

## MASTER THESIS

# "WITH THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE IN ACTIVE RESISTANCE"

## The Ideological Discourse of Ecuador's Indigenous Movement



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## Abstract

Ecuador's indigenous movement has been a well-recognized social movement actor in the struggle against neoliberal policies and for the recognition of the country's plurinationality since the 1990s. In October 2019, the Andean nation experienced twelve days of social unrest, as it had not seen in over a decade. Once again, it was the CONAIE, the confederation of indigenous people that lead the mobilization against the cut of fuel subsidies and other fiscal measures introduced by president Lenín Moreno. Much research has been carried concerning the activities of the CONAIE during the neoliberal era and its relation to the former left-wing president Rafael Correa, however there is a lack of research concerning the more recent developments. The presented paper will examine how Ecuador's indigenous movement used its organizational structures during the protests of 2019 to regain political visibility and defend its position as a leading actor in the struggle against neoliberal policies.

Within the area of social movement studies, the importance of discourse and framing is nothing new. However, the relation of discourse and ideology has not yet been sufficiently examined. Using a pluralist approach, mixing elements of discourse and framing studies, the presented study aims at exploring how the movement's central terms and topics form the foundation of its ideology and vice versa. To gain an even deeper understanding of the importance of the movement's discourse, Manuel Castell's concepts of project identity and resistance identity are applied to the selected texts. The analysis was carried out using a two-level approach. The first part of the analysis applies Van Dijk's schema of ideology to the one of the CONAIE's foundational texts, their political project. The second part of analysis follows the mobilization of October 2019, through a series of press releases. The results of the analysis show that more than just creating an ideology that stands in opposition to neoliberalism, the fundamental objective of Ecuador's indigenous movement is the transformation of society as a whole, and the construction of a plurinational state. While basing the recent protests on an anti-neoliberal rhetoric that rejects any form of cooperation with the IMF, the CONAIE is also using the public platform to mobilize against extractivist activities and for the construction of the plurinational state. The identification of Ecuador's indigenous people around their territorial belonging and the reflection of this identification in the social movement's strategies, builds a solid argument for the creation of a project identity. However, in order to avoid becoming an exclusionary

force themselves, it will be in the hands of the movement to effectively extend the boundaries of the in-group to make further space for real social change.

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# 1 Introduction

On October 1st, 2019, the Ecuadorian president Lenín Moreno presented wide-reaching fiscal reforms to the population of the Andean country. Amongst other measures, the package, also known as Decree 883, included the end of decades-old fuel subsidies, which did not only lead to the immediate rise of the price of diesel by about 50 %, and petroleum prices by about 30 % (Brown, 2019) but the announcement also led to an immediate public outcry. The reforms aimed at reducing the fiscal deficit - a \$4.2bn deal with the IMF that Lenín Moreno had signed in February 2019. To reach this deal, the country would have to tighten the country's national budget by about 6 % of the GDP over the course of three years (Weisbrot, 2019). The reforms were announced amidst a time when public support for Moreno's government had already been decreasing and the majority of the population shared the opinion that the president was only governing the upper class (Gallegos, 2019). The lower class was under the impression that they would have to carry a disproportional amount of the newly introduced economic measures. National protests were initiated by transport unions on October 3rd. After two days of paralyzing the country's transportation system, the union leaders entered into talks with the government and stopped protesting after the governments' public transport companies allowed the drivers to raise the ticket prices (Brown, 2019). However, this only further mobilized indigenous movements, student groups, and workers and mass protests continued. The happenings quickly recalled memories of more intense political interventions led by the CONAIE<sup>1</sup> over a decade ago, and the government saw itself forced to relocate itself from Quito to the coastal city of Guayaquil (Peralta, 2019).

Lenín Moreno also called a state of exception 'to ensure citizens' security and avoid chaos' after protests first broke out (Reuters, 2019). The state of exception allowed the government to restrict the citizen's free movement and their rights of assembly (Luque, Poveda, Hernández, 2019). Protests on the streets continued and quickly became more violent and it appeared as though the Moreno government was using the state of exception

<sup>1</sup> Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador

as a demonstration of power. Amnesty International later condemned these occurrences. In their annual review of the global Human Rights situation, the organization speaks of “days of violent repression of social discontent and evidence of excessive use of force by the security forces against protesters” (Amnesty International, 2019). After more than ten days of protests, the CONAIE agreed to enter into an UN-led dialogue with the government. After several hours of negotiations on October 13, the government agreed to revoke Decree 883 and announced the formation of a commission with the indigenous leaders and other social organizations to work on a new version of the fiscal package.

The October protests recalled memories of similar mobilizations in the late 1990s and early 2000s. A lot of the protests that happened during this decade were also motivated by the introduction of drastic neoliberal measures, similar to the protests of October 2019. According to Rice, Ecuador’s indigenous movement has “artfully linked indigenous people’s demands to issues of political and economic inclusion for the masses, to produce national movements that draw from a broad spectrum of civil society actors” (2012, p.5). The principal slogan that Ecuador’s movement adopted for itself was “nothing only for the Indians” (Bello, 2004, p.159), framing its struggle in terms of national problems, a strategy that allowed the movement to gain broad public support (Rice, 2012).

When demonstrating the relevance of this social movement and thus the topic of this study, different factors should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the October protests present the first major protest movement during Lenin Moreno’s legacy. Moreno did not only replace Rafael Correa, whose presidency lasted a full decade, he also performed an abrupt turn from his predecessor’s left-wing style of governing to introducing clear neoliberal policies. It will, thus, be interesting to consider how this specific political turn has influenced the possibilities of action of the movement. When speaking about the general importance of the movement, scholars agree that Ecuador’s indigenous movement has been recognized as the most organized of the continent, due to its capability of uniting diverse social sectors in the struggle against neoliberalism. (Altmann 2013, Rice 2012). However, the recent protests were the first protests of this size after a time where the movement had lost some of its public credibility. It is, therefore, a relevant question to ask what circumstance led to the most recent mobilization of Ecuador’s indigenous movement.

Lastly, the protests in Ecuador were the first ones in a wave of protests that happened throughout Latin America during late 2019. Although this paper will not provide much space for comparison, single case studies concerning this wave of protests can build a valuable base for possible comparative studies. Since the protests lay less than a year in the past, there has not been sufficient scientific research carried out on the protests in focus, which is another argument to support the relevance of this case study. This paper will analyze how Ecuador's indigenous movement used its organizational structures during the protests of 2019 to regain political visibility and defend its position as a leading actor in the struggle against neoliberal policies.

## 2 Problem formulation

The introduction of this paper outlined the scope of recent protests in Ecuador and gave an idea of the general importance of Ecuador's indigenous movement within the country's political and social landscape. Most of the studies that have been conducted on the CONAIE as a social movement, do so in relation to neoliberalism, which is an important aspect, without doubt. The nation's politicians have been struggling trying to find their stance between global actors such as the IMF or the World Bank, trying to gain influence on the economic system in Latin American countries since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, the movement should not only be analyzed in terms of the external system that it is struggling against, but also regarding its intrinsic motivation, thus according to the ideas and values that are shared among the actors, not necessarily affected by current political happenings. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the ideas and values that define Ecuador's indigenous movement, a discourse-analytical approach has been deemed to be the most useful. This discourse-analytical approach will be combined with the concept of framing and social movement theory and will be applied to one of the movement's foundational texts before going into the discourse surrounding the current debate.

The general problem formulation of this study is:

*How has Ecuador's indigenous movement used its discourse to reestablish its position as a leading social movement actor in the struggle against neoliberal policies during the protests of October 2019?*

The problem formulation is complemented by three sub-questions, that serve as a general guideline for the analysis and allow for a deeper reflection of all the aspects that are necessary to answer the problem formulation. The sub-questions read as follows:

- *Using Van Dijk's scheme of ideology, what are the central terms and topics that build the foundation of Ecuador's indigenous movement and how do these terms stand in opposition to neoliberal policies?*
- *What collective action frames did the movement use to transform its claims from a local to a national level?*
- *Does the CONAIE as a political project and social movement show characteristics of a resistance identity or project identity and how are such characteristics represented in the movement's activities and discourse?*

### 3 Theory & Methodology

#### 3.1 Theoretical considerations

As Altmann (2013) rightly notes in the final chapter of his study on the use of the terms plurinational and multiculturalism in Ecuador's indigenous movement, scientists that are working with issues of indigeneity and decoloniality, are always operating within the frame of coloniality themselves. Moreover, as Western scientists, we have to be aware of the problems that come with researching indigenous movements. Del Valle (2006) criticizes the practice of using indigenous people as a research object while categorizing the research using terms that find their origin in Western academia. In an article on their own experiences as indigenous people, working with non-indigenous academic supervisors, Myra Singh and Jae Major (2016), suggest using a poststructuralist approach when working with indigenous topics. More precisely, the authors state that



“poststructuralism and poststructuralist concepts feature strongly in the theoretical choices of many researchers committed to a critical stance and social justice and equity, such as those working in Indigenous research” (p.8). Typical research focuses of those using a post-structural approach are questions of subjectivity, a focus on discourse, and processes of becoming, as well as concerns with power relations (McLeod, 2009, p.138). More than that, “poststructuralism rejects totalizing essentialist assumptions about the world and reality and questions the aim of research to develop grand theories or meta-narratives that seek to explain everything in a complete or universal way” (Sing and Major, 2016, p.8). Universal claims of truth are looked at skeptically by poststructuralists, who view knowledge as “constructed in social and historical contexts” (Burr 2003, in Sing and Major, 2016). As well, “for poststructuralists, meaning is constructed through language and within discourses – the ways of talking (and thinking about something that comes to be taken for granted as common sense, and therefore structure what can be said, by whom and in what circumstances” (Sing and Major, 2016, p. 8), this adds another particularly interesting aspect to the choice of theory and methodology. To conclude this stance for a poststructuralist approach, Sing and Major find that “poststructuralism provides a means of deconstructing and revealing deficit, marginalizing discourses, which is the foundation for challenging and resisting oppressed subject positions and reconstructing more powerful and positive identities (2016, p.9).

## 3.2 Methodology

### 3.2.1 Combining discourse analysis & social movement theory

As indicated by the research questions in the previous chapter, this single-case study will be built upon an inductive approach and a qualitative research design. The study will rely on a pluralist approach, taking elements from discourse and frame analysis to combine them with social movement theory. *Methodological pluralism* seems to have dominated the field of social movement studies in recent years, according to Della Porta (2014). Methodological pluralism is defined as combining different methods as appropriate for the problem under investigation (Della Porta and Keating, 2009). In the case of this study, elements from discourse and frame analysis are combined with social movement theory,

creating a specific methodological approach suitable for the research questions. According to Linkdekilde (2014), social movement studies mainly use discourse analysis to study how movement texts (press releases, websites, slogans, etc.) “are composed and draw on existing discourses in order to communicate particular meanings, and how the reception of texts is, therefore, co-shaped by their discursive context” (2014, p.4). Regarding the general implications of discourse analysis in social movement research, Linkdekilde expresses that social movements are engaged in ‘innovative and creative forms of discursive practices, which pose a challenge to or reproduces the existing order of discourse in a given institution or social domain’. This statement expresses the importance of being aware of existing (power) relations when working with social movements. By “mixing existing discourses in new ways (inter-discursivity) or drawing on prior texts in new ways (inter-textuality,) social movement activists aim to destabilize or stabilize social, political, and cultural structures and power relations in society at large or social domains in particular” (Linkdekilde, 2014, p.11).

### 3.2.2 Ideology and discourse

This study will use a discourse analytical approach that is inspired by a particular area of critical discourse studies (CDS). In his study on ideology and discourse, van Dijk (2013, p.1) notes that ideologies are “largely acquired, spread, and reproduced by text and talk,” and, therefore, central to the study of discourse. While ideologies are typically associated with systems of domination, van Dijk proposes a theory ‘of ideology and its reproduction by discourse,’ of which ideologies of domination (such as racism, sexism, or neoliberalism), are special examples (2013, p.2). Anti-racism, feminism, and socialism, therefore, are ideologies that function as the sociocognitive basis for the struggle against domination. As a building part of the field of critical discourse studies (CDS), Van Dijk’s theory includes methods such as the analysis of semantics and pragmatics, syntax and narrative, amongst others.

Van Dijk’s theory sees ideologies as “largely acquired, expressed, and reproduced by discourse” (2013, p.2) and views discourses as social practices, that function to acquire, use and spread ideologies. For Van Dijk (2013), ideologies are inherently social and differ from personal beliefs in that they are shared by members of specific social groups. This

also means that ideologies are usually not taken for granted by the whole socio-cultural community, but rather shared by a small, but defined group of people. The group of people that share these same beliefs, thus the same ideology, will typically defend their beliefs to outsiders that do not share them. This leads to ideological discourse usually expressing polarized structures of underlying attitudes, emphasizing the positive properties of *us*, the in-group, and the negative properties of *them*, the out-group.

In line with other theorists of contemporary discourse studies, Van Dijk, also views the necessity of relating any type of discourse to its communicative situation. As he explains, “language users, and in general social actors, not only construct a subjective mental model of events they think or talk about, but also of the very actions and environment in which they are currently engaged” (Van Dijk, 2013, p. 7). Depending on these conditions, social actors construct subjective context models, which consist of “a spatiotemporal setting, a representation of the current identity and the role of the participants as well as the relations between them, the current social actions and its goals, as well as the knowledge and ideology of the participants” (Van Dijk, 2013, p.7). In conclusion, this means that language users adapt to the communicative situation they find themselves in. A feminist activist for example will unlikely use the same type of rhetoric in any communicative situation, but they will adapt their discourse, depending on their current identity, the identity of the recipients, the goal of the current discourse and the ideology of the recipient (Van Dijk, 2013). The context model also explains that the same discourse may be understood differently by different recipients.

Van Dijk (2013) developed a scheme that organizes the fundamental beliefs of an ideological group and can be regarded as “the structure of the overall self-image of the group as well as its relation to other groups.” The ideological scheme encompasses the categories of *identity* (who are we? / who belongs to us?), *activities* (what do we do/ what is our role in society?), *goal* (what is the goal of our activities?), *values* (what are the norms of our activities?), *relations* (who are our friends and enemies?) and *group resources* (what material or symbolic resources form the basis of our (lack of) power and position in society?). Van Dijk’s scheme will be used to analyze foundational texts of Ecuador’s indigenous movement and to understand the movement’s ideology, thus underlying beliefs and shared ideas of the movement’s members. This step of the analysis will also serve to

understand the relations that the CONAIE maintains with other groups, which will in turn help to understand how the movement began to lift their claims from a local to a national level.

### 3.2.3 The construction of identity

A concept that will complement Van Dijk's theory of ideology and discourse in the context of this study, is Manuel Castells' conception of identity.

Castell's 2010 edition of *The Power of identity* explores the construction of identities "as they relate to social movements and power struggles in the network society" (2010, xvii). According to Castells, the social construction of identity always takes place in a context marked by power relationships. Castells' distinguishes between three main types of identities, namely *legitimizing identities*, *resistance identities*, and *project identities*. *Resistance identities* are usually constructed by using the materials inherited from history, such as God, nation, ethnicity, and locality (Castells, 2010). Referring to the factor of ethnicity, which is undeniably relevant when working in indigenous contexts, Castells states that ethnicity has become a major source of self-organization across different places of the planet. The fact that ethnicity has always been a basic attribute of self-identification can be explained, "not only because of shared historical practice but because 'the others' remind people every day that they are 'others' themselves" (Castells, 2010, xxv), meaning that ethnicity is a self-identifying factor for people, allowing them to find solidarity among people of their ethnicity, especially when they feel stigmatized by the dominant ethnic groups of society. Resistance identity is "generated by those actors who are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from or opposed to those permeating the institutions of society." A *legitimizing identity* is defined by Castells (2010, p.8), as a form of identity introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination with the help of social actors. Lastly, a *project identity* is constructed, "when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials are available to them, build a new ideology that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the information of overall social structure" (Castells 2010, p.8).

*Project identities* have been used by social movements throughout history, most significantly by the movements of feminism and environmentalism, according to Castells. As an important example of an identity project, Castells names the LGBTQ+ movement. The LGBTQ+ movement (referred to by Castells as the gay and lesbian movement), achieved their repositioning in society by focusing their efforts on obtaining legal recognition on their right to marry, form families and have children. By insisting on the movement's member's assertion to their equal rights, they achieved the transformation of the social institution of marriage (Castells, 2010).

Castells also refers to the Latin American context, stating that the crises in most Latin American countries result from the failed process of integration of local and national societies into the global economy. Considering these circumstances, one of the questions that will have to be kept in mind during the analysis, is in which ways the Ecuadorian indigenous movement constructs a resistance identity and to what extent it represents a project identity or if a mixture of both types can be detected.

#### 3.2.4 Framing

The methodological approaches presented so far will be combined with a framing analysis. The framing analysis will be introduced at the second level of analysis and will serve to understand the strategies and opportunities that Ecuador's indigenous movement made use of during the protests of October 2019.

Discussing the power of social movements, Alexander (2006) found that social movements' power and chances of influence depend on their ability to translate movement-specific grievances (e.g. women's rights) into larger, universal discussions of human rights or similar discourses of a larger relevance. Social movements can, therefore, use the relevant 'discursive opportunity structure' to gain broader support and, thus, influence the public discourse (Koopmans and Statham, 1999). The process of translating movement-specific grievances into discourses of larger relevance is reflected in the sub-question of how Ecuador's indigenous movement was able to translate local claims into national claims, thus framing issues that potentially only affect members of their own community in a way that they become relevant to bigger portions of the population. In their study on framing analyses and social movements, Snow, Vliegenthart and Ketelaars (2018) explain

that applied to social movements, the idea of frames problematizes the meaning associated with relevant events, activities, places, and actors, suggesting that those meanings are typically contestable and negotiable and, thus, open to debate and differential interpretation. When social movement actors use a set of shared beliefs and ideas to mobilize social movement action, we speak of *collective action frames*. According to Snow, Vliegenhart and Ketelaars (2018) *collective action frames* are the results of framing activity in the social movement arena. Collective action frames are defined as “relatively coherent sets of action-oriented beliefs and meanings that legitimize and inspire social movement campaigns and activities (p.395).” Beside describing the elements within the frame and transforming the meanings within the objects of attention, collective action frames have important mobilization functions. *Action mobilization* serves to mobilize participants to become visible and active members of the movement, *consensus mobilization* serves to broaden the movement’s base and *counter mobilization* is used to neutralizes or demobilize adversaries (Snow, Vliegenhart and Ketelaars (2018).

Other than collective action frames, the authors highlight the importance of core framing tasks such as *diagnostic framing*, *prognostic framing* and *motivational framing*. Diagnostic framing concerns a problematic aspect of the social system or social life that is in need of change “and the attribution of blame or responsibility for the problematized state of affairs” (Snow, Vliegenhard and Kerellars, 2018, p.396). Diagnostic frames, thus, provide answers to the questions of “what is or went wrong?” and “who or what is to blame?”. Prognostic framing typically provides a solution to the presented problem “including a plan of attack and the frame-consistent tactics for carrying it out” (Snow, Vliegenhard and Kerellars, 2018, p.396). Motivational framing goes beyond the diagnosis and prognosis in presenting a call for action that usually contains a set of vocabularies of motive and the urgency of taking action now rather than later. (Snow, Vliegenhard and Kerellars, 2018).

Compared to discourse analysis, framing analysis is more concerned with the question of how social movement actors strategically use language to bend the meaning of existing topics into particular directions (Linkdeilde, 2014), while discourse analysis shows an increased interest in questions of power. As indicated before, it is precisely the combination of both of these questions, that will make up for the different questions of

analysis. Snow, Vliegenhart and Ketelaars also find that “much research has identified movement-specific collective action frames and how they function as independent variables, but comparatively little research has examined systematically the discursive process through which frames evolve, develop, and change” (2018, p.404). The authors also lament that there are insufficient studies that explore the relationship “between collective action frames and framing processes and relevant cultural and psychological factors, such as narrative, ideology, collective identity, and emotion” (2018, p.405). By combining discourse analysis and questions of social movements’ identities and ideologies, the present study aims at further exploring the relation of some of these mentioned components towards each other and their position within the field of discourse and frame analysis.

### 3.2.5 Reflections on methods and data collection

The process of data collection has been guided by the presented methodological approach. On the first level of analysis that will focus on gaining an understanding of the ideology of the social movement in focus, as well as starting to reflect on the type of identity it constructs, the focus will be on the foundational documents of the movement. In 1994, the CONAIE published its *Proyecto Político*. The document introduces the movement and the organization behind it, its main goals and objectives as well as its norms and values. Furthermore, the analysis of that same document will serve to understand what terms and topics define the CONAIE as a social actor. Once this foundation has been established, the analysis will move onto the second level of analyzing more texts and the bulletins and press releases as well as interview/video material that has been published during the protests of 2019. Using the insights on existing texts that have been gained during the first level of analysis, the second level will use the framing approach to analyze how certain events and activities have been framed by the CONAIE to build up its most recent campaign. Lastly, the concepts of identity and ideology will be applied to the findings of the second level of analysis, seeing how underlying ideological beliefs are reflected in the recent protests and how notions of identity have developed or remained the same in the course of new developments and activities.

As shown within this chapter, the developed methodological approach combines various approaches and theories from the field of discourse and social movement studies. In a paper on frames and discourse-analytical approaches in social movement studies, Van Dijk (2016) criticizes several authors of carrying out discourse studies that are too one-sided and do not take sufficient advantage of the possibility for a multi-layered approach. Van Dijk suggests going beyond a traditional content-analytical approach and combining a structural analysis of discourse on the one hand, with an adequate approach to the study of frames and ideologies, on the other hand (p.16). Van Dijk proposes using a theoretical and methodological approach that is based on contemporary discourse studies and combining them with social movement studies. In practice, this means, the analysis of the actual words, actor descriptions, identity formulations, among other discourse properties need to be combined with “an analysis of the ways the ideologies and attitudes of the participants in the debate is (sic!) actually expressed and conveyed in their discourses” (Van Dijk, 2016, p.17). Instead of just applying framing theory to the texts and events related to the problem in focus, this paper will actually analyze the discursive properties of each text. In favor of going beyond these discursive properties of each text, Castells’ conception of movement identities will be utilized to gain a profound understanding of the movement and its motivation behind its actions.

### 3.2.6 Limitations

The recency of the political protests in focus is, both, a limitation and an opportunity. It is an opportunity to contribute to a relatively small body of scientific literature, and it is a limitation because there is almost no academic secondary literature that can be used to compare the findings of this study to those of other researchers. Another issue that relates to the handling of the secondary literature on the topic, is the high level of controversies that revolve around the topic in focus. This is not only the case for newspaper articles that report on the protests of 2019 but even for academic articles surrounding such topics as neoliberalism in Latin America or the presidency of Rafael Correa. The apparent bias of the authors of some articles complicate the selection of necessary secondary literature and make it more challenging to select truly objective information. This also leads to me increasingly reflecting on my personal role as a



researcher, especially concerning the topic in focus, which is something that I have already discussed when presenting the theory of poststructuralism. The chosen methodological approach allows for the development of new theories and insights on the problem in focus and can serve as a basis for studies with a more practical approach in the future.

## 4 Literature Review

This literature review will present an overview of relevant studies that focus on the main activities of Ecuador's indigenous movement in recent years, before closing with a reflection of the existing literature on the protests of October 2019. Two studies that are interesting to review regarding the stance of the movement as an anti-neoliberal actor, are by Roberta Rice and Eduardo Silva.

In her book 'The new politics of protest: Indigenous mobilization in Latin America's neoliberal era', Roberta Rice calls Ecuador's indigenous movement the 'lead-protagonist of anti-neoliberal contention in the country' (2012, p.51). While giving an overview of historically important events, the author takes a look at similar aspects as those which are considered within the research questions of this paper, regarding mainly the issue of anti-neoliberal protests as well as the framing strategies of the movement. To answer the question of how the indigenous movement was able to become such a strong contender of neoliberalist structures, Rice mentions the relative openness of the political system as an important factor. She refers to the country's historic pattern of popular political incorporation through which "multiclass populist parties generated collective identities and organizational forms that proved relatively easy to cast off in favor of ethnic forms of struggle" (p.52). According to Rice, indigenous identity has become the 'motor of collective action' in Ecuador (2012, p.66). In terms of movement framing, Rice explains that the indigenous movement was able to successfully frame its local struggle in terms of the solution to national problems, instead of just focusing on indigenous concerns.

In a comparative case study of Ecuador's and Bolivia's indigenous movement, Silva focuses on the indigenous movement as an anti-neoliberal actor in a similar manner as Rice does. Sticking to the concept of framing, Silva states that the CONAIE "translated the threats posed by neoliberal economic reforms into common framing devices and demands

that appealed to its diverse base” (2015, p.135). As the main catalyst for indigenous mobilization throughout Ecuador’s neoliberal era, Silva mentions the material threats that the system posed to individuals and communities, such as rising prices, land grabs, and declining prices.

Another study that is of particular interest, from a methodological point of view, was published by Phillip Altmann in 2013. Altmann carries out a discourse analysis that focuses on the terms *plurinationality* and *interculturality*. These two terms were in the focus of a dispute between the CONAIE and the governing party during the process of forming Ecuador’s new constitution that was introduced in 2008. While the CONAIE favored the term *plurinationality*, liberals and conservatives criticized the term as ethnocentric and suggested the use of the term *interculturality*. In the end, the different parties compromised and implemented both terms into the new constitution, however, Altmann criticizes the fact that neither of the terms are defined in sufficient detail. Altmann concludes, that Ecuador’s indigenous movement, as a whole, is a decolonial movement that questions the Eurocentric nation-state through its mere existence. By opposing the concept of the classic nation-state with a discourse that develops around such terms as *plurinationality*, the indigenous movement creates alternative visions that include the political, economic, and cultural landscape (Altmann, 2013). Although Altmann’s study provides a valuable in-depth analysis on central terms of the CONAIE as a movement, and not only of the discourse created around those terms, but also of the socio-economical model they stand for, the study does not offer insight into more recent protest activities, as this paper will do.

The authors of the few articles that have been published on the October protests, lack long-term research on the current protests and mostly explain the happenings by referring to past events and current political structures. An article of Ospina Peralta that was published for the magazine *La Nueva Sociedad* in October 2019, compares the sudden and strong outbreak of protests last fall to the protests of the 1990s and early 2000s and provides some valuable numbers concerning the disproportionate allocation of the fiscal measures introduced by Lenín Moreno. However, these types of articles tend not to be written in a completely neutral tone and are most likely influenced by the author’s political

opinion or the newspapers they are writing for. While they of course do provide valuable information on the political events, it will be the purpose of this study to gain new insights on the movement's structure and activities, by using a pluralist approach, combining discourse and frame analysis with social movement theory.

## 5 Historical background and local context

### 5.1 Neoliberalism in Latin America

Considering that the term neoliberalism and variations of it are used frequently throughout this paper, the term should be defined briefly, within the Latin American context. Two institutions are central to the development of neoliberalism in Latin America; the World Bank and the IMF. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these institutions made recommendations for the liberalization and management of Latin American countries and “gave strong external support to the adoptions of a neoliberal framework” (Gwynne, 2000 p. 142). The concept of neoliberalism increasingly gained attention during the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, that presented the decline of the economic model of state-directed, centrally planned economies. Within this context, Latin American governments began to notice the growing trend of economically driven regions, based on the concept of neoliberalism. It became the objective of treasury ministers throughout the region to modernize their economies to attract foreign investments and make their economies more competitive to world markets. The neoliberal era in Latin America was a turn away from an inward-oriented economic model of ISI<sup>2</sup> that ended in a severe debt- crisis in the 1980s, to an economy of increasing trade with other world regions and capital flows from foreign firms and banks (Gwynne, 2000).

Critics of the neoliberal system claim that it replaced earlier forms of neo-colonial domination and restricted any real possibility of development (Dello Buono & Lara, 2006). More specifically, Dello Buono and Lara (2006) find that structurally conditioned dependency deepened under the system of neoliberalism and the external debt of Latin

<sup>2</sup> Import-substitution-industrialization

American countries was converted into the defining element of a fortified mechanism of dependency. Furthermore, the authors state that “the impossibility of repaying the foreign debt and the recurrent crisis resulting from meeting debt service payments have produced processes of renegotiation that are in essence political-economic interventions” (Dello Buono & Lara, 2006, p.1). Assessing the relationship of indigenous people within the neoliberal system, Gondale and Postero (2013, p.6 ) find that while liberalism promised universal belonging, its promises were never completely fulfilled, “as indigenous groups and peoples of African descent were denied full participation in the political, economic and cultural life of the new Republican nation states.” The development of neoliberalist policies in Ecuador, the involvement of the IMF and the indigenous population’s struggle against these policies, will form part of the next subchapter.

#### 5.1.1 The influence of the IMF on Ecuador’s economic system – a brief history

When Latin American countries struggled with high amounts of debt in the 1970s and early 1980s, U.S. banks were eager to help out – with interest rates being low at the time, making it easy for Latin American countries to borrow money from the US (Pineo, 2007). However, when the continent entered into a severe economic crisis, starting with Mexico in 1982, interest rates practically grew overnight. Being unable to pay the interest on their loans, Latin American countries were forced to borrow even more money. At this point US banks refused to lend the countries more money without making them carry out economic reforms that should improve their economic credibility and in return allow them to borrow more money. Therefore, “all Latin American states were expected to enter into an accord with the IMF before getting new loans from U.S. commercial banks and getting an agreement with the IMF required adoption of ‘structural adjustment policies,’ that is, fiscal austerity and free market economic policies” (Pineo, 2007, p.190). IMF loans came with harsh austerity measures and forced borrowing countries to privatize state-owned firms, cut government spending, raise taxes and eliminate government subsidies and price controls, establishing what was known as the Washington Consensus. In 1982, Ecuador’s then-president Osvaldo Hurtado saw no other way but to get the stamp of approval from the IMF to obtain new loans from U.S. banks so the country could eventually

pay back its debt. This meant taking on such austerity measures as the rise of costs for public transport and basic necessities and the doubling of gasoline prices. The late 1980s and early 1990s were marked by a period of flat oil prices and increased national debt in Ecuador. The IMF's structural adjustment program, which Ecuador adopted in 1992, "led to a 50 percent decrease in the standard of living for Ecuadorian families" and "hit hardest at the poor" (Pineo, 2007 p.205)

Despite there being little choice for Latin American governments to find alternatives to the adjustment programs of the IMF, Ecuador in particular appears to have a history of presidential candidates publicly denouncing neoliberal measures prior to their election and then changing their policies to a clear pro-neoliberalist approach, once elected into office. This was the case with Abdalá Bucaram, also known as *el loco*, who was elected as president in 1996 (Pineo, 2007). During his campaign, Bucaram promised to provide government subsidies for staple foods and to promote social programs. A few months after his election, Bucaram then presented a neoliberal austerity program to the population, reducing government subsidies and price controls, leading to a dramatic rise of prices for basic goods and services, again, hitting the poorest the hardest. Another candidate that presented himself as anti-neoliberalist prior to his presidency, was Lucio Gutiérrez. Gutiérrez was supported by CONAIE's political party, Pachakutik<sup>3</sup>. Upon starting his presidency, Gutiérrez entered into a new agreement with the IMF, leading to cabinet members from Pachakutik resigning in anger and CONAIE starting to organize new protests (Pineo, 2007). As Pineo puts it, "in Ecuador democracy evidently means the right to pick between candidates who endorse neoliberalism and will happily carry out free-market measures, and candidates like Gutiérrez who speak out against neoliberalism but once in office adopt these policies anyway" (2007, p. 215).

3 "In 1996, CONAIE and the CMS (Coordinadora de movimientos sociales) formed the Pachakutik Movement for Plurinational Unity–New Country (MUPP-NP) as the political arm of the nation's indigenous and popular movements" (Rice, 2012, p.56).

## 5.2 The development of Ecuador's indigenous movement

This chapter will explain the emergence of Ecuador's indigenous movement, as well as its early organizational efforts, focusing on its activities during the neoliberal era from 1984 to 2005, before going into the particularities of Rafael Correa's presidency that began in 2007. Prior to the neoliberal era, indigenous people started to organize under peasant identity, encouraged to do so by the national populist state. The *Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas* (FENOC) was created in the 1960s. The FENOC helped indigenous communities of the highlands to organize around corporate lines, helping them to receive benefits promised by the government, namely land, credit and infrastructure improvement (Silva, 2015). The indigenous people of the Amazon started to organize independently, stimulated by oil development and colonist land invasions (Gerlach 2003, in: Silva, 2015).

Independent from the activities of the FENOC, indigenous people of the highlands founded the ECUARUNARI<sup>4</sup> and the indigenous people of the lowlands formed the CONFENIAE<sup>5</sup> in the late 1970s. While the ECUARUNARI mixed peasant issues such as land struggles and working conditions with indigenous ethnicity, the CONFENIAE focused on protecting territorial integrity in response to land grabs by landowners and oil companies (Silva, 2015). When labor unions began to weaken with the beginning of the neoliberal period, indigenous people stepped in to lead the movement against economic restructuring programs. ECUARUNARI and CONFENIAE united in 1986, forming the CONAIE to contest neoliberal reforms introduced by then-president Leon Febres Cordero (1984-1988) (Silva, 2015). Febres Cordero's economic stabilization program "cut subsidies to consumption for poor households and state sponsored construction within rural areas, eliminated or drastically reduced state support for peasant agriculture and devalued the currency" (Silva, 2015 p.135). The newly formed CONAIE felt increasingly threatened by deepening poverty and loss of land and farming capacity and started to step up its organizational efforts (Silva, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Ecuador Runcunapac Riccarimui, Awakening of the Ecuadorian Indian (Silva, 2015)

<sup>5</sup> Conferderation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon

The first major protest led by the CONAIE happened in June 1990 and became to be called the ‘national indigenous uprising’. After the protests shut down the country for over a week to voice their frustration with the country’s political and economic system, the government of Rodrigo Borja saw itself forced to enter into negotiations with the CONAIE (Rice, 2012). In 1997 the CONAIE led another protest movement, that resulted in the impeachment of then-president Abdalá Bucaram who had also tried to introduce ‘drastic neoliberal measures in order to complete the restructuring process’ (Rice, 2012). Only three years later, the indigenous movement joined forces with junior military officers to overthrow President Jamil Mahuad, who had used his presidency not only to dollarize the economy, but also to introduce new austerity measures, devalue the national currency and to freeze bank accounts (Rice, 2012). Silva (2015), calls the events connected to this coup d’état “a final cycle of anti-neoliberal contention in which CONAIE played a leading role” (p.36). However, according to Silva, the involvement in the coup d’état also led to a loss of trust of civil society in the leadership of CONAIE that began to see the organization in an increasingly radical light.

In general, the neoliberal era is described as paradoxical in terms of promoting indigenous identity and the rights of ethnic minorities. While neoliberalism encouraged organizational development based on indigenous identity to promote multiculturalism and supported the celebration of indigenous languages, festivals and rituals, neoliberal policies harmed indigenous people materially and systematically, excluding them from the policy processes (Silva, 2015).

In conclusion, it can be said that Ecuador’s indigenous movement “was the product of decades of organizing efforts by the political left CONAIE and the indigenous movement energized anti-neoliberal opposition in the country and quickly established themselves as the lead protagonists of change” (Rice 2012, p.54).

Following the neoliberal era, Ecuador entered into the period of Rafael Correa’s government, that the indigenous movement had a conflicted relationship with, which will be explained further in the following subchapter.

### 5.3 A government of the left turn - The presidency of Rafael Correa

Prior to his presidency, Rafael Correa had served as the Ecuadorian finance minister from 2005 to 2007 but was dismissed for strongly criticizing neoliberal policies (Rice, 2012). Consequently, he based his own presidential campaign on a strong anti-neoliberal platform. Ecuador's indigenous population has had a rather conflicted relationship with the country's former president of the political left. Correa based Ecuador's development on the idea of a socially responsible mining sector, however largely disrespecting indigenous territories (Rice, 2012), constituting a major point of conflict between the two parties. A moment of mutual understanding, on the other hand, was marked by the establishment of the new 2008 Constitution. Besides introducing approaches for alternative development, presented around the widely debated term of *el buen vivir* or *the good living*, and promoting a strong anti-neoliberal stance, the constitution officially declared Ecuador as a plurinational state, an objective the indigenous movement had long fought for (Rice, 2012).

However, another point of conflict between the two parties emerges around the CONAIE accusing Correa of integrating their and Pachakutik's political ideas and concepts into his government without acknowledging their origin (Van Cott, 2009). As Rice (2012) observes, the CONAIE's proposals have been largely taken up by Correa's administration and the space on the political left formerly occupied by Pachakutik and other smaller leftist parties was filled by Correa and his party as well. In conclusion, Ecuador's first president that was elected on a strong anti-neoliberal stand and even drafted a new constitution that included some of the indigenous movement's main principles, did not manage to maintain a good relationship with the country's indigenous communities.

Critics of Rafael Correa call out his populist tendencies. Correa was known for appearing on public news channels regularly, keeping up the communication with citizens through a very public platform, something that is typical for Latin American populist leaders. In an article about Correa's discursive practices Cerbino, Maluf and Ramos (2017), note that Ecuador's former president has sparked a new and increased political interest in the population through his use of media as a platform of communication with his voters and the general public. The authors describe the formation of a collective identity, putting emphasis on the 'we', and always showing a human side in his discourses, through the use of rhetoric devices and a sense of humor which leads to a feeling of empathy within this



population, even if they might not agree with the president's political decisions. As some of the most important notions that have been politicized within Correa's discourse Cerbino, Maluf and Ramos (2017) mention *self-esteem*, *dignity*, *national pride* and *hope*. Overall, the authors find not only an increased interest of the population in the presidential discourse but also a new sense of identity based on these discourses, leaving future presidents with the task of having to manage this demand for public communication.

De la Torre (2018) explains that while showing populism's inclusionary face through challenging the power of the elites and integrating the lower class in national life in new ways, he also started to misuse democratic institutions to maintain power. In 2015, Correa's allies in the national assembly helped him to add an amendment to the constitution, that allowed the president's indefinite reelection. When Correa felt that his popularity was declining, he chose his ally Lenín Moreno to run for president and started to support his campaign through vast financial aids. Apparently, his plan was to reclaim power himself in the 2021 elections (de la Torre, 2018).

#### 5.4 Lenín Moreno's term – a turn to neoliberalism?

Lenín Moreno was elected as Ecuador's president in April 2017. Moreno had been the vice-president under Rafael Correa, who strongly supported his successor's campaign (de la Torre, 2018). Consequently, Moreno was expected to continue his predecessor's style of governing and promised to maintain popular social spending (Becker & Riofrancos, 2018). However, after being voted into office, it became apparent that Moreno was not planning on keeping up the friendship with his former political ally. Shortly after being voted into office, Moreno started to criticize Correa for his aggressive social spending and accused him of maintaining corrupt state institutions. Correa, in exchange, called Moreno a "wolf in sheep's clothing". Becker & Riofrancos therefore speak of a "dramatic fall out" (2018, p.124). The fall out between the two politicians can also be observed in Lenín Moreno's public discourse. In an article that focuses on Lenín Moreno's reports to the nation of 2017, 2018 and 2019, von Schoettler (2020), assesses the changes in discourse from Correa to Moreno from an ideological 'progressive' position of continuity and

necessary changes to an authoritarian speech, where the last government was found ‘guilty’ of corruption along with the citizenship that gave it legitimacy, and that now it is necessary to put the country through neoliberal reforms that prioritizes freedom and entrepreneurship. Von Schoettler therefore sees a shift of the image of a public enemy, away from the World Bank or the IMF to the corruption of the previous government, impersonated as Rafael Correa.

As mentioned in the chapter above, Rafael Correa had a very conflicted relationship with Ecuador’s indigenous community. Moreno however, appeared willing to improve the dialogue with this part of the population from the beginning of his presidency. After major protests of indigenous women against the government’s extractivist activities in March 2018, Moreno agreed to enter into dialogue with the protestors, something that Correa had refused to do by saying that protestors were “out of touch with current economic and political realities, or as having allied with conservative forces that sought to overthrow his government” (Becker & Riofrancos 2018, p.127). De la Torre (2018) notes that Moreno has broken with Correa’s ‘us versus them’ style by opening dialogue with the indigenous and labor movements, the private media, and the business community. Reversibly, it can be argued that this ‘us versus them style’, was reintroduced by the current president’s constant habit of reminding the general public of the mistakes his predecessor and his political allies had made, leaving him to reconstruct Ecuador’s economy and financial institutions.

The biggest success of Moreno’s relatively young presidency is marked by the victory in a referendum of February 2018. The seven-point referendum aimed to revise the law that allowed indefinite presidential election. Moreno won all seven questions with a two-third majority. As Becker and Riofrancos (2018) explain, the referendum did not only mark a huge success in Moreno’s presidency, which was backed by high approval ratings at the time, but was also the product of strong public support for the referendum by Correa’s political opponents, out of the political spectrum of the left and right alike. The referendum marked the definite break between the former companions and made it impossible for Correa to be reelected after Moreno’s first term.

In February 2019, Lenín Moreno signed the beforementioned 4.2bn dollar loan with the IMF, forcing him to take severe economic measures. Besides the much-discussed cut of

fuel subsidies, the fiscal package contained economic policies such as cutting benefits of public employees and lowering the income tax on technological goods. It will remain to be seen, how he will manage future challenges and if he will push through with his neoliberal reforms, or if the protests against them remain too strong to be ignored.

## 6 Analysis

The data used for this paper consists of the official program of the CONAIE as well as a series of press releases published in the course of the October protests. The rhetoric used by the indigenous movement during the negotiations with the Ecuadorian government directly following the protests, will also be given a brief look. In order to gain an understanding of the indigenous movement and the organizational structures behind it, the analysis will start with one of the foundational texts of the movement, titled “Proyecto Político” (*Political project*). This first stage of the analysis will provide an overview of the discursive structures and topics that define the movement. The analysis will be carried out following the previously presented schema of Van Dijk that serves to understand the shared ideas and fundamental beliefs of an ideological group. Building on the findings of the first part of the analysis, the second part will analyze the discourse surrounding the protests of October 2019. Special attention will be given to established discursive strategies, concepts such as *interdiscursivity* and *intertextuality*, as well as to the framing strategies of the movement. Finally, the results of each part of the analysis will serve to answer the sub-questions of this paper and successively, come to a conclusion regarding its problem formulation.

### 6.1 The CONAIE and its *Political Project*

The document titled “Proyecto político de la CONAIE” was first published in 1994 and can be accessed through the official website of the organization<sup>6</sup>. It can be described as the political program of the organization, introducing the main objectives and the

<sup>6</sup> <https://conaie.org/proyecto-politico/> [last accessed 15/07/2020]

organizational structure of Ecuador's indigenous movement. The program consists of a general presentation of the movement and the ideas that define it, followed by a declaration of its political objectives and ideological principles. In continuation, the document presents the *plan of action*, split in the categories of *political system*, *economic system* and *cultural representation*. The document has a clear structure, presenting a series of steps to the reader that are necessary for the construction of the CONAIE's political project.

In this part of the analysis, the first three chapters ("Presentación", "declaración política" and "nuestros principios politicos ideológicos", *Presentation*, *political declaration* and *Our ideological political principle*<sup>7</sup>) will be analyzed utilizing Van Dijk's schema of ideological discourse. This analytical step is used to understand the movement's foundational claims and objectives as well as to get an overview of the overall discursive structures that define the movement. Following the application of the ideological schema, the movement's central terms will be summarized, and framing techniques will be examined. The findings of this first stage of analysis serve as a foundation before going into the second stage of analysis, as they are necessary to contextualize the claims that the movement made during the protests of October 2019.

### 6.1.1 Determining the communicative situation

Following Van Dijk's theory, before we can move into the level of ideological discourse semantics, the communicative situation that the discourse forms part of has to be defined, establishing a so-called context model. The document in focus presents the political program of the CONAIE, an organization that is formed by and represents Ecuador's indigenous communities. In the case of this study, the CONAIE also represents the leading social movement actor. The spatiotemporal setting is defined by the members of an organization that identify themselves with each other through factors such as ethnicity, nationality and territorial belonging. The document was written with a clear, communicative purpose in mind, which is the presentation of the organization's political project to the general public. Recipients of the discourse are likely to come from a broad

<sup>7</sup> Throughout the analysis, the original Spanish quotes will be put into quotation marks, while the respective English translation will be set in cursive.

range of social and political actors, such as political allies of the organization, other political parties, academics as well as political actors and movement members that come from a different political spectrum and will consume the discourse with a different mindset, than others. This also means that different recipients are likely to understand the same document differently and to evaluate the importance of its different sections differently, depending on their personal values and beliefs. In this context, it is important to note that the personal beliefs of an individual might differ from the beliefs they share as members of an ideological group (Van Dijk, 2013). Lastly, it should be said that the document does not represent a ‘raw’ piece of discourse such as for example the recording of a conversation would, but that it presents a piece of writing that gives the authors the possibility to constitute their discourse step by step and edit it several times before publishing it. Keeping these factors in mind, the text will be analyzed following Van Dijk’s schema of ideological discourse, intending to understand the fundamental beliefs and shared ideas that characterize the CONAIE as an organization and social movement actor.

### 6.1.2 Applying the ideological schema

The first aspect that serves to understand the fundamental beliefs of an ideological group, according to Van Dijk, is the aspect of *identity*. At this level of discourse, Van Dijk suggests asking the questions of ‘Who are we’ and ‘Who belongs to us?’. The first paragraph of the document, as part of the chapter ‘*Presentacion*’ (sic!) already contains some valuable information regarding the identity constructed by the text’s authors. The CONAIE presents itself as being *guided by the historical experiences of the permanent struggle of the Indigenous Peoples, against Spanish colonialism, and imperialism*. (“La [...] CONAIE, guiándose en las experiencias históricas de la lucha permanente de los Pueblos Indígenas, contra el colonialismo español, [...] y el imperialismo” (CONAIE, 1994, p.1)). The identity constructed through the CONAIE’s discourse; is presented as one that is held together by historical ties. On the local level of discourse, these historical ties are expressed in such phrases as “los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas hemos logrado recuperar el Espacio Político usurpado en 1492” (CONAIE, 1994, p.5), which translates to, *the indigenous people and nationalities have achieved to retake the political space that*

*was stolen from us in 1492*. The CONAIE's political project was published only two years after the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbus arrival to the Americas and is using this number to recall memories of the repression that the indigenous population has suffered from ever since. Another example of this kind is "luego de largos años de lucha combativa, nos hemos organizado para poner fin a cinco siglos de opresión, miseria y pobreza" (CONAIE, 1994 p.5) (*After long years of fighting, we have organized to put an end to five centuries of repression, misery, and poverty*). The aspect of common history and shared experiences is closely connected to the injustices and repression that the indigenous people suffered from by being subjected to colonialism and the imperialist systems that followed the colonial period.

By referring to the indigenous peoples and communities as a whole and defining them by means of their historic struggle, the text is also defining them in opposition to the oppressors, hence creating an 'ingroup' (the indigenous communities) and an 'outgroup' (the system of oppression). This creation of an in-group and an out-group also serves to find an answer to the question of "Who are we?", while creating typical properties of an ideological discourse. This identifying question is not only answered by referring to ethnic or national ties, but by referring to the collective experience of a common, historical struggle against domination. This struggle is expressed on the lexical level by the frequent use of phrases surrounding "la lucha" (*the fight* or *the struggle*). The identifying meaning of this topic is shown in the following examples.

- (1) "la lucha de los pueblos indígenas se ha convertido en una fuerza política alternativa a nivel nacional e internacional" (*the struggle of the indigenous people has turned into an alternative political force on a national and international level*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.5)
- (2) "La CONAIE convoca a todos los hombres y mujeres que luchan contra la injusticia social" (*The CONAIE calls on all men and women who fight against social injustice*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.1)
- (3) "la lucha decisiva por la liberación política y económica" (*the fight for the political and economical liberation*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.6).

(4) la lucha de hoy y del futuro, hacia la construccion de la Nueva Sociedad Humanista” (*the fight of today of future, towards the construction of the new, humanistic society*”) (CONAIE, 1994, p.1)

This terminology around the words fight and fighting, can be regarded as having an identifying function in deepening the lines between the ‘in-group’ and the ‘out-group’. The in-group, in this case the indigenous population, appears to be willing to defend their rights, making use of all measures necessary, an aspect that will be analyzed further under the aspect of resources. Example (2) shows the identifying function among members of the in-group as well as the allies of the indigenous people that come together in fighting against social injustices. Even so, the fight of the indigenous people is not only directed against their oppressors and the injustices the current political system is continuing to cause, but also works to overcome the current system and creates something new as example (3) and (4) show. Furthermore, the struggle of the indigenous people is described as an alternative political force, in example (1).

The question of “Who belongs to us?” can be answered from a similar perspective, working with the terminology of an in-group and an out-group. The ‘us’ consists of the indigenous population that has suffered oppressions and exclusion by the dominant sectors of society since the time of colonization. The feeling of belonging, of building a collective is not only created through the retelling of the common history of the indigenous people, but especially by referring to the oppression the indigenous people have suffered, since the arrival of the colonizers.

However, the discourse that evolves around the subject of indigenous identity also shows an inclusive side that creates a broader space of belonging and possible participation. The discourse expresses solidarity with other minorities and calls for a peaceful coexistence and the creation of a plurinational state that respects the diverse reality of Ecuador as a country and protects the rights of all nationalities. The main objective of the plurinational state is defined as *achieving economic, political, cultural, technological and scientific equality of the Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities, and other nationalities, guaranteeing the satisfaction of the materialistic and spiritual needs of the whole Society and enhancing the development of man and the conservation of nature* (“El Nuevo Estado Plurinacional

[...] con el objetivo principal de lograr la igualdad económica, política, cultural, tecnológica y científica de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, y demás nacionalidades, garantizando la satisfacción de las necesidades materialistas y espirituales de toda la Sociedad y potencializando del desarrollo del hombre y la conservación de la naturaleza”. (CONAIE, 1994, p.11)).

The CONAIE is calling upon all people, but especially those who have been subjected to inequality and repression, to fight against social injustice and economic exploitation to come together to build a new economic model. The construction of a plurinational state is presented as the only solution to all *social sectors prostrated and relegated to subhuman standards of living*. These people are told that there is only one path to solve their problems and that is *the decisive struggle for the construction of a New Pluralistic and Participatory Nation*. (“Que los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas y demás sectores sociales postrados y relegados a niveles de vida infrahumanos tenemos un solo camino para solucionar nuestras [...] problemas, y es la lucha decisiva por la [...] construcción de una Nueva Nación Pluralista y participativa” (CONAIE, 1994, p.6)) Another aspect, that expresses a more inclusive concept of identity, is the discourse that is created around the coexistence and living in harmony of humans and nature. This coexistence of humans and nature is further described in the section “humanismo integral” (*integral humanism*) (CONAIE, 1994 p.11). *Integral humanism* is described as something that the indigenous people and nationalities actively practice, while emphasizing the fact that these are the people that have survived the genocide and dehumanization by western civilization (CONAIE; 1994 p.11). The concept of integral humanism stands in relation to the concept of plurinationality, focusing on the respect and recognition of the historic rights of all nations that build the Ecuadorian territory and that creates visibility for the injustices that happened against indigenous people, yet building unity between all nationalities to achieve the afore mentioned peaceful coexistence between humans and nature.

When looking at these structures we can already notice some discursive topics, also defined as *macro-propositions*. The discourse evolving around indigenous identity constructs the discursive topic of a struggle against domination and oppression. Looking at this topic more closely, we notice that it is constructed around the discourse of restoring justice and retaking the space that was violently taken by the Spanish colonizers, as seen



in the quote introduced at the beginning of this section. Another example that transmits this notion of restoring justice is the following:

- (5) “Nuestra lucha pretende restablecer los derechos políticos y económicos colectivos negados por los sectores dominantes”

*(Our struggle aims to restore the collective political and economic rights denied by the dominant sectors)* (CONAIE, 1994, p.7).

As shown in example (5) the CONAIE is not only highlighting and denouncing the injustices that indigenous people suffered from and are still suffering but also demanding action to retake what was taken from them by the colonizers and the following systems of domination. These reconquered spaces are not only taken to reclaim power, but also to fill them with new meaning. The following is expressed in the phrase “recogiendo el pensamiento político” (*retaking the political thinking*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.1), intending a restructuring of the political system and developing a space to express the discourse surrounding indigenous identity.

The second category of Van Dijk’s ideological schema concerns the activities of a social group. These activities are not only guided by the question of “What do we do?”, but also by the question of “What is our role in society?”. The role that the CONAIE takes up as an organization, is essentially defined as leading the historical fight against Spanish colonialism, the republican-constitutionalist regime, and imperialism. It is the indigenous people’s task to shed light on the social injustices and the economic exploitation that have been working to suppress the rights of minorities since 1492 (CONAIE 1994, p.5). The question of “What is our role in society?”, necessarily leads to a reflection about “What is our position in society?”. The social position that the CONAIE has historically taken, is expressed on the discursive level as one guided by marginalization and oppression by the dominant systems, subsequently resulting in a form of systematic oppression. The discursive topic of systematic injustice and inequality is created around such phrases as:

- (6) “La marginación, discriminación, opresión y exclusión en la que nos han sumido los sectores dominantes” (*the marginalization, the discrimination, oppression, and exclusion that the dominant sectors have exposed us to*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.5).
- (7) “El sector hegemónico se ha encargado de aislarnos, dispersarnos y dividirnos” (*the hegemonic sector has taken on the task of isolating us, dispersing us, and dividing us*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.13)

Example (6) shows some of the lexical variety that is used to highlight the scope of oppression that the indigenous population finds itself subjected to on a discursive level. Example (7) expresses the notion of powerlessness, of being subject to a higher power that is using its resources to push certain groups of society to its margins to deny them real political participation. However, concerning their role in society, the CONAIE also constitutes a political project that suggests an alternative proposal to the political system currently in place. It is the role of the CONAIE to promote this project among the different sectors of society, such as peasants, workers, women, and students and to mobilize these sectors to actively support indigenous population in the creation of this project (CONAIE 1994, p.1). The CONAIE's social position is described as a marginalized one, caused by historical repression and the struggles against a continuing state of domination. The discourse of oppression and suffered injustices positions the indigenous population on the outskirts of society on one hand, while creating a rhetoric of resistance that can have a unifying function on the other hand. It is thus not only the role of the indigenous movement to create an alternative democratic model to the current status quo but to solve underlying structural problems of society and to create awareness for the injustices that the current status quo brings with it on a global level. This attempt to present a solution to global problems is expressed in example (8):

- (8) “Presentamos a la sociedad nacional e internacional nuestro ‘Proyecto Político’, que señala el camino para solucionar los graves problemas del subdesarrollo, la dependencia, y la corrupción política-administrativa desde sus raíces en sus

orígenes” (*We present to the national and international society our 'Political Project', which points the way to solve the serious problems of underdevelopment, dependence, and political-administrative corruption from their roots in their origins*) (CONAIE 1994, p.1).

In order to create awareness for the need of a new political system, the practice of *transnational solidarity* is crucial in defining the activities and the indigenous movement’s role in society. Within the plurinational state that the CONAIE aims at creating, the principle of international solidarity is one that will be permanently practiced and that denounces any form of hegemonic aggression and flawed democratic systems (CONAIE, 1994, p.14).

The next category of the ideological schema is formed by the goal of the organization’s activities. The ultimate goal of the CONAIE’s activities, is the transformation of the current political system of a hegemonic, uni-national nation state that is described as anti-democratic and repressive (CONAIE, 1994 p.7), into a plurinational, democratic society that guarantees the permanent participation of indigenous people in the decision making of the plurinational state (CONAIE, 1994, p.12). Furthermore, the CONAIE calls for the fulfillment of the rights of the indigenous population on the one hand while also demanding a new, inclusive form of democracy that ensures the participation of all sectors of society, on the other hand (CONAIE, 1994, p.5).

The plurinational state that the CONAIE aims at creating shall not only consider the interests of its population on a demographic level, but the diversity of the population has to be reflected directly, on the level of the government, as shown in the following statement:

- (9) “La democracia que construiremos, garantizará la plena y permanente participación de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades en la toma de decisiones en el ejercicio del poder político del Estado Plurinacional” (*The democracy that we will build will guarantee the full and permanent participation of Peoples and*

*Nationalities in decision-making in the exercise of political power of the Plurinational State*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.1).

As example (9) shows, the political system has to be transformed on a structural level, overcoming the century-old structures of colonialism and imperialism. As mentioned before, the CONAIE does not simply want to take power, but is working to achieve the transformation of the conception of power, from something that is exclusive and repressive to a system that allows for the equal participation of all sectors of society.

The next category of Van Dijk's scheme are the norms and values that define a movement's activities. The values that define the CONAIE as an organization as represented on the discursive level, are based on the construction of the plurinational nation-state. The CONAIE criticizes the fact that in Ecuador the fundamental principles of democracy, namely: equality, liberty, fraternity and social harmony have not been respected and that it will be precisely the role of the new plurinational state to adhere to these democratic norms, as seen in the following example:

- (10) “Que el Ecuador es una Sociedad Plurinacional en formación y que debemos desarrollarla teniendo en cuenta los procesos de desarrollarlo ininterrumpidos de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades indígenas, por lo que propugnamos el establecimiento de un Estado Plurinacional y Pluricultural”. (*Ecuador is a plurinational society in formation and we have to develop it keeping in mind the processes of uninterrupted development of indigenous peoples and nationalities, for which we advocate the establishment of a Plurinational and Pluricultural State*) (CONAIE, 1994, p.6).

Example (10), describes the construction of the plurinational state as a process that will be established over time, keeping in mind the democratic norms and human rights of all nationalities. The second chapter of the CONAIE's program describes nine basic concepts, which contain the norms and values that the political project is based on. The concepts which are all connected with each other, are the ones of *integral humanism*,

*communitarianism, the plurinational and communitarian democracy, plurinationality, unity in diversity, auto determination, sovereignty, independency, and international solidarity.* One of the most important concepts is the one of unity in diversity, defined in example (11):

- (11) “La Unidad en la Diversidad garantizará la constitución y consolidación de la Nacion Ecuatoriana, que el Estado Plurnacional deberá impulsar, con la participación y compromise de todas las Nacionalidades hasta alcanzar el desarrollo económico, politico y social en un marco de mutual cooperación, reciprocidad e igualdad”. (*The Unity in Diversity will guarantee the constitution and consolidation of the Ecuadorian Nation, which the Plurinational State will have to promote, with the participation and commitment of all the Nationalities until reaching the economic, political and social development in a framework of mutual cooperation, reciprocity and equality*). (CONAIE, 1994, p.13).

The quote expresses some of the principal values of the organization as constructing a safe living space for all and improving the visibility and participation of minorities, while creating an economic model that allows for the equal participation of all. The principle of ‘integral humanism’, as defined on page 28, emerges from the inhumane crimes that the indigenous population suffered from. It is based on the interrelation between humans, nature and society and intends to create better living standards for the individual being as well as for the collective.

The value of *communitarianism* is based on the collective character of a society that drives of the active participation of all its members. Although the principle is one that the indigenous population has always practiced, it is one that has changed overtime, adapting to economic and political processes. (CONAIE 1994, p.11). The principle of communitarianism is guided by the vision of a plurinational and communitarian democracy. This model democracy is based on the values of *pluri-nationalism* (“plurinacionalismo”), *unity in diversity* and *self-determination*. The concept of *pluri-nationalism* recognizes the right of all nationalities to live on their own territories and to live on these territories under their own, autonomous administration (right to *self-*

*determination*) to be able to develop themselves economically, socially and culturally and to contribute to the overall, integral development of the pluri-national nation-state (CONAIE, 1994, p.12). *Unity in diversity*, according to the CONAIE, means, to not only recognize and affirm the rights of all nationalities in theory, but to recognize them without placing one above the other. *Unity in diversity* means, that all sectors have to work together and participate in the process of achieving a state of true cooperation and equality (CONAIE; 1994, p.13). The value *of sovereignty*, replaces the interests of the hegemonic state and the dominant sector by including all the sectors of society in the equal exercise of power (CONAIE, 1994, p.14). By calling for the complete independency of the Ecuadorian plurinational nation-state, the CONAIE criticizes economic or political dependency of any kind and recognizes the right of all peoples to free themselves of these *oppressive systems* (“Reconocemos el derecho de todos los Pueblos a liberarse de estos sistemas opresivos” (CONAIE, 1994, p.14). The importance of *international solidarity* has been mentioned before and builds on the rejection of all forms of colonial and neocolonial oppression and advocating for mutual respect between all indigenous peoples and other communities that have suffered from the oppression of these systems.

Concerning the relations of an ideological group, Van Dijk suggests asking the questions of “Who are our friends?” and “Who are our enemies”? Regarding the process of building relations with other groups, the CONAIE expresses its solidarity for other minorities such as Afro-Ecuadorians and others, and calls other social groups such as women, peasants and students to join in the construction of the plurinational state. Regarding the topic of group relations, the discursive structures of the text show a clear polarized structure expressed in ‘a *us versus them* style’ rhetoric. The organization’s enemies are clearly described in the form of the hegemonic, neoliberal nation-state and the oppressive system of (neo)-colonialism. As outlined in the previous sections, the hegemonic system is accused of being anti-democratic and exclusive. Having said that, those lines of *us versus them* are not created around competing social groups, but between oppressed parts of society and the dominant system. At this stage of the text, the discourse created by the CONAIE differs from the strictly polarized ‘us versus them’ structure that is presented by Van Dijk in his

theory on ideology and discourse. The text also shows a different approach to *actor descriptions*, since it does not describe individual actors as the group's enemies, but instead the systems of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and the hegemonic nation state. These systems are accused of systematically oppressing the indigenous population and other minorities. When it comes to the description of the ingroup however, the actor descriptions are more specific. The *ingroup* consists of the indigenous people and nationalities that have their territories within the Ecuadorian nation state. In calling for transnational solidarity in between groups that have traditionally been excluded from the hegemonic nation state the discourse extends the boundaries of the *in-group*. In doing so, the text goes beyond the classic *us versus them* structures that typically depict forms of ideological discourse and creates the possibility of participation for members that might not identify as members of the ingroup. The notion of collectivity is created by the frequent use of the first plural verb form. The frequent use of and repetition of phrases such as “nuestra meta” (*our goal*) or “nuestra lucha” (*our struggle*), at the beginning of successive paragraphs (CONAIE 1994, p.7), creates the feeling of collectivity, addressing not only the members of the in-group but also other recipients of the text, for example social groups such as women, workers, and peasants, but also members of the military and democratic politicians, that are specifically addressed to join the construction of a new socio-political project.

Regarding a group's resources, Van Dijk suggests asking the question “What materials or symbolic resources form the basis of our (lack of) power and our position in society?”. The resources that the CONAIE makes use of consist in utilizing the public space and the rights that are guaranteed by the national constitution to defend themselves and to make use of their human rights to achieve the liberation of the exploited and oppressed sectors of society, as shown in the following example.

- (12) “Nuestra lucha pretende restablecer los derechos políticos y económicos colectivos negados por los sectores dominantes, a través de todos los medios institucionales, o agorando el ultimo recurso de autodefensa permitido por los organismos internacionales por la constitución vigente” (*Our struggle aims to re-*

*establish the collective political and economic rights neglected by the dominant sectors, through all institutional means, or by using the last resort of self-defense allowed by international orchestras and by the current Constitution.)* (CONAIE, 1994, p.7)

The group resources also manifest themselves in taking advantage of the communitarian character of the proposed political project, hence of the active participation of all its members (CONAIE, 1994, p.11). Another aspect that should not be neglected in terms of symbolic resources of the indigenous movement, are its ties to the international community. The CONAIE claims that its work has been recognized by international institutions and society in general as an alternative, political force (CONAIE, 1994, p.5). Furthermore, the CONAIE is actively practicing international solidarity with other nations that have suffered from the oppression of hegemonic systems. This solidarity can also serve as a type of network that is promoting the cause of the CONAIE on an international level.

### 6.1.3 Frame analysis

The CONAIE's political project, aims to offer an alternative to the system of the hegemonic nation-state that is held responsible for the century-long oppression of indigenous people and other minorities. The project is not introduced as something that can be achieved by relying on the strength of a few, but as something that needs the diverse sectors of society to come together as a collective. In terms of framing activities, diagnostic framing, as well as prognostic framing, can be observed. Motivational framing can be observed to a lesser extent than the first two. The diagnostic frame does not criticize a particular aspect of the social system, but more so finds the whole system to be flawed and thus suggests replacing it as a whole. As a social organization, the CONAIE finds the hegemonic and (post)colonial system to be wrong as such and blames the actors that are holding this system in place for the systematic oppression of the indigenous population and other minorities. The diagnostic frame finds the current system to be unjust in itself and to deprive the indigenous population of their historic rights.

The prognostic frame, then goes on to present the construction of the plurinational state as a solution to the problems of the current status quo. The plan of attack, which forms



part of the prognostic frame, consists in calling upon all oppressed and disadvantaged parts of societies, in line with the diagnostic frame that calls out the injustices of the current system. The plan of attack furthermore consists in creating international solidarity and broadening the boundaries of the in-group to gain more strength as a collective. Concerning the motivational frame, the analyzed texts introduces as set of vocabulary of motive that is created around the discursive topic of systematic injustice. Concerning the importance of taking immediate action, the text focuses on the transformation of society as a process more so than achieving immediate change. The project that the CONAIE presents is built upon the historic struggle of indigenous people and is presented as a change on all levels of society and as a solution not only to present, but also future generations.

In terms of translating movement specific grievances into discourses of larger relevance, three main topics can be observed, namely the discourse surrounding human rights, economic exploitation and environmental destruction. The topic of indigenous justice and indigenous rights is connected to the larger discourse of human rights. At the beginning of the text, the CONAIE addresses all men and women that fight against economic exploitation, racial discrimination and the violation of human rights (CONAIE, 1994, p.1). Although the topic of human rights is mostly connected to the discourse around indigenous justice, the text speaks to all sectors of society, especially to those that have traditionally been exploited by the dominant sectors of society, such as peasants and other members of the working class. The topic of environmental justice is connected to indigenous forms of living on the one side, practicing the principle of integral humanism that is based on the relation between humans, nature and the overall society. On the other side, the discourse surrounding the preservation of nature is directed towards the human race as a whole that will be affected by the environmental destruction that is tolerated by the dominant sectors.

## 6.2 Discursive strategies in the protests of October 2019

The second stage of analysis will apply the presented methodological approach to a series of press releases published by the CONAIE during the protests of October 2019. The press releases will be analyzed in chronological order, applying Van Dijk's

terminology of ideological discourse. The discursive topics will be examined while keeping the observations of the previous chapter in mind. Special attention will be given to such stylistic devices as interdiscursivity and intertextuality. The chronological part of the chapter will close with the analysis of a short excerpt of the utterances of the CONAIE during the dialogue with the Ecuadorian government that marked the end of the twelve days of mobilization. Thereafter, the movement's in-group and out-group relations will be examined, before giving a closer look to the movement's resources and mobilizing strategies. This second part of the analysis will set the stage for the discussion of the results according to the sub-questions of this paper and the overall problem-formulation.

### 6.2.1 Twelve days of protests

In opposition to the *political program* analyzed in the previous chapters, the documents analyzed below are press releases, meaning that they are designed to give an immediate reaction to current political developments. The documents are written in a more spontaneous manner, designed to reach the general public by publishing the statements on the organization's official social media channels. The first press release issued by the CONAIE, regarding the economic measures announced on October first, was published two days thereafter and is titled "Frente al paquetazo neoliberal y el Gobierno de los ricos" (*Against the neoliberal package and the government of the rich*). The title shows clear polarized structures, referring to the government as the government of the upper class and to the presented fiscal measures as the neoliberal package. By accusing politicians of governing exclusively for the wealthy part of society, the text's authors do not only create an opposition between the social movement and the government, but also divide society into those that are said to benefit from the taken measures and those who suffer from them. In the text's first paragraph, the government is accused of aggravating the exploitation of indigenous people by working in favor of the imperialist system represented by the IMF and the country's bourgeoisie. In defense of the national territories the CONAIE announces measures for an unlimited amount of time:

(13)“Con la unidad del pueblo en resistencia activa, no permitiremos la imposición de las políticas económicas del FMI, ni las privatizaciones, ni la flexibilización y desregulación laboral, así como ninguna medida económica que afecte y empobrezca al pueblo ecuatoriano, de igual manera, en continuidad con la lucha desde los territorios indígenas exigimos que se declare al país libre de minería metálica” (CONAIE, 2019, October 3)

*(With the unity of the people in active resistance, we will not allow the imposition of the economic policies of the IMF, nor privatization, nor labor flexibility and deregulation, nor any economic measure that affects and impoverishes the Ecuadorian people, in the same way, in continuity with the struggle from the indigenous territories, we demand that the country be declared free of metallic mining".)*

As shown in example (13), the CONAIE first and foremost rejects any policies that are backed by the IMF before going into detail about the type of economic measures it criticizes. Besides criticizing the fiscal package, the CONAIE calls for an end of metallic mining in order to protect indigenous territories, while reminding the reader of the ongoing struggle of the indigenous population. Within this statement, different discursive topics and strategies can be observed. The involvement of the IMF is described as something that is imposed on the Ecuadorian society, and as standing in opposition to a plurinational form of democracy. In referring to the whole of the Ecuadorian people as being subjected to economic measures that they don't have any say in, the CONAIE is solidarizing itself with the wider popularity. Furthermore, by referring to the unity of the people, the authors of the text are highlighting the value of *unity in diversity*, that has previously been established as a foundational concept in the CONAIE's vision of a plurinational nation state. The authors of the text are thus using discursive elements that have been created in previous texts in news ways, applying the stylistic devise of interdiscursivity. In this case, interdiscursivity serves to appeal to movement members as well as possible new members by creating bonds between the diverse groups that see themselves affected by the economic measures.

The last two paragraphs of the first press release present another attempt for action mobilization:

(14) “Todos juntos a enfrentar el paquetazo neoliberal, convocamos a campesinos, trabajadores, ciudadanía, explotados del campo y la ciudad a sumar fuerzas en acciones contundentes y enfrentar en unidad al Gobierno entreguista de Lenín Moreno”. (CONAIE, 2019, October 3) (*All together to face the neoliberal package, we call peasants, workers, citizens, exploited from the countryside and the city, to join forces in forceful actions and confront in unity the treacherous government of Lenin Moreno.*)

As can be observed in example (14) the discursive structures show similarities to the CONAIE’s political project. While addressing peasants, workers, and other citizens, and asking them to join the movement in confronting the government, the out-group is clearly described as the president and his government that is accused of being treacherous and incapable of facing the protestors. The CONAIE is thereby introducing a diagnostic frame at the very beginning of the mobilization. The Ecuadorian government, represented by president Lenín Moreno is not only accused of selling out the country to the IMF and of governing exclusively for the rich, but also of contradicting the interests of the popular sectors and accepting the impoverishment of the majority of the population.

On October 8, the CONAIE published a press release titled “Lenín Moreno instaure un regimen de terror” (*Lenín Moreno installs a regimen of terror*). The document explicitly attacks Lenín Moreno, using strongly polarized language. The statement is released in response to a curfew that the Ecuadorian government had previously installed. The reaction of the social movement actors to this event marks the immediate character of the communicative situation (“ante la expedición del Decreto 888 que dispone el Toque de queda, restricción de movilidad y tránsito, desde las 20:00 hasta 5:00 en áreas estratégicas e instituciones públicas” (*in the face of the expulsion of Decree 888 which provides for a curfew, mobility and transit restriction from 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. in strategic areas and public institutions*)). The CONAIE accusing the president of installing a *regimen of terror*, can be considered as a strategy for consensus mobilization, intending to reach more people

to join the protests by blaming the president for disrespecting democratic norms. Evaluating the scope of the curfew introduced by the government, the CONAIE states:

(15) “El Gobierno Nacional lo único que demuestra con estas acciones es su debacle, debilidad y la incapacidad de las autoridades para responder frente a la movilización social y el acumulado de acciones de resistencia vigentes desde el Movimiento Indígena en todo el territorio nacional, que a su vez, se traduce en el abandono del Palacio de Carondelet por parte del presidente Lenín Moreno” (CONAIE, October 8, 2019) (*The only thing that the National Government shows with these actions is its debacle, weakness and the incapacity of the authorities to respond to the social movement and the accumulation of resistance actions in force by the Indigenous Movement throughout the national territory, which in turn, translates into the abandonment of the Carondelet Palace by President Lenín Moreno.*)

By accusing the government of weakness and incapacity, the CONAIE is highlighting the strength of the movement, while emphasizing the weakness of those in power. Furthermore, the CONAIE is questioning the legitimacy of the measure within the framework of a democratic nation state. The CONAIE sees the measure of the curfew as one that was taken *in the style of a military dictatorship* (“al puro estilo de una dictadura militar”) and directly addresses national and international human rights institutions, asking them to stay observe the situation (CONAIE, October 8, 2019).

Regarding the movement’s claims, a sharpening of the general rhetoric can be noticed throughout the development of the mobilization and in the statement of October 8. The CONAIE emphasizes the permanence of the mobilization against the fiscal measures and repeats its claim of an end to extractivist policies in defense of indigenous territories. The movement’s leadership is emphasizing the fact that the mobilization will not stop until the government responds to their claims. In this context, the text author’s make use of the previously established rhetoric evolving around the words of ‘fight’ and ‘resistance’. Furthermore, a prognostic frame is introduced, presenting a clear plan of attack that consists in the strategic use of indigenous territories. With communities across the country

being prepared of using their constitutional right to self-defense, the CONAIE is pressuring the government to take action and to listen to the demands of the protestors.

(16) “Nuestras bases están organizados y con la agenda de lucha clara, [...] la concentración en Quito constituye una medida de presión de una parte de nuestra estructura ya que las acciones locales y provincias se mantienen a la espera de nuevas estrategias de lucha” (CONAIE, October 8, 2019) (*Our bases are organized and with an agenda for a clear struggle [...] the concentration in Quito constitutes a measure of pressure from a part of our structure since the local and provincial actions are being kept awaiting for new strategies of struggle.*).

Example (16), shows that the CONAIE uses its organizational structure reverse existing power relations and to put pressure on the government. The territorial distribution of the indigenous population across the country is used as a strategy reminding those in power of the indigenous people’s historical right to their lands that they are willing to defend.

After some of the protestors lose their lives in the clash with security forces<sup>8</sup>, the movement’s rhetoric starts to become more emotional. On October 10, the CONAIE released two statements, one issued in particular to account for their grief of their lost movement members, carrying the title “La Confederación de nacionales indígenas se declara the luto” (*The CONAIE, declares itself in mourning*). The government of Lenín Moreno and in particular two of his ministers, María Paula Roma and Oswald Jarrín, are accused of causing these deaths through the introduction of disproportionate security measures (CONAIE, 2019, October 10a). The CONAIE makes use of their fundamental value of *international solidarity*, emphasizing that they are communicating with several human rights organizations in order to pursue punitive measures against those responsible.

<sup>8</sup> On April 6, 2020, the Human Rights Watch released a report stating that out of the eleven people who were killed during the October protests, at least four appear to have been killed by security forces. However, the report also finds that protestors committed serious crimes against police and vandalized public and private property (Human Rights Watch, April 2020).

Accessed via <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/06/ecuador-lessons-2019-protests>

A second statement released on the same day is titled “A nuestras bases y al pueblo ecuatoriano” (*To our bases and the Ecuadorian people*). In the document’s first paragraph, the CONAIE renews its central claim and intensifies its anti-IMF rhetoric, stating “esto no para hasta que el FMI salga del Ecuador” (*this will not stop until the IMF leaves Ecuador*) (CONAIE, 2019, October 10b). In addition, the movement’s leadership explains that the protests are not only about the price of gasoline, but that it is a fight against the negative consequences of the fiscal package in general, highlighting the urgency of taking action:

- (17) “Este lucha no es por hoy, por el precio de la gasolina solamente, es para evitar que nos hipotequen el futuro, y que paguemos con hambre y pobreza de dos y tres generaciones, lo que no frenamos a tiempo hoy.” (CONAIE, 2019, October 10b). (*This fight is not for today, for the price of gasoline only, it is to avoid us mortgaging the future and paying with hunger and poverty of two and three generations, if we do not stop in time today*).

Example (17), shows both immediate need to take action, as well as the need for social change that outlasts the next generations. Regarding the movement’s activities, the leadership of the indigenous movement demands the activists to reinforce strategies such as the blocking of public roads and the occupation of public buildings, as well as the building of alliances with all sectors of society. These demands are embedded in a rhetoric of struggle, expressed in such phrases as “Mientras tanto la tarea es ir a la lucha” (*In the meantime the task is to go and fight.*) and “Renovar fuerzas” (*Renew forces*) (CONAIE, 2019, October 10). The CONAIE’s press release of October 11 (2019), presents another immediate response to political developments and its title reads “Sobre la llamada del presidente lenín moreno al ‘dialogo’” (*Concerning the invitation of president Lenín Moreno to a ‘dialogue’*). The placing of the word *dialogue* in quotation marks, indicates that the CONAIE does not regard this offer as a sincere step towards the protestors. Within the document, the CONAIE states that the president had previously invited the indigenous people to join in a dialogue with him, without however obtaining concrete results. The CONAIE thus rejects the invitation of the president, *until decree 883 will be lifted* (“hasta

que se derogue el decreto 883”), simultaneously increasing the pressure on the government to react to their demands (CONAIE, 2019, October 11).

On October 12, the CONAIE released another statement, shortly deciding to enter in a dialogue with the Ecuadorian government. The CONAIE explains that it is the responsibility of the indigenous people to deescalate the situation and to avoid a *blood bath* (“baño de sangre”), and therefore agrees to accept the president’s invitation to a dialogue to find solutions to the precarious situation that the country finds itself in (CONAIE, 2019, October 11). By taking on this responsibility, its emphasizing their positive image as the ideological in-group. Nevertheless, the text emphasizes that *there will be no real dialogue without the necessary guarantees of the integrity of the indigenous leaders across the national territory* (“No hay diálogo real sin las debidas garantías a la integridad de los dirigentes indígenas en todo el territorio nacional”), meaning that the mobilization will not stop until decree 883 will be lifted and that they expect the government to meet them on eye-level and guarantee the protection of all movement members. The organization also explains that the objective of the movement is not to simply enter into a dialogue with the government, but to achieve the *reorientation of the country’s economic policy* (“se trata de reorientar la política económica del país”), attempting to use the political space gained by the movement to change the system and integrate the ideas previously established in the CONAIE’s *political project*.

- (18) “Por ello, realizaremos los acercamientos para tratar la derogatoria del decreto 883, pero sostendremos las acciones de movilización a nivel nacional y en cada uno de los territorios, exhortando al gobierno para que existan las debidas garantías.” (CONAIE, 2019, October 11) (*Therefore, we will make efforts to discuss the repeal of Decree 883, but we will continue the mobilizing actions at the national level and in each of the territories, urging the Government to ensure that there are proper guarantees*).

On the day of the dialogue, October 13, the CONAIE published another statement in which the CONAIE thanks the Ecuadorian people and especially the Universities, labor unions, and other social organizations that formed part of the protest and stood in solidarity with



the indigenous movement. The CONAIE once more emphasizes that the plurinationality of the state of Ecuador has not been respected during the indigenous mobilization:

(19) “La violencia también se ha manifestado en el irrespeto al estatuto de plurinacionalidad del Estado y de los territorios indígenas, que han sido concesionados a empresas mineras y extractivas. Solicitamos que se respete la plurinacionalidad del Estado y que las concesiones extractivas sean analizadas bajo el ordenamiento jurídico vigente.” (CONAIE, 2019, October 13) (*The violence has also manifested itself in the lack of respect for the plurinationality of the State and of the indigenous territories, which have been granted to mining and extractive companies. We request the plurinationality of the State to be respected and for extractive concessions to be analyzed under the current legal system*).

Example (19), in addressing the extractivist policies of the Ecuadorian government, emphasizes once more that the indigenous population is not only fighting against the elimination of the fuel subsidies.

The dialogue between representatives of Ecuador’s indigenous movement and the Ecuadorian president, as well as other members of the government, was broadcasted live on national television. This section will give a small glance into the discourse that the representatives of the indigenous movement made use of during the negotiations. While the dialogue mostly presented a series of arguments for and against the presented fiscal measures, Jaime Vargas, the CONAIE’s president, took the opportunity to illustrate some of the general objectives of the movement as shown in the following example.

(20) “Los pueblos y nacionalidades [...] somos los que hemos planteado al Ecuador de construir un verdadero estado plurinacional, un estado de derecho, un estado donde exista libertades de expresión, [...] libertad para todos los hombres y mujeres del Ecuador [...] creo que hasta este momento no se ha cumplido el objetivo fundamental, el objetivo de un estado plurinacional.” (Secretaría general de comunicación de la presidencia, 2019, (17:48)) (*The people and nationalities [...]we are the ones who have raised the idea of founding a true plurinational state, a state of law with freedom of expression [...] freedom for all men and women of*

*Ecuador [...] We think until this moment the fundamental objective has not been met yet, the objective of a plurinational state)*

Example (20) shows that once given the public space the CONAIE uses this space to stand up for their fundamental principles, to create new meaning and to overall demands for the construction of a plurinational state that acts in the interest of all Ecuadorians. Vargas further demands a process of participative decision making to construct a country of true liberty. Lastly, Jamie Vargas addresses the president directly and asks him to change the country's structure as a whole, if he really wants to act in the people's favor:

(21) “señor presidente [...] si en verdad quiere seguir construyendo de nuestro país y de nuestro país de nuestro pueblo [...] cambie la estructura de todo el país. Hay hombres, jóvenes, profesionales, dispuestos a construir esta sociedad. “[Secretaría general de comunicación de la presidencia 52:45] (*Mr. president, if you really want to build out of our country a country of our people [...] you have to change its whole structure. There are men, women, professionals, that are prepared, ready to build this society*)

### 6.2.2 Group relations

The discourse that the CONAIE creates within its press releases around the category of *relations*, shows a clear polarized structure, creating an *in-* and an *out-group*, as well as showing the typical *us versus them* rhetoric found in the discourse of ideological groups. The in-group (standing for the pro-noun of *us*) consists of Ecuador's indigenous organizations, that announce the indefinite mobilization against the economic measures presented by the Ecuadorian government (CONAIE, 2019, October 3). The indigenous movement is addressing peasants, workers, citizens, the exploited from the country, and the city, to join forces and take action in confronting the government of Lenín Moreno (CONAIE, 2019, October 3). In the course of the protests the ties that the indigenous movement seeks to establish with other sectors of the Ecuadorian society are intensifying on a rhetorical level, as can be observed in the following quote:

(22) “Hemos vivido días de mucha agitación, nos hemos sorprendido de nuestra propia capacidad de lucha y resistencia, y hemos demostrado al mundo que el movimiento indígena y el pueblo ecuatoriano somos un solo puño, y en el lugar que nos ha dado la historia, hemos hecho temblar al poder” (*We have lived days of much agitation, we have been surprised by our own capacity for struggle and resistance, and we have shown the world that the indigenous movement and the Ecuadorian people are ‘one fist’, and in the place that the history has given us, we have made the power tremble*). (CONAIE, 2019, October 10)

Example (22), creates empathy among the diverse social sectors that have jointed the indigenous population in their protest against the governing class. However, there are signs that the in-group does not expand across the whole of the Ecuadorian population. Specifically, the CONAIE states that it represents the demands of the *working class, the students, peasants, indigenous, and the country’s impoverished sectors* (“el Movimiento indígena, el cual integra las demandas de la clases trabajadora, de estudiantes, campesinos, indígenas y los sectores empobrecidos del país” (CONAIE, 2019, October 11). The financial upper class, however, is included in the out-group, as can be seen in such expressions as *the government of the rich* and in example (23) that separate those who support the government from the popular sectors:

(23) “Quienes sostendrán a este gobierno [...] la clase empresarial, vende patria y pro imperialista, que quiere asegurar los préstamos del Fondo Monetario Internacional para que sus deudas, su crisis, la paguemos la clases trabajadora, los indígenas y los sectores populares” (CONAIE, 2019, October 10b) (*Those who will support this government [...] the business class, selling out the country, and pro-imperialist, who want to secure the loans from the International Monetary Fund so that their debts, their crisis, are paid by the working classes, the indigenous people and the popular sectors*).)

As shown by the example, the financial elites and business class of the country are accused of not only tolerating, but of using the working class to pay their debt.

The rhetoric surrounding the relations of the movement differs from the text examined in the first part of the analysis. The lines between the in-group and the out group are defined along the lines of the population, in contrast to the discourse created in the CONAIE's *political project* that is more abstract and stays within the rhetoric of the dominant system versus those oppressed by the dominant system. Within the discourse surrounding the recent process, the pronoun of *them* addresses the president, Lenín Moreno, his political allies, and the members of his government, in particular the ministers María Paula Romo and Oswaldo Jarrín. In addition, the rhetoric of us versus them is also directed at the systems of neoliberalism and imperialism as a whole and in particular against the IMF as an institution, which is expressed in the frequent use of phrases such as “Este no para hasta que el FMI salga del Ecuador” (*This doesn't stop until the IMF leaves Ecuador*), “Fuera FMI del Ecuador” (*IMF out of Ecuador*) (CONAIE, 2019, October 10) and “No permitiremos la imposición de las políticas del FMI” (*We will not allow the imposition of the IMF's politics*) (CONAIE, 2019, October 3). This type of vocabulary creates a motivational frame, urging the government to take action and simultaneously mobilizes the members of the popular sectors to solidarize themselves with the movement.

### 6.2.3 Resources and mobilizing strategies

One of the main discursive topics that is present throughout the CONAIE's mobilization against Lenín Moreno's fiscal package is the defense of and mobilization from indigenous territories. The subtitle of the CONAIE's first press release reads “El inicio de medidas de hecho indefinidas en todo el territorio nacional” (*the initiation of indefinite measures throughout the national territory*) (2019, October 3). The CONAIE is highlighting its power towards the government by referring to the indigenous people and their territories as well as the strategic positioning of other allies, spread throughout the country. Moreover, this strategy is used to radicalize the movement's activities when the CONAIE declares that the movement should maintain roadblocks and takeovers of governmental and public buildings, while calling for ongoing and increasing assemblies in all communities and alliances with all sectors of the people (CONAIE, 2019, October 10). The CONAIE emphasizes the organizational structures of its movement that allow for the

strategic use of their power. The same is the case when the movement's leaders talk about the concentration of the mobilization in Ecuador's capital Quito. On October 8, the CONAIE (2019) states that *the concentration in Quito constitutes a pressure measure of a part of our structure since the local actions and provinces are being kept awaiting for new strategies of struggle* ("la concentración en Quito constituye una medida de presión de una parte de nuestra estructura ya que las acciones locales y provincias se mantienen a la espera de nuevas estrategias de lucha"). Again, the CONAIE is putting pressure on the government and implying that the protests in Quito are only a temporal solution in the hope of coming to an agreement with the government, but that the population positioned throughout the various territories is set to take further action if needed. While the power of the indigenous movement is emphasized, the government is portrayed as being weak and incapable of showing a proper response in the face of indigenous mobilizations (CONAIE, 2019, October 8). This frequent referral to the national indigenous territories on a discursive level also connects to the historic struggle of the indigenous people for sovereignty over their territories.

A central demand of the indigenous movement and a discursive topic that is closely connected to the strategic use of their territories, is the CONAIE's demand to end all mining activities. In the very beginning of the protests, the CONAIE declares that in continuity with the struggle of the indigenous territories the country should be declared free of mining (CONAIE, 2019, October 3). More than just opposing extractivist activities as such, the CONAIE is insisting upon its right to self-determination over their own territories, as manifested in their political Project.

Another resource that the CONAIE uses to stabilize their power, is the cooperation with and the use of their relations to international organizations and institutions. After some of the protestors had lost their lives due to the use of excessive violence by the security forces, the CONAIE stated that *they are* in coordination with various human rights organizations to continue with the necessary and relevant processes, so that this crime against humanity does not remain in impunity (CONAIE, 2019, October 10a). Similar actions can be perceived concerning the government's installment of a curfew, which causes the CONAIE to address international human rights organizations and asking them to evaluate the situation according to democratic principles (CONAIE, 2019, October 8).

Lastly, the CONAIE is also highlighting the words of solidarity they received throughout the protests, strengthening their position towards the government on a symbolic level and subliminally using this international attention that the protests are receiving, as a form of pressure towards the government to take action:

(24)“Mientras en el mundo cientos de organizaciones nos expresaron solidaridad frente a embajadas, emission de comunicados de respaldo, demostrando que no estamos solos y que esta lucha no es solo de Ecuador” (CONAIE, 2019, October 12). (*In the meantime, hundreds of organizations expressed their solidarity with us in front of embassies, issuing communiqués of support, demonstrating that we are not alone and that this struggle is not only Ecuador's*)

## 7 Discussion

### 7.1 Central movement topics and their opposition neoliberalism

The foundational terms of the CONAIE as an organization have been introduced in the analysis of their political project (Chapter 6.1). The concept of integral humanism, as one of the defining terms of the movement, establishes the peaceful relation between humans and nature and respects the right of all living beings. Integral humanism stands in direct opposition to extractivist policies, that are part of the system of neoliberalism in Latin America, as the countries started to orient themselves towards economic growth and foreign investment since the end of the 1980s. The values of communitarianism, self-determination, sovereignty, and independency point into a similar direction. The concept of communitarianism, as described by the CONAIE and practiced by Ecuador's indigenous people relies on the equal participation of all, practicing a socio-economic system based on a collective character. Essentially, by relying on the equal economic participation of all, this concept does not only stand in opposition to neoliberalism, but to the system of capitalism. The principle of self-determination goes one step further and proclaims the right of the indigenous people to freely choose their own socio-political system, free of any form of dependency, within the plurinational state. The values of sovereignty and independency also reject any forms of economic dependency, while cooperating with the

international community to achieve peace, equality and solidarity between all people. The principle of international solidarity describes the permanent and peaceful practice of solidarity with the international community as standing in opposition to all hegemonic systems that are based on the power of a few states over many others. Lastly, the concepts of plurinationality, the plurinational and communitarian democracy and unity in diversity, all refer to the construction of a plurinational state. The plurinational state ultimately achieves the economic, political, and cultural equality of all people, showing respect for humans and nature alike. As outlined in chapter 6.2 on neoliberalism, the participation of ethnic and cultural minorities in neoliberalist systems is mostly restricted to a symbolic level, through the promotion of festivals and other cultural events to maintain the inclusionary image of neoliberalism, however denying those social groups real political and social equality. The main topics that define the CONAIE as a movement, are not constructed to specifically oppose neoliberalism, but aim at the creation of something entirely new, filling the political space that the colonizers took from the indigenous people and restoring justice.

## 7.2 From local claims to national claims – framing activities

The fundamental beliefs and values of the CONAIE, as they are presented in their *political project*, evolve around the construction of a plurinational nation state, restorative justice for the indigenous people, focusing on the auto determination over their historic territories, and the value of unity in diversity, guaranteeing the equal participation of all social groups in the political decision making process. Furthermore, the dominant systems are being accused of systematically repressing minorities and disrespecting the diverse social reality of a plurinational society. On a local level, the CONAIE claims the right to govern over their own territories, which implies the end of all extractivist activities, to achieve independence from the hegemonic nation-state and its post-colonial structures, as well as the respect of the individual rights of all nationalities.

In October 2019, Ecuador's indigenous movement ran a social movement campaign based on the condemnation of any neoliberal policies imposed on the country by its government and the IMF. The central demand of the movement was the revocation of Decree 883 that eliminated fuel subsidies, which led to a dramatic increase of gasoline

prices for all social sectors. The mobilization around this issue consequentially built the base of the movement's collective action frame. By blaming the politicians of governing exclusively for the rich and for making the popular sectors pay for the mismanagement of the fiscal budget, the social movement actors are using valid political ideas that fulfil the purpose of action mobilization. As mentioned in chapter 5 on neoliberalism, Ecuador has had a history with presidents running on an anti-neoliberal campaign and then changing their political direction shortly after being elected into office. The same is true for Lenín Moreno, who served as vice-president under Rafael Correa. Correa, who strongly supported his successor's campaign shaped the image of financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF as the public enemy and surely expected Moreno to keep up this rhetoric. However, Lenín Moreno did not only run on a much more moderate campaign than Correa, but officially broke ties with him in early 2018 when he won the referendum that would make it impossible for Correa to get reelected. Moreno also made an effort to stabilize the strained relations with the United States, starting with the invitation of vice president Mike Pence in June 2018 and continuing with the termination of Julian Assange's political asylum in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, in April 2019. Considering his agreement with the IMF that was made behind closed doors two month earlier, Moreno made up for an easy target of the CONAIE's anti-neoliberal frame. As elaborated during the analysis, the CONAIE accuses Moreno of selling out the country and governing exclusively for the rich, thus mainly appealing in particular to popular sectors such as students, the working class and ethnic minorities other than the indigenous population. However, there are two more collective action frames that can be detected within the rhetoric of the indigenous movements, namely the ones of environmentalism and human rights. In their political project, the CONAIE accuses the neoliberalist system of exploiting humans and nature alike and of being responsible for environmental destruction (CONAIE, 1994, p.1). The discourse surrounding the 2019 mobilization picks up environmental issues by demanding respect for indigenous territories and the termination of metallic mining. Human rights issues are raised surrounding the harsh security measures taken by the government against protestors, appealing to international organizations to monitor the constitutional legality of those measures. While basing the discourse expressed in press-releases and other democratic statements on the shared beliefs of their movement members,



the CONAIE appears to the wider structures of society by accusing the government of acting in the interest of imperialist institutions, while disrespecting the diverse needs and interests of its own population.

### 7.3 From a resistance identity to a project identity?

The discourse developed by the CONAIE in the presentation of its political project presents a clear ideology of struggle against a form of systematic oppression. As explained by Van Dijk (2013), ideologies, as anti-racism, pacifism or environmentalism, are no less ideologies than ideologies of domination, such as racism, socialism or classism. Ideologies of struggle do not serve to legitimate domination, but “precisely to provide the sociocognitive basis for the struggle against it” (Van Dijk, 2013, p.2). The CONAIE describes its pursued new form of democracy as anti-colonialist, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-segregationist. Following Van Dijk’s theory, ideological forms of discourses are typically polarized and create an ‘us versus them’ type of discourse. Ideologies are based on shared believes of the members of a social group, but are seldom accepted as common believes by the whole socio-cultural community. The ‘us-versus-them’ rhetoric is clearly reflected in the political project of the CONAIE, calling out the current state of democracy as flawed and repressive (CONAIE, 1994, p.12), and instead promoting the construction of a new, plurinational democracy that expresses the plurinational reality of Ecuador as a country. When applying these factors to the terminology of Manuel Castells, much speaks for the construction of a resistance identity by the CONAIE. As Castell’s (2010) explains, a resistance identity usually makes use of materials inherited from history, such as god, nation, ethnicity and locality. Ecuador’s indigenous movement clearly identifies itself along the lines of ethnicity and locality. These identifying factors form the basis of their collective struggle against the century long oppression of dominant systems. According to Castells, resistance identities can generate new project identities, if they aim at the transformation of society as a whole. At the core of those new project identities, Castells finds the factor of territorial identity as a fundamental anchor of belonging. These “communes of resistance defend their space, [...] against the placeless logic of space of flows characterizing social domination in the

information age” (Castells, 2010, p.423). The territorial identity is connected to the concept of communes of resistance. Considering the structural crisis of civil society and the nation-change, Castell sees identity groups that organize around such communes of resistance as “the main potential source of social change in the network society” (2010, p.70). As the results of the analysis show, Ecuador’s identification based on their national territories does not only define their political project but is also a recurring factor in their discourse constructed during the protests of 2019 and one that is at the center of their organizational strategies, as shown in chapter 6.2. Around the construction of an identity that is based on these national territories, the indigenous movement suggests the construction of a plurinational state, guaranteeing the equal political participation of all social sectors. In change, Castells speaks of the emergence of a resistance identity “when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, in so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure” (2010, xxvi).

In conclusion, it can be said that the CONAIE as a social and political organization shows clear characteristics of a project identity. The CONAIE’s political project is designed to transform society as a whole. In 2007 the plurinational state was introduced into the Ecuadorian constitution, which marked a big success for the movement and is another clear indicator of the development of a project identity. However, as explained in the Literature review of this study, according to Phillip Altmann (2013), the term of *plurinationality* was introduced together with the term of *multiculturality*, which was favoured by liberal politicians, and in the end neither of the terms was defined in sufficient detail. As shown in the second part of the analysis and especially with the statement that Jamie Vargas gave during the dialogue with the government, the CONAIE is not seeing the current government acting in the interest of a plurinational state. Something that Castells views as the threat to this possibility of social change, is the “building of defensive identity in the terms of dominant institutions/ ideologies, reversing the value judgment while reinforcing the boundary”, which turns the excluded identity into an exclusionary identity itself (2010, p.9). While the CONAIE’s discourse shows very polarized structures, and clearly identifies the in-group versus the out-group, they also leave an open space for

those who want to join the in-group and join in the transformation of the overall structures of society.

## 8 Conclusion

The presented study is based on a pluralist approach and a two-level analysis. The combination of Van Dijk's ideological schema with a framing analysis and the application of Castell's theory of identity allowed for the development of a detailed understanding of the fundamental ideas and shared beliefs of Ecuador's indigenous movement. The movement's ideology based on the values of plurinationality, unity in diversity and the struggle for the indigenous people's right to their territories as defined in the *political project* of 1994, is clearly reflected throughout the mobilization of October 2019. By appealing to the popular sectors through including them in the ideological in-group and mobilizing against the government that is accused of governing exclusively for the upper class, the movement builds a valuable base for consensus mobilizations and creates a strong collective action frame. However, more than just restoring their role as a leading social movement actor in the face of new austerity measures that are threatening to increase poverty among those that are already struggling, the CONAIE is using its public platform to promote the transformation of society as a whole and demand the construction of a plurinational state that respects indigenous territories, ends extractivist activities and uses the principle of international solidarity to enable equal participation of all social sectors in the political decision making process.

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## Title Page

[Untitled illustration, logo of the CONAIE]. CONAIE. Retrieved from [https://twitter.com/CONAIE\\_Ecuador/photo](https://twitter.com/CONAIE_Ecuador/photo)



# PROYECTO POLITICO DE LA CONAIE



CONSEJO DE GOBIERNO  
1994



AUTOR: Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador - CONAIE

TEXTOS: CONAIE

IMAGENES: Dpto. de Comunicación - CONAIE

DIAGRAMACION  
Y DISEÑO: Informática - CONAIE  
248930, Quito

TIRAJE: 1000 Ejemplares

Texto aprobado por el IV Congreso de la CONAIE

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CONSEJO DE GOBIERNO DE LA CONAIE  
1994

**CONSEJO DE GOBIERNO INDIO ELEGIDO EN EL IV CONGRESO DE LA  
CONFEDERACION DE NACIONALIDADES INDIGENAS DEL ECUADOR  
CONAIE  
PERIODO 1.994 - 1.996**



PRESIDENTE: LUIS MACAS AMBULUDI  
VICEPRESIDENTE: RAFAEL PANDAM UVIINDIA  
DIRIGENTE DE PROMOCION Y ORGANIZACION: JOSE MARIA CABASCANGO  
DIRIGENTE DE TERRITORIOS, RECURSOS NATURALES, MEDIO AMBIENTE Y DESARROLLO: NINA PACARI VEGA  
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DIRIGENTE DE SALUD Y NUTRICION: MANUEL CASTILLO SANCHEZ

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## **PRESENTACION**

La Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador -**CONAIE**-, guiándose en las experiencias históricas de la lucha permanente de los Pueblos Indígenas, contra el colonialismo español, el régimen republicano constitucionista, y el imperialismo; y recogiendo el pensamiento político, así como las demandas históricas de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades, que anhelamos mejorar las precarias e infrahumanas condiciones de vida, transformar las estructuras políticas, económicas y sociales, y construir una Nación Pluralista y Democrática; presentamos a la sociedad nacional e internacional nuestro **"PROYECTO POLITICO"**, que señala el camino para solucionar los graves problemas del subdesarrollo, la dependencia, y la corrupción política-administrativa desde sus raíces y en sus orígenes.

El Proyecto Político que la CONAIE ha elaborado y defiende, es una propuesta alternativa que presentamos a los diferentes sectores sociales organizados, a los campesinos, obreros, mujeres, estudiantes, profesionales, intelectuales, religiosos, militares y políticos democráticos y humanistas.

En estos tiempos difíciles e impredecibles, en los que la pobreza, la miseria y la explotación se recrudece; y el neoliberalismo asalta los recursos nacionales, la CONAIE convoca a todos los hombres y mujeres que luchan contra la injusticia social, la explotación económica, la discriminación racial, la violación de los Derechos Humanos, la destrucción de la naturaleza, y la contaminación del medio ambiente, etc; a enarbolar el "Proyecto Político" que tiene como objetivo principal la construcción de un Nuevo Modelo de Estado y la Nación Plurinacional.

La Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, defiende e impulsa el presente Proyecto Político, que no es más que un instrumento teórico de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas; que guiará la lucha de hoy y del futuro, hacia la construcción de la Nueva Sociedad Humanista.



**1**

# **DECLARACION POLITICA**

Los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas hemos constituido una organización política nacional sólidamente estructurada, y con una clara ideología basada en nuestro propio accionar histórico - cultural; y nos proponemos construir la Nueva Nación Plurinacional.

A pesar de la marginación, discriminación, opresión y exclusión en la que nos han sumido los sectores dominantes que controlan el poder político, económico y militar; los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas hemos logrado recuperar el Espacio Político usurpado en 1492, para cuestionar y poner al descubierto la injusticia social y explotación económica, el ineficiente y caduco sistema jurídico-político y administrativo, así como el carácter antidemocrático del Estado y de las Instituciones de Poder.

Los objetivos políticos de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, pretenden garantizar el cumplimiento de nuestros derechos específicos, y propugna el desarrollo armónico y equilibrado de toda la sociedad en un marco de paz y plena democracia; por lo que **convocamos** a todos los sectores políticos y sociales que coexistimos en el actual territorio Ecuatoriano, a participar activa y creativamente en la solución de los graves problemas que históricamente nos agobian.

Los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas luego de estos cinco siglos de opresión y explotación colonialista y republicana, sacamos las siguientes conclusiones:

1. Que la lucha de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas se ha convertido en una fuerza política alternativa a nivel nacional e internacional, reconocida por los organismos internacionales y la sociedad en general.
2. Que en el Ecuador el "problema del indio", no es únicamente un problema pedagógico, eclesiástico o administrativo como señalan los sectores dominantes; sino que fundamentalmente es un problema económico-político estructural, y por lo mismo un problema nacional y que para solucionarlo requiere el concurso de toda la sociedad.

3. Que el actual Modelo de Estado, los gobiernos de turno, la iglesia y sectas religiosas, los partidos políticos, la fuerza pública y los organismos jurídicos son instrumentos del sector dominante para mantener sojuzgados a los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, y a todos los sectores sociales; impidiendo la participación política y negando nuestros derechos históricos individuales y colectivos.
4. Que el Estado Uninacional Burgués, hegemónico en su naturaleza jurídico-política y económica, es excluyente, antidemocrática, represiva y pro-imperialista.
5. Que los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas y demás sectores sociales postrados y relegados a niveles de vida infrahumanos, y sometidos a sistemas crueles de explotación y opresión tenemos un solo camino para solucionar nuestros múltiples problemas nacionales, y es la lucha decisiva por la liberación política y económica, y la construcción de una Nueva Nación Pluralista y Participativa.
6. Que el Ecuador es una sociedad Plurinacional en formación y que debemos desarrollarla teniendo en cuenta los procesos de desarrollo ininterrumpidos de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, por lo que propugnamos el establecimiento de un Estado Plurinacional y Pluricultural.
7. Que en el Ecuador los principios fundamentales de la Democracia: igualdad, libertad, fraternidad y paz social, no se han cumplido, y por lo mismo sólo el Estado Plurinacional y las Nacionalidades garantizarán su aplicación y vigencia.
8. Que la Resistencia de los Pueblos Indígenas, han sido un factor determinante para el fortalecimiento y desarrollo político de las Nacionalidades, constituyendo la base para la transformación de las estructuras del actual sistema impuesto por los sectores dominantes, y la construcción de la Nueva Sociedad.
9. Que los rezagos económicos, políticos, sociales, psicológicos y culturales de la colonia; así como el Eurocentrismo y Etnocentrismo fomentado por los sectores dominantes que impide el desarrollo de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas y de la sociedad en general, deben desaparecer para dar paso al establecimiento de un Nuevo Orden Económico y al Nuevo Estado Plurinacional.

Los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, luego de largos años de resistencia y lucha combativa, nos hemos organizado para poner fin a cinco siglos de opresión, miseria y pobreza; y tenemos como objetivo primordial construir un Estado Alternativo, y la instauración de un Gobierno Plurinacional Democrático que vele por los intereses de todas las Nacionalidades que conformamos el Ecuador, y garantice el bienestar material y espiritual de la familia, de la comunidad y de la sociedad en general.

Nuestra lucha va más allá de las simples reivindicaciones aisladas. Nuestra lucha propugna solucionar los postergados problemas de la tierra y territorialidad, la industrialización, el desempleo y subempleo, de la vivienda, de la educación, de la salud, y la terrible lacra social y humana de la discriminación y segregación racial.

Nuestra meta no es la simple toma del poder ó gobierno sino la transformación de la naturaleza del actual poder del Estado Uninacional hegemónico, excluyente, antidemocrático y represivo; y construir la Nueva Sociedad Humanista Plurinacional. Nuestra lucha es una opción frontal contra el sistema económico, político e ideológico capitalista hegemónico, represivo y esclavizante, tanto nacional como internacional que impide la Autodeterminación, y la Independencia económica y política de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, y de los demás sectores sociales del Ecuador.

Nuestra lucha pretende restablecer los derechos políticos y económicos colectivos negados por los sectores dominantes, a través de todos los medios institucionales, o agotando el último recurso de Autodefensa permitido por los organismos internacionales y por la Constitución vigente; por ello este proceso liberador demanda el concurso de todos los sectores explotados y oprimidos del país.





2

# **NUESTROS PRINCIPIOS POLITICOS IDEOLOGICOS**

## **2.1. HUMANISMO INTEGRAL**

El Humanismo que los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas practicamos es un Humanismo Integral donde el hombre y la naturaleza en estrecha y armónica interrelación garantizan la Vida.

La conciencia histórica ratifica el Humanismo Integral practicado por los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, y que Vive en las Nacionalidades que hemos sobrevivido a la explotación, al genocidio, al etnocidio y al sometimiento deshumanizado de la civilización occidental.

Consecuentes con el pasado y el presente, sustentamos el principio Humanista Integral, en la interrelación Hombre-Naturaleza-Sociedad; para conseguir mejores condiciones de vida individual y colectiva propugnando para ello la construcción de la Nueva Sociedad Plurinacional.

Nuestro Humanismo Integral defiende, respeta y afirma los derechos de todas las vidas: de los hombres y de la naturaleza; como sustento de la espiritualidad, religiosidad, pensamiento y conocimiento de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas.

## **2.2. COMUNITARISMO**

Los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas practicamos el modo de vida comunitario, desde el surgimiento de nuestra sociedad colectivista-agraria.

El comunitarismo es la forma de vida de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas basada en la reciprocidad, solidaridad e igualdad; es decir un sistema socio-económico y político de carácter colectivo en el que participan activamente todos sus miembros.

El comunitarismo de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas se ha ido adaptando a los procesos económicos y políticos externos, se ha modificado pero no ha desaparecido, vive y se lo practica en los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas.

El modelo de sociedad que propugnamos, es una sociedad comunitaria. La base para la construcción de la Nueva Nación Plurinacional será la propiedad familiar-personal, comunitaria autogestionaria, Estatal Plurinacional, y mixta.

El Nuevo Estado Plurinacional será el encargado de armonizar estos tipos de "propiedad" con el objetivo principal de lograr la igualdad económica, política, cultural, tecnológica y científica de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, y demás nacionalidades, garantizando la satisfacción de las necesidades materiales y espirituales de toda la sociedad; y potencializando el desarrollo del hombre y la conservación de la naturaleza.

### **2.3. DEMOCRACIA PLURINACIONAL COMUNITARIA**

La Democracia que construiremos, garantizará la plena y permanente participación de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades en la toma de decisiones y en el ejercicio del poder político del Estado Plurinacional.

Nuestra Democracia se sustenta en el respeto a los derechos humanos, a los derechos individuales y colectivos de los Pueblos; en la libertad de pensamiento, en el respeto a las creencias y religiosidad, en la paz y justicia social, practicado por los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas.

La Democracia Plurinacional Comunitaria implica un reordenamiento de las estructuras jurídico-políticas, administrativas y económicas que permita la participación plena de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, así como de los otros sectores sociales organizados.

La Nueva Democracia será ante todo, anticolonialista, anticapitalista, antimperialista y antisegregacionista, es decir, diferente al falso sistema democrático representativo imperante.

La Democracia Plurinacional Comunitaria significará el perfeccionamiento de la Nación y del Estado ecuatoriano, en aras de lograr el desarrollo armónico y equilibrado de las Nacionalidades Indígenas, el Pueblo Afro-ecuatoriano, y los distintos sectores sociales; en tanto el Estado actual como forma de organización política no expresa la realidad plurinacional del Ecuador.

### **2.4. PLURINACIONALISMO**

El Plurinacionalismo se sustenta en la diversidad real e innegable de la existencia de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas como entidades económicas, políticas y culturales históricas diferenciadas.

El Plurinacionalismo propugna la igualdad, unidad, respeto, reciprocidad y solidaridad de todas las Nacionalidades que conformamos el Ecuador. Reconoce el derecho de las Nacionalidades a su territorio, autonomía política-administrativa interna, es decir a determinar su propio proceso de desarrollo económico, social, cultural, científico y tecnológico; para garantizar el desarrollo de su Identidad Cultural y Política; y por ende al desarrollo integral de la Nación.

En base a la igualdad, al reconocimiento de los derechos específicos, y a la unidad indisoluble de las Nacionalidades, es que se constituirá y consolidará la verdadera Nación Plurinacional Ecuatoriana.

Para garantizar el pleno ejercicio de los derechos de las Nacionalidades, es necesario consolidar y reafirmar la unidad de la Nación Plurinacional; para enraizar la

democracia, la paz y la libertad se constituirá el Nuevo Estado Plurinacional como expresión soberana, independiente y democrática de las Nacionalidades, amparada en la nueva Carta Política fundamental del Estado Plurinacional.

## **2.5. UNIDAD EN LA DIVERSIDAD**

La diversidad de Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas, del pueblo Afro-ecuatoriano e Hispano-ecuatoriano, demandan la unidad de éstas, en el campo económico, social, cultural y político, en aras de transformar las actuales estructuras y construir la Nueva Nación Plurinacional, en un marco de igualdad de derechos, paz y armonía entre las Nacionalidades.

La Unidad de las Nacionalidades parte del reconocimiento y respeto de los derechos de cada Nacionalidad, sin distinción de ninguna naturaleza, esta unidad es necesaria porque el actual Estado Uninacional no reconoce los derechos específicos de las Nacionalidades y por que además el sector hegemónico se ha encargado de aislarnos, dispersarnos y dividirnos.

El reconocimiento de la diversidad garantiza la Unidad y permite la convivencia, coexistencia e interrelación fraterna y solidaria entre los Pueblos y Nacionalidades lo que garantiza el establecimiento del Estado Plurinacional y la construcción de la Nueva Nación.

La Unidad de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades se contrapone a la fuerza hegemónica del actual ordenamiento jurídico-político y económico, impuesto por el sector dominante.

La Unidad en la Diversidad garantizará la constitución y consolidación de la Nación Ecuatoriana, que el Estado Plurinacional deberá impulsar, con la participación y compromiso de todas las Nacionalidades hasta alcanzar el desarrollo económico, político y social en un marco de mutua cooperación, reciprocidad e igualdad.

## **2.6. AUTODETERMINACION**

Los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas que existimos en el actual territorio ecuatoriano, sometidos y dominados por el Estado Uninacional Burgués y los Estados hegemónicos imperialistas; propugnamos el establecimiento del derecho a la Autodeterminación de las Nacionalidades, y a su ejercicio mediante la participación activa y directa en la vida política, económica y cultural en el proceso de transformación y consolidación de las Nacionalidades y en la construcción de la Nueva Nación Plurinacional.

La Autodeterminación es el derecho que tienen las Nacionalidades de elegir y ejercer libremente su propio sistema político y, el modelo de desarrollo económico-social y científico-cultural, en un territorio plenamente definido dentro del marco de la Nueva Nación Plurinacional.

## **2.7. SOBERANIA**

Es el poder, decisión y voluntad política de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades que será ejercida a través del Nuevo Estado Plurinacional y sus respectivos organismos gubernativos, e instituciones.

La Soberanía Plurinacional sustituirá el ejercicio de la soberanía actual que se basa en los intereses hegemónicos y en los instrumentos del sector dominante; para imponer el poder y la voluntad política de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas y no indígenas, que salvaguardará los intereses de toda la Nación Plurinacional.

En el ejercicio de su Soberanía, el Estado Plurinacional velará por los derechos políticos y económicos de los Pueblos, Nacionalidades, y de la Nación Plurinacional ecuatoriana ante el conjunto de Naciones en el contexto Internacional en aras de fortalecer la paz, la cooperación, la igualdad y la solidaridad.

## **2.8. INDEPENDENCIA**

Propugnamos la Independencia total de la Nación Plurinacional Ecuatoriana, frente a la dependencia económica, política, ideológica y tecnológica del exterior; que frena e impide el desarrollo de los Pueblos, Nacionalidades y de la Nación.

Los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas condenamos toda forma de colonialismo, neocolonialismo, discriminación o segregación racial, de intervención militar y todo tipo de bloqueo económico. Reconocemos el derecho de todos los Pueblos a liberarse de estos sistemas opresivos.

## **2.9. SOLIDARIDAD INTERNACIONAL**

Acorde con el principio Humanista Integral y la vocación pacifista de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas; el Estado Plurinacional practicará permanentemente la solidaridad internacional. Solidaridad que podrá ser moral, política, y material basada en el principio humanista y de reciprocidad de los Pueblos Indígenas, para con los Pueblos y Comunidades Amigas.

Rechazamos toda forma de agresión de los Estados hegemónicos; y abogamos por la liberación de los Pueblos, Nacionalidades y de las Naciones que viven bajo sistemas coloniales y neocoloniales, así como bajo falsos sistemas democráticos.



DMQ, 03 de Octubre del 2019

### **Frente al paquetazo neoliberal y el Gobierno de los ricos**

Luego de un análisis profundo ante las últimas medidas económicas tomadas por el Gobierno Nacional, en complicidad con el imperialismo representado por el FMI y la burguesía de este país, que profundizan las condiciones de explotación de nuestro pueblo; la CONAIE, ECUARUNARI y CONFENIAE, declaramos

### **EL INICIO DE MEDIDAS DE HECHO INDEFINIDAS EN TODO EL TERRITORIO NACIONAL.**

Con la unidad del pueblo en resistencia activa, no permitiremos la imposición de las políticas económicas del FMI, ni las privatizaciones, ni la flexibilización y desregulación laboral, así como ninguna medida económica que afecte y empobrezca al pueblo ecuatoriano, de igual manera, en continuidad con la lucha desde los territorios indígenas exigimos que se declare al país libre de minería metálica.

Todos juntos a enfrentar el paquetazo neoliberal, convocamos a campesinos, trabajadores, ciudadanía, explotados del campo y la ciudad a sumar fuerzas en acciones contundentes y enfrentar en unidad al Gobierno entreguista de Lenin Moreno.

Convocamos a la unidad de todos los sectores populares del país para enfrentar con altura el paquetazo neoliberal.

**Carlos Zucushañay**  
**ECUARUNARI**

**Jaime Vargas**  
**CONAIE**

**Marlon Vargas**  
**CONFENIAE**





# CONAIE

Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador

ACUERDO - CODENPE N° 817 -31 de enero del 2008

Creado legalmente - 24 de agosto de 1989 - M.B.S 01734

D.M. Quito, 08 de octubre 2019

## LENIN MORENO INSTAURA UN RÉGIMEN DE TERROR

La Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, CONAIE, ante la expedición del Decreto 888 que dispone el Toque de queda, restricción de movilidad y tránsito, desde las 20:00 hasta 05:00 en áreas estratégicas e instituciones públicas, expresa lo siguiente:

El Gobierno Nacional lo único que demuestra con estas acciones es su debacle, debilidad y la incapacidad de las autoridades para responder frente a la movilización social y el acumulado de acciones de resistencia vigentes desde el Movimiento Indígena en todo el territorio nacional, que a su vez, se traduce en el abandono del Palacio de Carondelet por parte del presidente Lenin Moreno.

Denunciamos la dimensión de esta medida, al puro estilo de una dictadura militar, alertamos a los organismos nacionales e internacionales de derechos humanos lo que esto pueda provocar.

La Conaie ratifica la permanencia de la movilización nacional contra las medidas económicas, el rechazo al extractivismo y la defensa de los territorios, nuestras bases están organizadas y con la agenda de lucha clara, la concentración en Quito constituye una medida de presión de una parte de nuestra estructura ya que las acciones locales y provinciales se mantienen a la espera de nuevas estrategias de lucha.

  
Por el Consejo de Gobierno  
Jaime Vargas  
**PRESIDENTE DE LA CONAIE**



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Quito - Ecuador





## COMUNICADO

D.M. Quito, 10 de octubre del 2019

### LA CONFEDERACIÓN DE NACIONALIDADES INDÍGENAS DEL ECUADOR SE DECLARA DE LUTO

Con profundo dolor e indignación comunicamos al Ecuador que en la represión desmedida y brutal del día miércoles 09 de octubre, hacia el Movimiento Indígena, direccionada por las políticas represivas del Gobierno de Lenín Moreno y su Ministra de Gobierno, María Paula Romo y Ministro de Defensa, Oswaldo Jarrín, confirmamos que existen compañeros que perdieron la vida.

Nos encontramos en coordinación con diversas organizaciones de derechos humanos para continuar con los procesos necesarios y pertinentes para que este delito de lesa humanidad no quede en la impunidad.

Frente al ocultamiento de información por parte de las autoridades y ciertos medios de comunicación, en los próximos días emitiremos un informe completo de todas las víctimas mortales, heridos y desaparecidos.

Por el Consejo de Gobierno  
Jaime Vargas  
**PRESIDENTE DE LA CONAIE**







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D.M. Quito, 10 de octubre 2019

## A nuestras bases y al pueblo ecuatoriano,

Hemos vivido días de mucha agitación, nos hemos sorprendido de nuestra propia capacidad de lucha y resistencia, y hemos demostrado al mundo que el movimiento indígena y el pueblo ecuatoriano somos un solo puño, y en el lugar que nos ha dado la historia, hemos hecho temblar al poder. Nuestra palabra esta puesta: **esto no para hasta que el FMI salga del Ecuador.**

Como todo gobierno débil y deslegitimado, la única respuesta que ha dado Lenin Moreno es la violencia y la represión. Sin ningún resquicio de respeto a las normas más básicas de respeto a los derechos humanos, ha tratado al pueblo como un enemigo. No ha respetado zonas de resguardo humanitario, lanzando bombas lacrimógenas donde están nuestros niños y mayores. Nos impidió la creación de corredores humanitarios para que los heridos lleguen a los hospitales. Y masacró a hermanos nuestros caídos con balas en el cuerpo, impactos de bombas, atropellados por caballos, golpeados e incluso lanzados al vacío desde un puente. Lo que se vive en este país no tiene nombre, no hay memoria en la historia reciente de una represión tan atroz y violenta sobre el pueblo que reclama sus derechos.

Quiénes sostendrán a este gobierno para que se sienta en capacidad de lanzarse una guerra contra el pueblo: los mismos que lo resguardaron en Guayaquil. La clase empresarial, vende patria y pro imperialista, que quiere asegurar los préstamos del Fondo Monetario Internacional para que sus deudas, su crisis, la paguemos la clase trabajadora, los indígenas y los sectores populares.

Esta lucha no es por hoy, por el precio de la gasolina solamente, es para evitar que nos hipotequen el futuro, y que paguemos con hambre y pobreza de dos y tres generaciones, lo que no frenamos a tiempo hoy.

Lágrimas de ira tenemos, pero si hemos aprendido de nuestras mamás y taitas que a los muertos de la lucha se los honra multiplicándonos. El diálogo que plantea Lenin Moreno es una fantochada. Por eso compañeros, compañeras, a radicalizar las acciones. Nada de diálogo con un gobierno asesino hasta que se cumplan los mínimos requisitos: la salida de María Paula Romo y de Oswaldo Jarrín del gobierno y la derogación del decreto 883.

Mientras tanto la tarea es ir a la lucha, renovar fuerzas y sostener los bloqueos de vías y las tomas de gobernaciones y edificios públicos, asambleas en todas las comunidades y alianzas con todos los sectores del pueblo.

Nadie tomará la palabra por el movimiento indígena para hablar con este gobierno asesino, hasta que se cumplan estas demandas. La única voz oficial es la dirigencia de la CONAIE, ya está dicho, dirigentes que incumplan el mandato del pueblo se someten a la justicia indígena y popular.

¡Ni un paso atrás!

¡Fuera FMI del Ecuador!

¡Este Paro no para!

Por el Consejo de Gobierno  
Jaime Vargas  
**PRESIDENTE DE LA CONAIE**





# CONAIE

Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador

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D.M. Quito, 11 de octubre 2019

## **SOBRE LA LLAMADA DEL PRESIDENTE LENÍN MORENO AL "DIÁLOGO"**

La Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, después de 9 días de exitosa movilización nacional y acciones de resistencia en todo el país, por la derogatoria del Decreto 883, le expresamos al Gobierno Nacional que ya motivamos el diálogo hace dos años y medio, sin obtener resultados concretos.

En consecuencia, el diálogo que promulga carece de credibilidad, en este escenario la lucha social, encabezada por el Movimiento Indígena, el cual integra las demandas de la clase trabajadora, de estudiantes, campesinos, indígenas y los sectores empobrecidos del país, le pertenece al pueblo.

El diálogo que el Gobierno Nacional dice promulgar se ha sustentado durante este proceso de resistencia en una de las peores masacres en la historia del Ecuador, una violencia exacerbada interpuesta por la fuerza pública y militar, con responsabilidad directa de los Ministros, de Gobierno, María Paula Romo y Defensa, Oswaldo Jarrín, que hasta el momento deja una cifra de más 554 heridos, 929 detenidos, 5 muertos y otros tantos desaparecidos, configurándose como delito de lesa humanidad.

**NOS DISPONEMOS AL DIÁLOGO CUANDO SE DEROGUE EL DECRETO 883.**

  
Por el Consejo de Gobierno  
Jaime Vargas  
**PRESIDENTE DE LA CONAIE**



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# CONAIE

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Creado legalmente - 24 de agosto de 1989 - M.B.S 01734

D.M. Quito, 12 de octubre 2019

## A nuestras bases y al pueblo ecuatoriano,

La jornada en el décimo día de movilización nacional ha sido conmovedora por la incansable voluntad de nuestra gente de luchar, mujeres, jóvenes, mayores y toda la población que llegó desde todos los rincones del país a sumarse al paro, con una enorme conciencia sobre las razones de la lucha y la necesidad de movilizarnos en unidad, pero sobre todo lo que significa el retorno de las políticas neoliberales del Fondo Monetario Internacional, mientras en el mundo cientos de organizaciones nos expresaron solidaridad frente a embajadas, emisión de comunicados de respaldo, demostrando que no estamos solos y que esta lucha no es solo de Ecuador.

Esta es la mejor expresión de lo que constituye el movimiento indígena y los sectores empobrecidos de este país. Sin embargo, el Estado y todo su aparato ha demostrado tener la decisión de seguir matando indígenas y gente en las calles hasta derrotarnos en el dolor de perder a nuestros compañeros y hermanos de lucha. Al parecer, es más importante para el presidente Lenín Moreno mostrar su implacable política represiva y la figura absurda de no dar el brazo a torcer, que dar una salida que contemple escuchar la voluntad popular, saludamos a nuestras bases por esa firme voluntad de seguir en la lucha por nuestros derechos.

Por ello, es responsabilidad de la Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, CONAIE, destrabar la situación y evitar un baño de sangre de nuestro pueblo, por la brutal represión a manos de la fuerza pública. Por tanto, orientamos a seguir las acciones de lucha mientras se delega a una interlocución exploratoria para diseñar una serie de medidas que impliquen salir de esta encrucijada. No hay diálogo real sin las debidas garantías a la integridad de los dirigentes indígenas en todo el territorio nacional.

Aclaremos a nuestras bases y a la opinión pública que en este contexto no ha existido ninguna negociación sino se trata de reorientar la política económica del país. Por ello, realizaremos los acercamientos para tratar la derogatoria del decreto 883, pero sostendremos las acciones de movilización a nivel nacional y en cada uno de los territorios, exhortando al Gobierno para que existan las debidas garantías.

Rechazamos cualquier intención de desprestigiar nuestra lucha histórica tratando de tildarnos de terroristas y subversivos, nuestras bases han decidido salir a las calles con firmeza y por propia decisión.

Jaime Vargas

Presidente CONAIE

Marlon Vargas

Presidente CONFENIAE

Carlos Zhucushañay

Presidente ECUARUNARI.



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# CONAIE

Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador

ACUERDO - CODENPE N° 817 -31 de enero del 2008

Creado legalmente - 24 de agosto de 1989 - M.B.S 01734

Quito 13 de octubre del 2019

## La CONAIE al País

Queremos agradecer al pueblo ecuatoriano por la solidaridad, por el compromiso, por la unidad y por el acompañamiento sin condiciones al movimiento indígena y a los movimientos sociales en estas jornadas de resistencia. Queremos manifestar nuestro agradecimiento a Quito, Luz de América, y al libertario y noble pueblo de Quito por su acogida, por su generosidad. Queremos agradecer a todas las bases del movimiento indígena a nivel nacional, a las organizaciones de trabajadores, al FUT, a las organizaciones de mujeres, a las organizaciones barriales, a las organizaciones de comerciantes, a los estudiantes, a los rectores de la Universidad Católica de Quito, Universidad Salesiana, Politécnica Nacional, Universidad Andina, Universidad Central del Ecuador, y a las incontables organizaciones sociales y ciudadanos de todo el país que apoyaron, se movilizaron y arriesgaron sus vidas por defender al pueblo ecuatoriano, y un agradecimiento especial a los jóvenes que estuvieron en primera línea de la resistencia, a los jóvenes que hicieron el cordón humanitario para proteger a su pueblo en los momentos más dramáticos y violentos.

Rechazamos el uso excesivo de la violencia en contra del pueblo ecuatoriano porque siempre fue una manifestación pacífica y amparada por el Artículo 98 de la Constitución Política sobre el derecho a la resistencia. Este uso de la fuerza será sometido al escrutinio de todas las instancias nacionales e internacionales de derechos humanos, que determinarán las responsabilidades y las sanciones respectivas.

Hemos propuesto una agenda de diálogo al gobierno nacional bajo los siguientes puntos:

Por el bien de la paz social, para evitar acciones de violencia en contra del pueblo y para que el gobierno demuestre su predisposición al diálogo, pedimos la derogatoria inmediata de todos los decretos presidenciales que amparan el Estado de Excepción y el Toque de Queda.

El Decreto 883 que libera el precio de los combustibles no tiene ninguna justificación fiscal y no está vinculado con ninguna estrategia de inversión pública, y el gobierno pretende utilizar esos recursos para gasto corriente, además que golpea duramente a los sectores más pobres, por ello nos ratificamos en que debe ser Derogado en su totalidad.

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Sabemos que hay problemas fiscales, por ello pedimos se conforme una Auditoría de los costos que le significan al país la Ley de Fomento Productivo y su respectiva reforma por parte de la Asamblea Nacional.

Pedimos a la Corte Constitucional que ejerza el respectivo Control de Constitucionalidad a todas las medidas económicas y leyes que el Presidente pretende llevar adelante.

Pedimos que el gobierno nacional transparente los Acuerdos a los que llegó con el FMI.

La convulsión social, el irrespeto a los derechos humanos, la violencia desmedida contra el pueblo, y el terrorismo de Estado, se representan en su Ministra del Interior y en su Ministro de Defensa. Como un gesto de paz social al país, pedimos su inmediata separación.

Los detenidos, desaparecidos, torturados, asesinados en estas jornadas, deben ser reparados de forma integral por parte del Estado, quien debe amnistiarlos y debe asumir su compromiso de nunca más utilizar ninguna forma de violencia en contra del pueblo ecuatoriano.

La violencia también se ha manifestado en el irrespeto al estatuto de plurinacionalidad del Estado y de los territorios indígenas, que han sido concesionados a empresas mineras y extractivas. Solicitamos que se respete la plurinacionalidad del Estado y que las concesiones extractivas sean analizadas y revisadas bajo el ordenamiento jurídico vigente.

Exigimos a la Asamblea Nacional que apruebe en el menor plazo posible una nueva Ley de Extinción de Dominio, que posibilite la incautación de los bienes de los procesados en casos de corrupción.

Dado y firmado en Quito

**Jaime Vargas**  
**PRESIDENTE DE LA CONAIE**



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