Alziro who has already gone through the experience of being sleeping while a ceremonial house was burning, emphasizes the importance of ceremonial house to the community:

We are working on lifting the ceremonial house to continue with rituals and songs ... nhandesy and the adults are not going to be here forever so they will leave this memory of fight and resistance to the children. It's important to register that Ytay is here, standing up, and people say we're violent, but we're open to talk, to invite people to listen to the other side of the story. (Roberto Alziro)

In spite of all hurt and violence, the community of Ytay carry on aiming to fight for maintenance of culture and traditional rituals so important to Kaiowa and Guarani. The traumatic experience caused marks and altered the routine. That is exactly by reconstruction of sacred space and its protection that reside the possibility of recovery of trauma and of community. Ytay is open to dialogue, demanding liability of the aggressors and protection to ceremonial houses of crimes.



#### 4. Documents filled by Kunangue Aty Guasu in legal instances

To the Federal Public Ministry of Ponta Porã/MS

To the Federal Public Ministry of Dourados/MS

The Public Defender's Office of the State of MS

The Public Defender's Office of the Union

**Eu queria avisar voces grupos essa mulher uma traficante e macunbeira foi pego aqui na aldeia arroio cora avisa todos aldeias que esta no grupo. Elas foram expulsos daqui, por isso elas vão procurar outra aldeia. Não estou mentindo veja o foto que eu mandei pra vocês. Ela tem dois filhos o nome dela Janeti Vilhalva Silveira. Aqui quem fala o vice capitão do arroio cora. Rafael**

17:47

I want to warn you all in this group, that this woman, a drug dealer and witch was caught here in the Village Arroio Cora. Everyone in this group should be aware about that. They have been kicked out of here, so they're going to look for another Village. I'm not lying, look at the picture I sent you. She has two children and her name is Janeti Vilhalva Silveira. I am the vice Captain of Arroio Cora. Rafael.

*Tortured woman in Limão Verde/Amambai-MS, post was shared on social media.  
January/2020*

Since November of 2019, Kunangue Aty Guasu has been denouncing to the Brazilian State, the persecution, torture, beating, among so many violence against the nhandesy elders practiced by men dressed as “believers” and other leaders linked to the captaincy of the Kaiowá and Guarani communities. These men, for the most part, are part of the doctrine of the Pentecostal church Deus é Amor and preach colonial discourses of domination of the woman's body, silencing and violating in the name of the church.

In the first weeks of January 2021, the crime of religious intolerance is advancing strongly in indigenous communities, as it rises to nine cases identified over this year only. Women have their bodies raped by men who use knives, whips, ropes and sticks to “condemn” them: to torture them for the practice of the so-called “spell”.

The raped and abused Kaiowá and Guarani women have their bodies cut with knife points, carrying marks of leather whips on their backs. Still, these women have their hair cut by a knife, they carry deep physical bruises on their heads and many other parts of their bodies.

In the process of “condemnation” by neo-Pentecostals, their knees can be seen bleeding, their houses are burned, they are expelled from communities and carry with them brutal psychological violence trauma, fearing they would be burned alive, hanged and killed. They are insulted and cursed by witches and sorceresses.

Slave followers of the doctrine of the Pentecostal church Deus é amor, based in São Paulo, demonize our traditional way of being Guarani and Kaiowá. They refuse to understand our belief, the historical process of our people, our environmental and traditional knowledge, among other prejudices. Furthermore, nhandesys are criminalised, considered witches, sorceresses, macumbeiras and so on. The neo- Pentecostal church, seen as the “correct” preaches the salvation of life, towards “heaven”. We never condemn them for being of Pentecostal religions. They are the ones who condemn our elderly mourners, promoting a religious war that crosses our bodies and strongly violates us.

Most of the tortured nhandesys are elderly women and their daughters have little contact with the urban space. These women are sentenced to death for simply maintaining the practice of caring for medical plants and praying. The videos and photos that reach us are from women who have the wisdom of natural medicine, healing diseases with herbal remedies, as well as the centuries-old work of caring for pregnant women.



In November/2020, in the midst of assembly of the VIII Kunangue Aty Guasu, we launched the documents **“Silenced bodies”, present voices: Violence Through the Eyes of Kaiowá and Guarani women - Hete Kiririm Avvu Jekaa Tekovai, Kuñangue.** In this document, we denounce the crime of religious intolerance to the Brazilian State, with consistent denunciation of violence against indigenous women through several reports from the Kaiowá and

Guarani women’s assembly. It is evident that this is not the first time we seek help, crying out for help, support and protection for the lives of Kaiowá and Guarani women. After the denunciations, the results are minimal, contributing to the advance of violence against our bodies.

While we are waiting for the response from the Brazilian State and referrals of torture and abuse of our bodies, we human rights defenders and representatives of Kunangue Aty Guasu, we are also being persecuted and threatened with death. The violence gains strength and advances in parallel with the construction of Pentecostal churches in the communities, within the indigenous reservations and the reclaimed territories.

Churches are entering indigenous communities en masse, undermining traditional culture and devaluing the traditional knowledge of our people. Pastors use churches as an instrument to stop and disorganize a traditional structure that the Kaiowá and Guarani people come to overtime, struggling to rebuild - despite the serious consequences left by the colonization that follows strong against our bodies, customs, and traditions.

We demand from national and international legal instances that they urgently investigate all incidents of violence against our bodies. Our elders are risking their lives and with them, so are we!

We demand that the judiciary assist us in our native language, enforcing our rights to remain alive and dignified.

É Urgently the protection, strengthening, and enhancement of the Nhandesys, midwives, Jarys, indigenous women Kaiowá and Guarani human rights defenders, in the face of anti-indigenous extermination projects that are being carried out against our bodies, against our way of being Guarani and kaiowá.

**We await with a thirst for justice and visibility of our voices, that the state and international courts listen to us, and support the demands of Kaiowa and Guarani women.**

Best Regards,

Council of Kunanague Aty Guasu - Grand Assembly of Kaiowa and Guarani Women.





## **5. Index of photographs of the three burnt prayer houses addressed in the report**

Below, is a compilation of photographs that merge records made by the community itself at the time immediately following the incendiary attacks committed against the *ogá pisy* on each of the dates indicated, demonstrating a chain sequence of events over a few months. The proximity of the attacks suggests a probable articulation led by the Pentecostal churches active in the aforementioned offensive against Guarani and Kaiowá prayers [nhanderu] and [nhandesy] - and, consequently, against an entire people - to destabilize communities and persecute, threaten, torture, destroy, defame symbols and religious and spiritual authorities Guarani and Kaiowá in evident acts of intolerance and religious racism. Below are the photographs proving the fire provoked against the prayer houses:

## NOTA DA KUNANGUE ATY GUASU CONTRA PATRIARCADO E RACISMO: **violências medievais e extremismo religioso no MS**



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A Kunangue Aty Guasu (Grande Assembleia das Mulheres Kaiowá e Guaraní), vem por meio desta, denunciar e exigir que sejam apuradas/investigadas de forma continuada, todas as violências em nossos territórios, contra meninas, jovens, mulheres e Nhandesys (mestras tradicionais). Nossos espaços de medicina e de rezo, onde se exerce o cuidado dentro de nossa cultura está sendo sistematicamente incendiado de forma criminosa. As Igrejas neopentecostais - Assembleia de Deus e Deus é Amor, incitam o ódio à cultura e principalmente a mulher Guaraní e kaiowá, através de discursos racistas contra as Nhandesys e Nhandieru. Como no período da Inquisição e de caça às bruxas, pregam que anciãs e anciãos indígenas são felicitados e responsáveis pelas mortes e doenças que atingem as nossas aldeias, fazendo com que pessoas se sintam legitimadas a agredirem seus corpos e casas de cura e rezo, gerando cenários de violências medievais e extremismo religioso, como apedrejamentos e ameaças de morte constantes. Esse discurso de ódio tem contribuído para o aumento das violências em nossos territórios, e assim a uma onda de estupros e feminicídios. É preciso urgente, que as mulheres indígenas e ativistas, defensoras de direitos humanos que lutam contra essas violências, sejam protegidas.

Os grandes chefes dos espaços evangélicos (igrejas) que estão em nossos territórios precisam se responsabilizar pela demonização seguida de ataques violentos contra o nosso modo tradicional, porque eles são responsáveis pela formação valorativa dos fiéis. Exigimos que parem imediatamente com a intolerância religiosa, o racismo religioso, que respeite os nossos espaços tradicionais e nossos modos de se organizar, de ser e existir.

A constituição federal de 1988, garante o direito fundamental à liberdade de religião, e foi expressamente assegurada uma vez que esta liberdade faz parte do rol dos direitos fundamentais. O inciso VII do artigo 5º, estipula que ninguém será privado de direitos por motivo de crença religiosa ou de convicção filosófica ou política, salvo se as invocar para eximir-se de obrigação legal a todos imposta e recusar-se a cumprir prestação alternativa, fixada em lei.

Também chamamos o judiciário e outras organizações, movimentos sociais, universidades, etc para juntos realizarmos o enfrentamento a esse racismo religioso estrutural. É de responsabilidade dos órgãos públicos combater os crimes de intolerância religiosa, assim como são aqueles que têm todos os instrumentos para investigar, julgar e combater a violência.

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Por isso, questionamos porque nada tem sido feito e porque continuamos a vivenciar essas violências brutais e a termos nossos direitos como cidadãos desrespeitados pelas instituições responsáveis pela garantia de nossos direitos.

Quem vai investigar as queimas das casas de rezas no Mato Grosso do Sul? O que fazer com esse racismo e perseguição estrutural contra os nossos princípios? Como proteger os nossos patrimônios nativos? Até os dias atuais, nenhum espaço da igreja foi incendiado, pastores e fiéis não são perseguidos, ameaçados.

Até quando?



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### 5.3 Guapo'y Village, Amambai Indigenous Reserve

Date of attack: 10/02/2021



Image 1: Oga pysy burned in the village Guapo'y. Prayer (*nhandesy*): Dona Nilza. October 2, 2021.



Image 2: Dona Nilza's prayer house burnt down after the rain. October 3, 2021.

## 5.2 Rancho Jacaré Indigenous Land, municipality of Laguna Caarapã

Date of attack: 10/02/2021



Image 3: *Ogá pisy* of Rancho Alligator minutes after the attack. October 19, 2021



Image 4: *Ogá pisy* from Rancho Jacaré, the day after the attack, visit of Kuñangue Aty Guasu.



### 5.3 Resumption of Itay Ka 'agwyrusu, municipality of Douradina

Date of attack: 12/29/2021



Image 5: *Ogá pisy* burned down in the resumption of *tekoha* - Guarani and Kaiowá ancestral territory - Itay Ka 'agwyrusu. December 29, 2021 Source: Itay Ka 'agwyrusu community.



Image 6: *Ogá pisy* burned down in the resumption of *tekoha* - Guarani and Kaiowá ancestral territory - Itay Ka 'agwyrusu. December 29, 2021 Source: Itay Ka 'agwyrusu community.



Image 7: Photo of Joel's tomb destroyed by members of the Pentecostal church God is Love. Source: kuñangue Aty Guasu fieldwork. January 13, 2022.



Image 8: Ruins of *the Itay* ogá pisy. February 9, 2022. Source: Kuñangue Aty Guasu/O.K.A/DPU/DPE/DRDH fieldwork.

## Conclusion

Whereas the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 defends and promotes the protection of fundamental rights relating to freedom of religious expression, the fundamental right not to be tortured or treated inhumanely, the defense of indigenous rights, including their culture and customs, as well as the right to access and cultural manifestation to which the State must protect, such as indigenous cultures;

Whereas ILO Convention 169 on the Protection of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples to which Brazil is a signatory through Legislative Decree No. 143/2002;

Considering that Decree No. 7.037/2009 (National Human Rights Program - PNDH-

3) established guidelines on the human rights policy to be adopted in Brazil, including Strategic Objective VI (Respect for different beliefs, freedom of worship and guarantee of the secularity of the State, wherein the Programmatic Actions), points out: a) Establish mechanisms to ensure the free exercise of various religious practices, ensuring the protection of their physical space and curbing manifestations of religious intolerance. Responsible: Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Culture; Special Secretariat for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic. b) Promote publicity campaigns on religious diversity to disseminate a culture of peace and respect for different beliefs. Responsible: Special Secretariat for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic; Ministry of Culture; Special Secretariat for Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality of the Presidency of the Republic;

Considering that FUNAI Ordinance No. 466, of January 19, 2022, establishes the Special Operations Program for Ethno-environmental and Territorial Protection - Proepet, within the scope of the National Indian Foundation - Funai brings in Chapter I - Preliminary Provisions, in *Art. 2 For the purposes of this Ordinance, situations of urgency and emergency are considered: IV - situations of land, territorial and interethnic conflict;*

Considering the Maria da Penha Law, which ensures that no woman, regardless of class, race/ethnicity, should live under violence, preserving her physical and mental health and her moral, intellectual, and social improvement;

Whereas concerning the Special Secretariat of Indigenous Health, the Special Indigenous Health District of Mato Grosso do Sul (DSEI-MS) is the instance of the Ministry of Health responsible for primary health care, as well as basic sanitation actions of indigenous peoples in this administrative region, according to the National Policy for Health Care of Indigenous Peoples (PNASPI), published in Ordinance MS No.254 of January 31, 2002, Ordinance No.2,656 of October 17, 2007;

Considering Ordinance No. 2,663, of October 11, 2017, which amends Consolidation Ordinance No. 6/GM/MS, of September 28, 2017, to redefine the criteria for the transfer of the Incentive for Specialized Care for Indigenous Peoples – IAE-PI, within the scope of the Unified Health System - sus. Art. 275, concerning the objectives, in IV – to facilitate the assistance of traditional caregivers, when requested by the indigenous patient or by the family and, when necessary, to adapt spaces to enable such practices; VII – to promote and stimulate the construction of tools for articulation and inclusion of health professionals from the Special Indigenous Health Districts - DSEI/SESAI/MS and/or other traditional professionals and specialists who have a relationship with indigenous patients, in the construction of the care plan for indigenous patients; X – to promote and promote processes of permanent education on interculturality, appreciation, and respect for traditional health practices and other topics pertinent to professionals working in the establishment, together with other professionals and/or specialists;

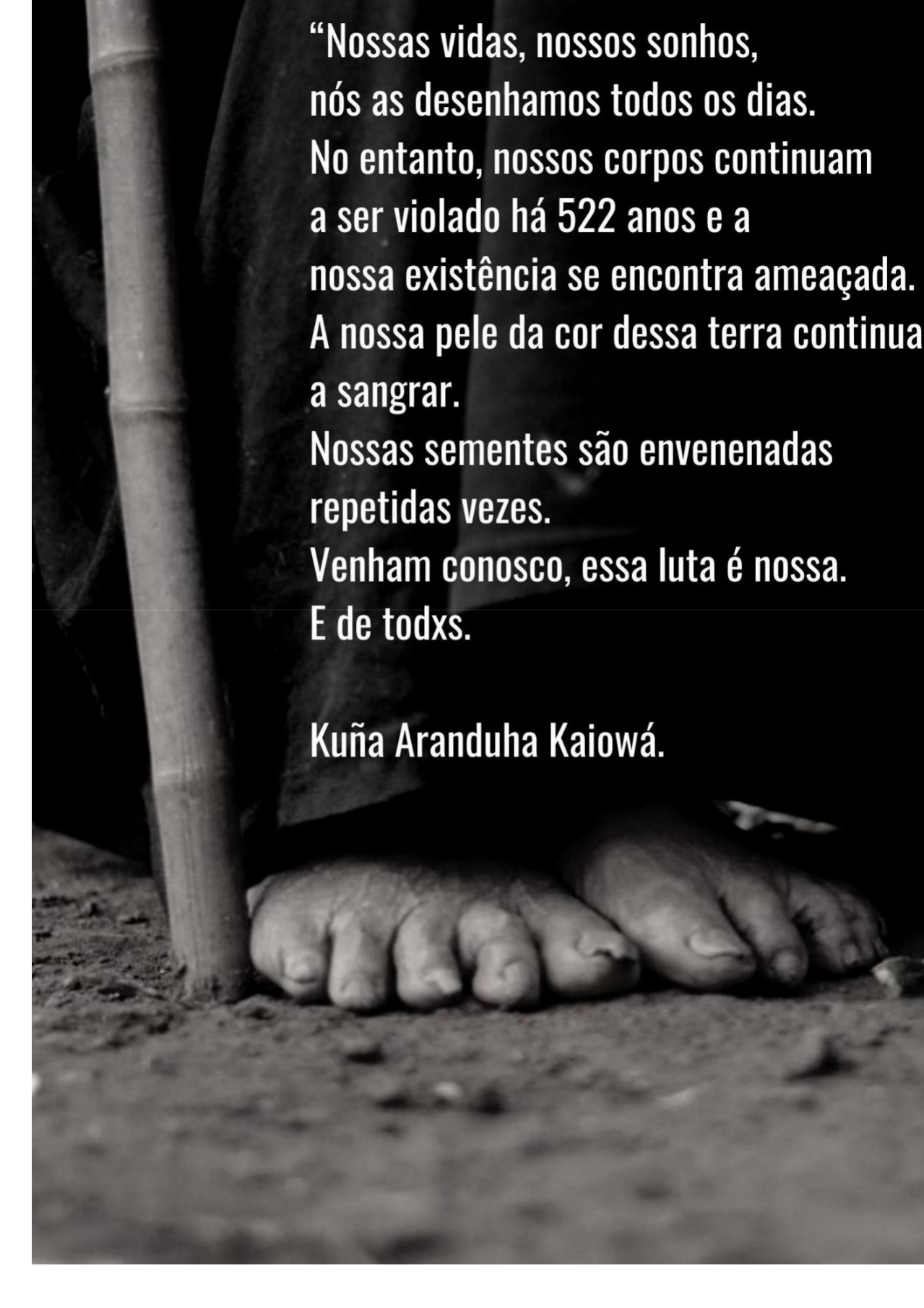
Considering Complementary Law No. 80 of 1996, which defines as legal competence of Public Defenders of the Union and State the defense of fundamental rights:

- That the police inquiries regarding the cases addressed in this report be monitored, putting pressure on the interested parties to be informed about the progress and ascertaining whether the investigations are being conducted seeking the real principals and those responsible for the cases;
- That the actions for the defense of the aforementioned rights be postulated and filed through the modalities of collective protection in the defense of indigenous cultural rights, freedom of religious expression;
- That there be actions to open the dialogue with aggressors for extrajudicial agreements to adjust the conduct in the sense that captains and local leaders investigate or assist in the investigation of crimes denounced by the community close to Prayer, establish actions and projects to protect and promote the defense of religious, social, cultural ancestral traditions, promote a culture of defense of women's rights and local education on the rights of indigenous women and condemn violence against women, as well as the investigation and local prohibition of hate speech that incites violence against local prayers and prayers and build projects and defend before the State the promotion of the construction of prayer houses and local support for their constructions;
- That there be representation in the international human rights system with broad participation and dialogue with Kuñangue and OKA in the event that national means for the protection of prayer houses

actions at the national level in defense of violence to prayers and local indigenous people who experience and frequent the prayer houses spaces;

- Finally, that the action of accountability of the State be filed given the allegations of failure to investigate the cases by the Police (as was informed in the case of Itay) and that it requires a state responsibility in relation to the investigation of these crimes, as well as effective policies and actions to protect the houses of prayer and *nhandesy* and *nhanderus*;
- There must be respect for the *nhandesy* and *nhanderu* within the community, who can live their culture and pray in freedom, who can take care of the community through their ancestral medicine free from threats, persecution, and violence to them, their families, and those who choose prayer and ancestral medicine.



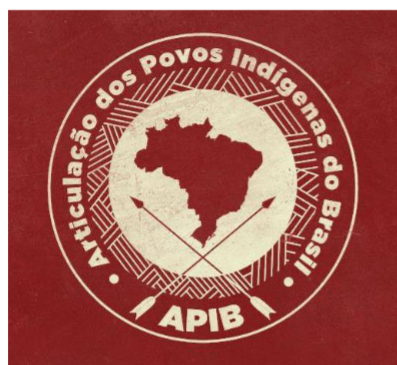


**“Nossas vidas, nossos sonhos,  
nós as desenhamos todos os dias.  
No entanto, nossos corpos continuam  
a ser violado há 522 anos e a  
nossa existência se encontra ameaçada.  
A nossa pele da cor dessa terra continua  
a sangrar.  
Nossas sementes são envenenadas  
repetidas vezes.  
Venham conosco, essa luta é nossa.  
E de todxs.**

**Kuña Aranduha Kaiowá.**

As long as there is the sound of mbaraka, takuapu,nhembo 'e, there will be a fight!

We for us, for all who came before us, for all who will come!



**ANI**  
**MI**  
**GA**      **Articulação  
Nacional das  
Mulheres  
Indígenas  
Guerreiras da  
Ancestralidade**





Caption

