

Brazilian Indigenous group sues Bolsonaro at ICC for genocide

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Brasilia, August 10 (RHC)-- An Indigenous organization in Brazil has asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro for “genocide” and “ecocide” -- accusing him of persecuting native peoples and destroying their homelands.

The Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) charged in a case filed with the Hague-based court on Monday that the far-right president has led “an explicit, systematic and intentional anti-Indigenous policy” since taking office in 2019.

"We believe there are acts in progress in Brazil that constitute crimes against humanity, genocide and ecocide," Eloy Terena, the group's legal coordinator, said in a statement. "Given the inability of the justice system in Brazil to investigate, prosecute and judge these [crimes], we denounce them to the international community."

Bolsonaro has presided over a surge of destruction in the Amazon rainforest, slashed environmental protection programmes and pushed to open Indigenous reservations and other protected lands to agribusiness and mining.

Indigenous rights activists further accuse him of exacerbating the devastation that COVID-19 has wrought on their communities with his stance against stay-at-home policies. The estimated 900,000 Indigenous people in Brazil are particularly vulnerable to outside diseases, including COVID-19.

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