

## Yarinacocha Declaration

**Issued on August 19th, 2018 at the First Convention of Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Traditional Medical Practitioners**

Pre-occupied that the knowledge of plants and practices of the *Onanyas* – Ancestral Healers are being lost and not being transmitted to future generations;

Recognizing the repercussions of colonialism, state-based and Western education, and the invasion of industrialization, which has threatened the ancestral practices and knowledge of Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Peoples;

Recognizing the great expansion of spiritual tourism in Amazonian territories, and that the international interest comes with opportunities as much as dangers for the on-going development of ancestral knowledge;

Recognizing the importance of coordination and agreements between *Onanyas* for confronting the opportunities and for discussing strategies to address the problems of our communities, which have been dramatically highlighted by the assassination of Maestra Olivia Arévalo Lomas;

We declare that:

1. Given their history, practice, and methodology, Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo healing and expertise in medicinal plants are anti-colonialist forms of practice and knowledge, able to resist, transform and reconfigure with every difficulty and threat. Thus healers, teachers, practitioners must remain aware and proud to cultivate the anti-colonialist nature of their practices.
2. The work of healing and the struggle towards self-determination are not separable. They must move forward on the same path.

Consequently, we

1. Adopt the term *Onanya* ("Ancestral Healer") to replace the common "shaman" and "shamanism," imported terminologies that do not apply historically to the particularities of our culture.
2. Suggest that *Onanyas* can focus on the training and education of Shipibos youth, especially in the communities, so as to counteract cultural appropriation by foreign apprentices who numerically overshadow local ones since our young populations do not have comparable economic resources to engage in long periods of training.
3. Invite *Onanyas*, practitioners, workers and students (indigenous as well as foreign) to be conscious of the politics of Shipibo sovereignty, and to contribute to the struggle for cultural, economic and social self-determination.
4. Propose the establishment of a school, "Escuela Meraya" (in accordance with values of this declaration) that would include education in plant medicine, politics, and art as well as in digital, vegetal and spiritual technologies.
5. Will investigate the development of a mechanism by which foreigners taking advantage of indigenous medicine, healing and spiritual labour might be able to contribute to the cultural and political empowerment of Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Peoples and their path towards self-determination; such a mechanism could include, for example, a tax or contribution for each "*pasajero*" (foreign patient) to be donated to an organization such as the "Escuela Meraya."
6. Invite *Onanyas* to join the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Association of Onanyas/ Ancestral Healers so that they might coordinate in unity and demand their rights and fair and just remuneration.