

## **Survival International Press Release**

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### **Colombia: Amazon Nomads Ask to Go Home**

The nomadic Nukak tribe, who were recently moved by Colombian authorities to a new camp far from their traditional lands, have asked to return to their own homes.

The plea comes after the death of a nine year old Nukak boy and a severe flu epidemic which struck down almost a quarter of the tribe.

In the new camp the Nukak are forced to live together in one place which, as experts had warned, has led to outbreaks of disease; traditionally they live in small, nomadic groups. Since first contact in 1988, flu and malaria have killed more than half of the tribe.

'I want to go back home. There was more meat there, there was more fish,' said Rosa, a Nukak woman.

The new camp is just 2% of the size of the Indians' own territory and their wild food is in short supply. They also live in fear of armed conflict between the Colombian army, paramilitaries and guerrillas.

The Nukak's demand comes just days after the visit of an international human rights mission which concluded that they are in 'danger of extinction.'

Survival International's Director, Stephen Corry, said today, 'It is vital that the government ensures the Nukak are able to return safely to their own territory, as that is clearly their wish. Without close medical attention many more Nukak will die, and they risk passing on diseases to their relatives still in the forest. So far Western society has given the Nukak little except misery and death. I hope 2006 can mark a new chapter in their so far tragic story.'

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