

Indigenous groups rally in Brazil as top court considers challenge to ancestral land rights

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Brasilia, August 31 (RHC)-- In Brazil, Indigenous groups from around the country rallied in Brasília Wednesday as the country's Supreme Court resumed hearings yesterday in a pivotal case that could strip Indigenous rights to their ancestral lands.

The case is being pushed by agribusiness-backed lawmakers, who argue Native groups are only entitled to land that they physically occupied when the 1988 Constitution was signed.

Many Indigenous communities were expelled from their ancestral land over the years, including during the military dictatorship.

Joenia Wapichana, a member of the Wapixana tribe and president of the National Commission for the Defense of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, told reporters: “There is a constitution, and it must be respected. So, in that vein, we hope that the Supreme Court does justice with the lives of Indigenous peoples and protects Indigenous lands for Indigenous people and all living beings.”

If enacted, the measure could have dire consequences not just for the Indigenous peoples of Brazil, but for the preservation of the Amazon and the entire planet.

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