

Brazil's Indigenous Peoples Articulation (BIPA) Statements on the EU–Mercosur FTA (2019–2025): Human and Environmental Security Implications

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Abstract

Drawing upon the decolonial approach within Peace Studies, this paper assesses human and environmental security issues identified in all statements adopted by Brazil's Indigenous Peoples Articulation (BIPA) and published on its webpage concerning the EU–Mercosur Free Trade Agreement. The five official statements issued by BIPA throughout the twenty-five-year negotiation period were located and analyzed, with all documents having been identified within the 2019–2025 period. Employing Content Analysis (CA), utilizing ATLAS.ti software, the paper is structured in two main parts. First, it establishes the decolonial theoretical framework, specifically the Indigenous perspective in Peace Studies, and contextualizes it within current struggles involving Indigenous peoples in Brazil. Second, it systemizes the coding results from the analyzed documents to identify potential implications. The central hypothesis posits that BIPA was predominantly opposed to the EU–Mercosur agreement, emphasizing in its discourse how the strengthening of economic sectors, such as agribusiness and mineral extraction, has the

potential to undermine Indigenous land rights and the protection of environmental reserves. The findings reveal a consistently critical position toward the agreement, evidenced by the predominance of the Human and Environmental Security issues category, which accounted for 68 units out of the 117 multiple associations across all subcategories within the coded data. These findings highlight the academic debate on the agreement's potential to exacerbate human insecurity, threatening the livelihoods of Indigenous communities in Brazil.

Keywords: Peace Studies; Brazil; Indigenous Peoples; Mercosur-EU FTA; Human Security; Environmental Security

Introduction

Over two decades, the EU-Mercosur FTA negotiations have mobilised various economic and social actors regarding the future of both economic blocs. Against a backdrop of economic and trade liberalisation, the final stage of negotiations was marked by intense questioning from social movements in both Europe and South America about the environmental and security implications of the agreement for vulnerable groups, such as traditional South American populations.

Simultaneously, the growing importance of the international climate change regime has drawn attention to the role of indigenous communities in evaluating and building global commitments around common challenges and agendas. A clear example is the activity carried out by Brazil's Indigenous Peoples Articulation (BIPA) established by the Indigenous movement during the Free Land Camp in 2005. This association is considered the main reference point for the indigenous movement in Brazil, and its mobilisation has been guided by the objective of safeguarding and ensuring the rights of indigenous populations, as well as demanding that the Brazilian state comply with and recognise their demands and claims. Therefore, its activity as a pressure group is noted both at the institutional level, through dialogue with government actors and political parties, and at the non-institutional level, through social demonstrations and political education.

Guiding the articulation among the different ethnic groups that constitute the Indigenous peoples of Brazil, BIPA's main channel of communication is the association's virtual portal, where it makes statements on political matters of public interest to these communities. In considering its activity in mobilising Indigenous peoples and other organizations against risks, threats, and attacks on indigenous rights, BIPA has drawn attention to issues of foreign policy and regional economic integration, which are closely related to the internal dynamics of power surrounding the defense and

protection of environmental resources, as well as their territorial rights and human dignity.

Against this backdrop, the present investigation aims to assess concerns of human and environmental security in BIPA's official statements regarding the EU-Mercosur FTA, from the signing of the agreement's principles in 2019 to the final signing of the conclusion of discussions in 2025. Using content analysis methodology, a single-case study model was employed, guided by the decolonial theoretical perspective within Peace Studies, a subfield of International Security in International Relations.

The research question for this investigation is: What were the official positions adopted by BIPA regarding the EU-Mercosur FTA?. Regarding the initial scope conditions, this investigation proceeds from a critical discussion of the potential future impacts of the FTA on Indigenous communities in Brazil, drawing upon Emilia Hallström's (2021) analysis concerning BIPA's role in Indigenous diplomacy related to the negotiations of this agreement.

The structure of this work consists of two parts. The first presents the theoretical approach, while the second encompasses descriptive and interpretive exploration of the coding results. The hypothesis to be descriptively tested is that these positions, beginning from a position clearly opposed to the EU-Mercosur FTA, identify as their main concern the intensification of systematic violence against territorial rights and environmental protection, thereby posing serious risks to the human security of these populations. The research findings indicate a set of BIPA statements that underscore the structures of domination reinforced by global trade governance at the service of the economic interests of actors involved in perpetuating human and environmental violations in the Brazilian context, particularly as a result of the expansion of agribusiness and mineral extraction.

Methods

The investigation adopts a mixed-methods Content Analysis approach (Neuendorf, 2017), as the classification framework consists of both pre-established categories and subcategories inductively developed during the organisation and examination of the documents. The study was conducted manually with the support of Atlas.ti software. Regarding data collection, five BIPA documents were selected through the web-scraping technique. All documents contain direct references to the theme addressed by the association: the EU-Mercosur FTA. To this end, drawing on the technique of thematic categorisation, the classification framework incorporates three categories for evaluating BIPA's statements regarding the agreement. The following table presents the adopted structure.

Table 1: Classification of BIPA's Statements on EU-Mercosur FTA

Categories	Definition	Markers (Subcategories)
1. Human and Environmental Security Concerns	Human and environmental impacts of the agreement.	Terms related to “deforestation, “land rights violations,” “slave labor”, and so on.
2. Economic and Trade Asymmetry	Criticism of Brazil/Mercosur's peripheral position and the FTA's unequal benefits.	Terms related to “inequality of exchange”, “center-periphery”, “dependency”, “deindustrialisation”, “privatisation” and so on.
3. Representation, Solidarity and Ethnicity	Institutional and legal articulations of indigenous resistance, alternative proposals for political coexistence among Indigenous peoples and partnerships with global social movements.	Terms related to “creation of EU legislation on control mechanisms”, “recommendations to european social movimentes”, “protection of the plurinational state”, “representation of ethnic minorities”, and so on.

Based on the three categories presented, the subsequent table delineates the codebook of the subcategories. The subcategory ensembles are arranged according to the numerical sequence of the overarching classification:

Table 2: Classification of BIPA's Statements on EU-Mercosur FTA

Subcategory	Definition
1. Agrochemicals and Biotechnology risks	Concerns regarding the expansion of agricultural production involving the extensive use of pesticides and genetically modified organisms as a consequence of the FTA.
1. Concerns on International Environmental Standards	Reference to deviations from international environmental protection standards signed by Brazil.
1. Deforestation	Association with a potential increase in deforestation driven by the FTA.
1. Familiar Agriculture Risks	Assimilation to negative effects on the livelihood conditions of family farming due to agribusiness expansion.
1. Food Insecurity	Relation between the transformation of the productive structure caused by the FTA and the rise of food insecurity among vulnerable communities in Brazil.
1. Indigenous Land and Human Rights	Association with a possible escalation of territorial violations and infringements on human dignity against Indigenous peoples as a result of the strengthening, through the FTA, of social forces opposed to Indigenous interests.
1. Predatory Extractivism and Illegal Mining	Increase in extractivist activities within preservation areas and the empowerment of illegal mining

	enterprises in environmentally and Indigenous protected territories.
1. Slave Labor and Workers Concerns	Association with a potential rise in cases of slave labor and labor-related offenses within economic sectors in Brazil benefiting from the FTA.
1. Worsening Human Development Indices	Reference to the deterioration of human development indicators among vulnerable communities in Brazil due to the socio-structural transformations triggered by the FTA.
2. Deindustrialization	Association with a scenario of trade liberalization and the decline of strategic industries in Brazil as a result of European industrial competition.
2. Disloyalty in Government Procurement	Criticism in defense of public service providers in Brazil due to concessions granted to the European bloc.
2. Financial System Vulnerability	Concerns about the potential liberalization of the national financial system and its increased vulnerability to international financial crises.
2. Low GDP	Association with a possible reduction in Brazil's Gross Domestic Product resulting from European competition.
2. Public Service Privatization	Concern over a potential endorsement of movements favoring the privatization of public services following the approval of the FTA.
2. Reprimarization	Criticism regarding the likely reinforcement of Brazilian productive segments with low or no added value.
2. Trade and Technology Dependency	Reference to the strengthening of Brazil's technological and commercial dependency on developed countries.
2. Transnationalization	Association with the possible empowerment of European multinational corporations in Brazil, particularly within primary-sector activities.
3. Contradiction of the State of Pará	Criticism of the stance of the State Government of Pará (PA), responsible for organizing COP-30, concerning environmental and Indigenous protection policies.
3. Exigencies to COP-30	Claims made to the COP-30 agenda in favor of Indigenous communities' conditions.
3. Friends of the Earth Europe and the Seattle to Brussels Network (S2B)	Mentions of strategic support provided by S2B to Indigenous communities in Brazil.
3. Funds and Financial Support	Demands for increased financial support to BIPA.
3. Kyoto Protocol's Ineffectiveness	Criticism of the continuous and systematic non-

	compliance with the Kyoto Protocol in Brazil.
3. Needs For New EU's Legal Mechanisms of Control	Demands addressed to the EU for the establishment of legal mechanisms of oversight in favor of Indigenous communities and environmental protection in Brazil.
3. No Transparency Provided by Mercosur	Criticism of the limited participation and representation of Mercosur in the FTA negotiations.
3. Offensive/Omissive Brazilian Parliament	Criticism of the complicity and omission of the Brazilian National Congress in relation to environmental degradation and violations against Indigenous communities in Brazil.
3. Paris Agreement's Ineffectiveness	Criticism of the continuous and systematic non-compliance with the Paris Agreement in Brazil.
3. The Brazilian Front Against the Mercosur-EU and Mercosur-EFTA Agreement (BFA-EU/EFTA)	Mentions of strategic collaboration between BIPA and the BFA-EU/EFTA

Based on these categories and subcategories, the markers identified throughout the document analysis were established subcategories. The coding was performed using the following procedures with the support of Atlas.ti software:

- Identifying statements directly related to the EU-Mercosur FTA;
- Selecting fragments of the statements in paragraph units;
- Multiple thematic association of categories and subcategories (markers) identified;

Following the coding step, the treatment of the categorical results was grounded in the interpretation of the analytical outputs through the adopted theoretical perspective. These resources include: thematic coding hierarchy charts; word-frequency charts; and multiple association charts of the identified subcategories. The following subsection therefore presents a brief chronological systematisation of the content of BIPA's statements. Regarding the reliability of the coding results, these were ensured through the determination of inter-coder agreement, as the unit coding was performed across multiple overlapping classes on standard coding units.

The webscraping process was conducted through the sophisticated search tool on the official documents related to the matter of the Mercosur–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in the organizational documents of BIPA with the help of any of the defined keywords separately or in combination. The final extracted data was checked carefully to ensure that the context in which the extracted data is presented matches with the context in which the keywords are used in the documents, after which the total five official records

related to the subject matter were extracted out of the total organizational documents issued by BIPA since it was founded.

On the aspect of validity and bias in the study, the method employed was Negative Case Analysis (NCA), for the reasons that: (i) in spite of the quantitative–qualitative tradition of content analysis, the study was done in an eminently qualitative manner because of the descriptive nature of the study, inductive approach, and the chosen research strategy – theoretically oriented single case study; (ii) The primary sources made available offer enough resources for the examination of data or cases which might present evidence of any possible contradictions to the above-specified category and codes.

What Is At Stake When It Comes To A Decolonial Perspective In Peace Studies

The decoloniality debate emerges as an alternative to give visibility to historically silenced groups, constituting a project of social, political, economic, and cultural liberation in pursuit of collective autonomy. This perspective challenges the objectification of nature and indigenous peoples characteristic of modern scientism (Lander, 2005).

This perspective is crucial to advancing debates in International Relations, as it interrogates the militarisation of territories inhabited by Indigenous communities. Such actions are often justified as protective measures against deforestation, land invasions, and economic pressures on the forest. However, these military responses frequently circumvent dialogue with the very communities affected, failing to ensure their security and, at times, intensifying local violence: an alleged solution that generates new problems. A decolonial approach is therefore essential, as it centres indigenous voices and demands, rejecting their treatment as mere objects or vulnerable actors in need of external “salvation” (Dalmiglio, Coronado & Babo, 2025).

Thus, decolonial perspective is a powerful instrument of autonomy and liberation, as it offers crucial reflections on the operational dynamics of coloniality. A striking example is the research by De Souza and Ferreira (2025) on the slowness or absence of action from the State against illegal mining incursions in Yanomami territory, which reveals how the proposal of militarisation, under the pretext of protecting those peoples who suffer from the violence of illegal mining, does little to confront the colonial practices that have persisted since colonialisation. Therefore, the decolonial perspective is an indispensable mechanism for examining false promises of progress in projects ostensibly aimed at minority groups within the colonial matrix of power.

In this regard, proposing a decolonial research perspective entails unveiling the complex web of the coloniality of power present in practices and symbols that reflect and reinforce the hegemony of a supposedly objective and

neutral worldview. The research of Silva, Macedo & Monielle (2022) exemplifies this approach also by analysing the invisibility of the pluriversality of knowledge in traditional Latin American diplomacy and by reimagining alternative forms of diplomatic construction, particularly through the cosmovision of indigenous diplomacy.

Those empirical studies reveal that the decolonial perspective transcends a merely descriptive or analytical role: it is propositional, as it raises critical questions and offers concrete pathways to break with power relations mythically present as resolver, yet which persist under new guises.

Te Maihāroa, Ligaliga & Devere (2022) analyze the prevalence of Western epistemologies in the subfield of Peace Studies. They contend that these epistemologies inadequately acknowledge the knowledge and experiences derived from indigenous communities. These studies often fail to propose meaningful changes in the relationships that affect the living conditions of these peoples, as they treat them as objects of study rather than as a central basis for understanding and intervening in conflicts and relationships of domination that affect indigenous populations and the environment. The proposal of the indigenous perspective in the decolonial approach to Peace Studies seeks to examine the transformation of academic and institutional frameworks to endorse and elevate indigenous knowledge (Te Maihāroa, Ligaliga & Devere, 2022).

When discussing the coloniality of power, one refers to the perspectives that are legitimized and widely disseminated. This contention directly engages the decolonial epistemological debate concerning the purported schism between normative/critical theoretical perspectives and explanatory/neutral theories. This is substantiated by the argument that normativity inherently pervades all distinct theoretical paradigms across diverse epistemic domains, given that the mode of science currently disseminated as 'universal and neutral' constitutes an outcome of colonial modernity (Mignolo, 2007).

To propose a decolonisation of this power is to unveil viewpoints historically marginalised since the European colonisation of the Indigenous territories, as well as the multiple forms of violence that have been reinvented over time to determine who is allowed to live or die and who is incorporated into the national interests of the Eurocentric state. In this process, those who are dehumanised are only rehumanised through supposedly "salvific" projects of interest, often carried out without genuine dialogue with Indigenous communities (Te Maihāroa, Ligaliga & Devere, 2022).

In this context, Mbembe's concept of necropolitics (2018), inspired by Foucault's reflection on sovereignty, highlights the power to decide who may live and who must die. The concept provides an analytical lens to understanding how certain groups are systematically exposed to death while

others are protected, revealing the lethal dimension of colonialism and its continuities. In Brazil, De Abreu, Vieira, and Fadel (2024) identify necropolitics in Bill 191/2020, which opens mineral exploitation on Indigenous lands, enabling invasions and forced displacements. Such initiatives crystallize a project of economic genocide, sustained by a vision that, since the colonial period, portrayed Indigenous peoples as obstacles to development, thus perpetuating state negligence and structural violence.

In this light, Rocha (2023) argues that this logic reflects a governmental strategy aligned with neoliberalism, whose central aim is the expansion of extractive industries despite environmental and humanitarian risks. This rhetoric is reinforced by discourses that dehumanize Indigenous peoples, reproducing myths—such as the stereotype of laziness—historically used to justify the plunder of their territories (Vieira, 2022). During the Bolsonaro administration, for instance, invasions of Indigenous lands accounted for 61.25% of the decade's recorded cases (De Matos, 2023).

Brown (2019) and Mendes & Haubber (2022) demonstrate that neoliberalism is not merely an economic model but also a mode of governance that shapes politics, culture, and subjectivities. In Brazil, this is evident in discourses combining individualism, nationalism, and meritocracy to justify extractive practices in protected areas. Although Brown does not specifically address the Global South, it is clear that neoliberalism operates by depoliticising public life, wreaking democratic institutions, and finishing the state's regulatory role, creating a favorable environment for violence against Indigenous peoples and the exploitation of their territories.

Going further, neoliberalism can be understood as an extension or new guise of the coloniality of power, whose central premise of progress relies on promises of improved quality of life for certain groups, at the expense of others precarisation. This colonial complex of power becomes even more evident when scholars from the Global South, as mentioned in the beginning of this section, analyse these dynamics beyond the critical lens of the Global North, highlighting how the narrative also generates vulnerability and precarisation for groups historically affected by this logic since European colonization.

BIPA On EU-Mercosur FTA: A Chronological Review of BIPA's Statements

This section aims to evaluate the categorical elements that comprise BIPA's overall position on the EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement. To this end, it provides a chronological review of BIPA's public statements regarding the agreement. The results are analysed based on the decolonial theoretical framework of Peace Studies.

BIPA's first public statement was issued in late December 2019, the year the agreement-in-principle was signed by the economic blocs. It came

from a manifesto produced by a campaign organized by the group entitled *“Note on the Indigenous Blood Journey: Not One Drop More.”* According to the organization, this journey passed through twelve European countries, where representatives of different Indigenous ethnic groups presented their demands to government leaders. BIPA stated that the main aim of the journey was to promote actions to pressure the Brazilian government and companies in the Brazilian agribusiness sector to comply with a set of agreements of commitments related to climate change and human rights, to which Brazil had committed. Among these treaties, the Paris Agreement, International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the New York Declaration on Forests were highlighted.

In addition to appealing to public opinion, the campaign's strategy primarily consisted of sending reports and letters of recommendation on various topics to national and regional parliaments in Europe. Among the themes listed, BIPA's negative stance on the EU-Mercosur agreement was reiterated, and the following recommendations were made to the national parliaments.

“The EU-Mercosur agreement should not be ratified while the Bolsonaro government continues to act contrary to the commitments outlined in its sustainable development chapter. Under its current terms, the Mercosur Agreement will incentivize environmental destruction and the genocide of Indigenous peoples and forest guardians in Brazil. We believe that the European Union must demand immediate action and concrete results from Brazil before any agreement can be considered for ratification, especially concerning the fight against violence targeting Indigenous peoples and forest guardians in the Brazilian Amazon. It is necessary that the agreement also includes sanctions against those who fail to comply with its terms. It is fundamental that the agreement is ratified only with guarantees that exported products respect environmental rights, Indigenous and women's rights, and do not originate from areas with conflicts, deforestation, slave labor, and Indigenous lands” (BIPA, 2019).

In addition to these recommendations, BIPA reiterated the need for the EU to establish a legal framework that would effectively prohibit and sanction European economic actors and ensure transparency and traceability "the purchase of products from other countries for the European Union, with the goal of curbing the acquisition of products derived from conflict areas, Indigenous lands, deforestation zones, and those that use slave labour" (BIPA,

2019). The association also urged European companies to comply with such legislation and emphasised the importance of developing and enhancing mechanisms that enable Indigenous organizations to have direct access to funding resources, thereby facilitating the implementation of the National Policy for Territorial and Environmental Management of Indigenous Lands (PNGATI).

BIPA's second public statement regarding the agreement was issued on 18 December 2020, just over a year after the signing of the agreement-in-principle. Through a document entitled "Front of Brazilian Civil Society Organisations Against the Mercosur-EU Agreement," BIPA reaffirmed its positions and criticisms of the agreement, called for a debate within the Brazilian parliament, and listed key concerns regarding the situation of Indigenous populations in Brazil.

Among the existing concerns, the association highlighted that "The commercial opening, under the terms of this agreement, will bring significant socioeconomic, labor, land, territorial, environmental, and climate impacts to Brazil and the other Mercosur countries. The largest beneficiaries will be transnational corporations interested in importing cheap raw materials, privatizing services, and expanding the market for their industrialized products" (BIPA, 2020).

Additionally, BIPA also highlighted the following implications of the agreement: a) the deepening of deindustrialisation and the productive-commercial reprimarization of the Brazilian economy; b) an increase in privatisations, the weakening of the essential service sector, and the vulnerability of the national financial system; c) the systematic devastation of Brazilian biomes due to predatory extractivism and deforestation; d) the inefficiency of control mechanisms arising from international carbon market agreements; and e) the expansion of the intensive use of pesticides and the development of degrading biotechnology.

Beyond these, BIPA also justified its opposition based on specific terms of the agreement, such as: f) unfair competition for national service providers due to the opening of the government procurement sector; g) a lack of transparency on the part of Mercosur governments concerning interregional negotiations; and h) the deepening of Brazil's economic and commercial dependence amid the health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In November 2022, BIPA's third declaration concerning the EU-Mercosur agreement was issued. In the statement entitled "BIPA integra comissão de movimentos populares que discute a política ambiental do acordo Mercosul-União Europeia" (BIPA joins a commission of popular movements discussing the environmental policy of the Mercosur-EU agreement), to

discuss and present evidence to authorities regarding the impacts of mining on Indigenous lands and on areas occupied by family agriculture. In this declaration, in addition to the issue of demarcating preservations areas, BIPA addressed the challenges of food insecurity. and the chemical contamination of Indigenous populations affected by large-scale agriculture in Brazil were also addressed. Among the meetings reported, a public session with members of the European Commission and the European Parliament, particularly leaders from the Green Party, was emphasized.

On the last day of 2024, the organisation reaffirmed its stance on the interregional agreement. In a document entitled "*Nosso Marco é Ancestral, Sempre Estivemos Aqui*" (Our Landmark is Ancestral, We Have Always Been Here), BIPA detailed its participation in several mobilisation conferences, including a meeting where the EU-Mercosur FTA was discussed as one of the the main drivers escalating territorial conflicts affecting Indigenous populations in Brazil. At this meeting, BIPA urged the European Union not to approve the Mercosur Agreement and requested that the bloc's leaders create a new legal framework within the European Anti-Deforestation Regulation for the protection of the Cerrado, one of the main Brazilian biomes affected by the expansion of agribusiness.

BIPA's most recent public statement on the agreement was made in May 2025, through a notification entitled "Em agenda com autoridades europeias, BIPA reivindica votos contra o acordo UE-Mercosul e metas mais ambiciosas na COP30" (On the agenda with European authorities, BIPA demands votes against the EU-Mercosur agreement and more ambitious goals at COP30). This document reported on meetings with Members of the European Parliament from the Socialists and Democrats bloc, as well as with British parliamentarians and authorities in London, United Kingdom. According to the association, the objective of this mobilisation was to address the impacts of the EU-Mercosur agreement, which, in the organization's view, has an unquestionable potential to intensify deforestation and violence against Indigenous peoples in Brazil. This statement also provided a summary of the demands for more ambitiously adequate goals to be established during the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil.

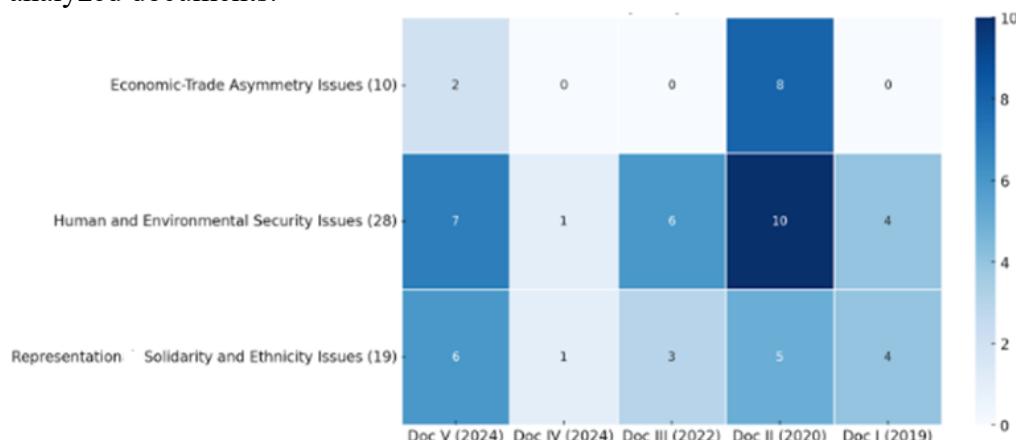
In this declaration, BIPA emphasised that the EU-Mercosur agreement could further accelerate deforestation, as the increase in Europe's beef import quota encourages the expansion of cattle ranching, which in turn indirectly drives soybean cultivation and demands for infrastructure projects, such as the Ferrogrão railway, invading Indigenous territories. Furthermore, the Agreement has been vehemently criticised for omissions that weaken the rights of Indigenous peoples, as it removes the term "free" from prior and informed consent and restricting this protection to a narrower and less protective framework.

The organisation also engaged in advocacy across other policy agendas. Among the more ambitious goals for COP30 demanded by BIPA, were the institutionalisation of direct funding for Indigenous peoples and global territorial recognition, while also alongside denunciations of the state of Pará for its permissive stance towards illegal gold mining. Regarding the European Union's Anti-Deforestation Law, BIPA demonstrated support for the creation of the Regulation. However, the Indigenous association recommended that this new legislation be expanded to include other Brazilian biomes besides the Amazon forest, as well as more products, such as gold and other minerals.

Given the descriptive overview of BIPA's official positions, the next subsection will elaborate on the analytical treatment of the coded results derived from the documents considered in this evaluation.

Results

Based on what was observed in the previous section, BIPA's opposing stance on the EU-Mercosur FTA had various motivations. Using the coding scheme developed, the following association frequency chart presents the presence of each analytical category and the coding units selected from the analyzed documents:

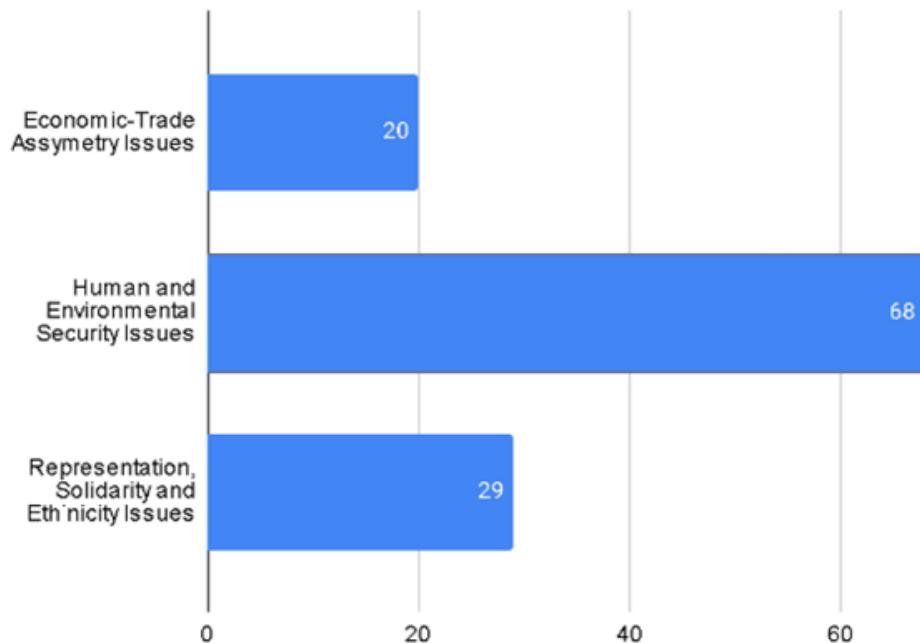


Graph 1: Class Area Frequency by BIPA'S Documents on the EU-Mercosur FTA (2019-2024)

In light of this analytical framework, the results indicate that the category of Human and Environmental Security Issues was the most predominant in the total coded segments within BIPA's position documents. Moreover, when examined chronologically the documents, this predominance was entirely constant, making it the principal category represented in all documents analysed. This finding is directly related to Voguel's (2012) argument that concerns related to human security issues in trade agreements

vary according to the social group involved and tend to become particularly pronounced in the perceptions of vulnerable ethnic groups and communities..

The following coding hierarchy chart presents the number of multiple associations among the identified subcategories (nodes) present within the coded segments of the documents:



Graph 2: Amount of Multiple Associations of all subcategories within coded areas of the BIPA's Statements

Based on this scenario, it is also possible to observe that, in addition to the predominance of the Human and Environmental Security Issues category, there was a considerably high number of multiple inter- and intra-categorical associations. This suggests that BIPA's opposing stance on the EU-Mercosur FTA is closely linked to concerns over the preservation of living conditions and the environment, which constitute the core motivations underlying its critique of the Agreement's effects, and that this runs parallel to the broader perception among both domestic and international economic actors regarding the potential commercial benefits of the Agreement, a perspective reflected in the key terms recurrent in BIPA's official statements as shown.

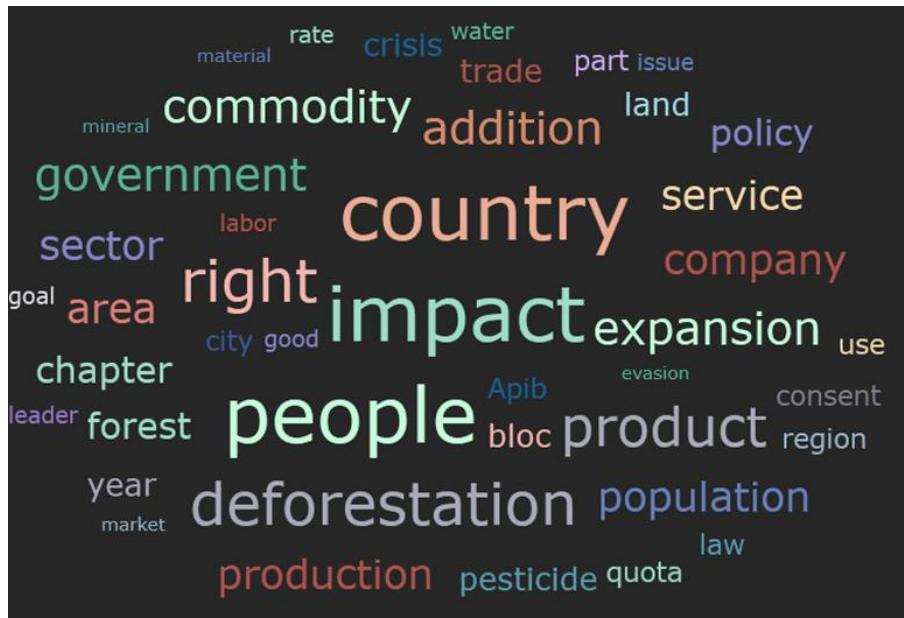
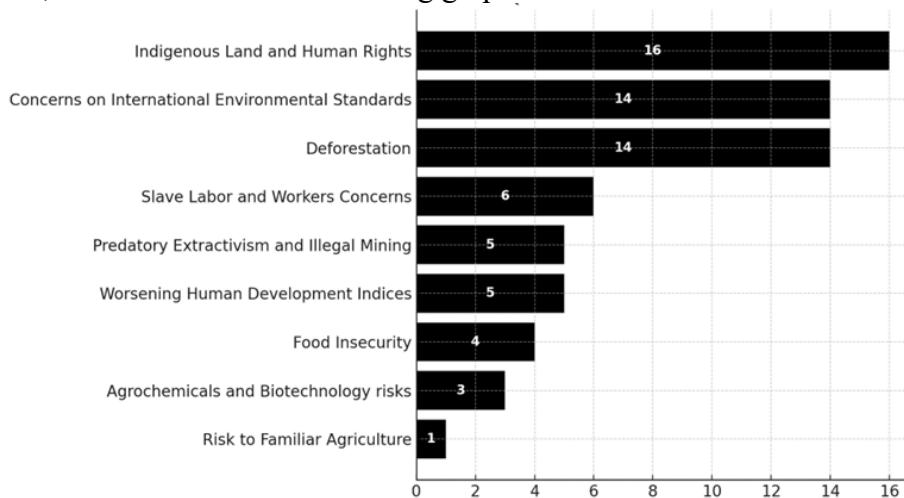


Figure 1: Word Frequency Cloud of BIPA's Positions on the EU-Mercosur FTA

Based on these terms, the interpretation of these positions draws on the argument advanced by Manuel and Schabus (2005) who contend that the multilateral trading system, and its associated regional arrangements, structurally disadvantages Indigenous peoples, thereby reinforcing their marginalisation. This perspective provides a valuable analytical lens through which to interpret the subcategory rankings within the broader Human and Environmental Security Issues category Human and Environmental Security Issues, as illustrated in the following graph.



Graph 3: Ranking of Subcategories within Human and Environmental Security Issues Category by Coding

The chart above reveals that the primary concerns regarding the effects of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) are principally linked to human and territorial rights, as well as the inconsistent application of environmental protections in relation to international climate commitments and the acceleration of deforestation, particularly within the Amazon biome. Revisiting the analysis of Manuel and Schabus (2005), this chart illustrates that, from the perspective of traditional communities, global trade agreements tend to frequently fail to safeguard these populations' most basic needs. Instead, such agreements often perpetuate dynamics of dispossession, whether driven by domestic actors or foreign transnational corporations, leading to the systematic violation of fundamental rights. This reflection frames these impacts not as incidental, but as structural consequences of the current configuration of the global economic system (Manuel & Schabus, 2005).

With regard on the ranking of subcategories related to Representation, Solidarity, and Ethnicity Issues, the following chart presents these results based on the frequency of their association with codes identified in the analysed documents:



Graph 4: Ranking of Subcategories within Representation, Solidarity, and Ethnicity Issues Category by Coding

An examination of these results reveals that the identified subcategories reflect mobilisation strategies grounded in Indigenous decolonial methodologies within Peace Studies. Drawing on Te Maihāroa, Ligaliga & Devere (2022), this methodological approach centres on incorporating narratives from diverse Indigenous communities concerning issues that directly affect their security. In doing so, it establishes communicative frameworks anchored in lived experiences, with the aim of reconfiguring or transforming power relations.

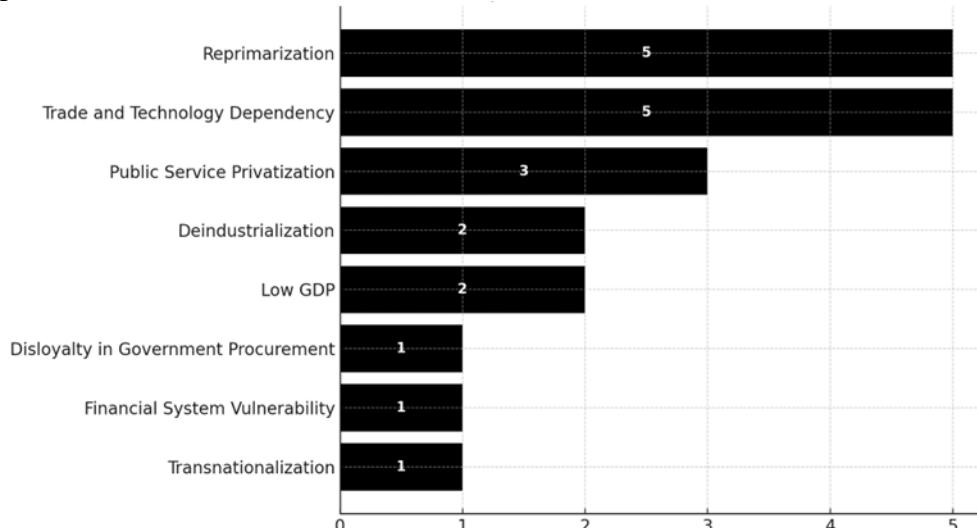
As illustrated in the chart above, this approach is evident in how the BIPA has strategically engaged in dialogues with European Union representatives through which it has demanded that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the implementation of binding legal mechanisms for environmental oversight and human rights protection in South America.

Simultaneously, BIPA has deployed a discursive strategy that highlights the corporatist alignment of Brazil's National Congress, which favours large-scale agribusiness and extractive industries-processes that perpetuate territorial dispossession and violence against Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, this second category underscores BIPA's efforts to advocacy for increased funding for environmental protection agencies and for strengthening partnerships with international NGOs. It also brings to the light the inconsistencies and shortcomings of both international institutions and local governments in upholding environmental safeguards and defending Indigenous communities.

Silva, Macedo & Monielle (2022) argue that the history of diplomacy in Latin America has been shaped by a process of ethnic silencing of Indigenous peoples. They contend that the notion of "national interest" has been constructed as a singular and unified expression of a culturally homogeneous and indivisible national political community. According to the authors, Indigenous diplomacy cannot be regarded merely as a contemporary manifestation of decentralized diplomacy, as its origins predate the formation of the modern territorial state. Rather, Indigenous diplomatic practices represent a longstanding tradition that challenges the dominant narratives of nation-building in Latin America—narratives that have historically served the political and economic interests of elite social groups while marginalizing Indigenous voices and worldviews.

When we consider Indigenous diplomacy as the foremost expression of representative pluriversality in Latin American diplomacy (Silva, Macedo, & Monielle, 2022), the lobbying and socio-political advocacy efforts undertaken by the BIPA (Brazilian Indigenous Peoples' Alliance) regarding the EU–Mercosur Free Trade Agreement (FTA) reveal a critical insight: the agreement lacks a genuinely inclusive and collectively representative process, one capable of balancing diverse interests and addressing the fundamental demands of marginalized social groups. At the same time, Indigenous diplomatic engagement in Brazil reinforces Cruz's (2020) critique of the widely held yet problematic notion of Latin America as one of the world's most peaceful regions. BIPA's critiques of the agreement's inadequate representation, pointing to a denaturalise this hegemonic narrative of peace, which often serves to legitimize external interventions and perpetuate unequal power relations.

On the other hand, the ranking chart of subcategories associated with Economic and Trade Asymmetry Issues reveals another critical dimension of BIPA's stance on the EU–Mercosur Free Trade Agreement. The results are presented below.



Graph 5: Ranking of Subcategories within Representation, Solidarity and Ethnicity Issues Category

Based on this ranking, it is evident that BIPA expresses significant concern regarding the socioeconomic impacts of the FTA, particularly its potential to accelerate deindustrialisation, reinforce the reprimarization of Brazil's productive structure, and deepen the country's commercial and technological dependency. These dynamics have already exerted profound effects on the Brazilian economy since the 1990s (Almeida Júnior & Almeida, 2025).

This apprehension is closely tied to threats against the security of Indigenous peoples in Brazil. Greater access to the European consumer market is expected to empower a segment of the dominant class whose economic power rests on two key activities driving the expansion of large-scale commodity production in Brazil: monoculture farming and extensive agro-livestock operations for export (Berringer & Granato, 2024).

Moreover, given that Indigenous populations in Brazil already face disproportionately limited access to public services, especially in health and education (Benevides, Portillo, & Nascimento, 2014), BIPA also raises concerns that the FTA could set dangerous precedents for the privatisation of state-owned enterprises and increased foreign control over Brazil's financial system. Additionally, BIPA criticises the agreement's discriminatory provisions regarding Brazilian firms in government procurement, which it deems fundamentally unjust.

Discussion

The findings of this research confirm Emilia Hallström's (2021) discussion on popular participation and representation in the formation of the EU-Mercosur FTA. By adopting the perspective of social movements within international negotiation processes to explore the perception of BIPA, it becomes evident that non-inclusion of the interests and demands of Brazilian indigenous peoples reinforces a dominant conception of sustainable development, perpetuating the status quo in domestic disputes over resource control and in the maintenance of unsustainable modes of production.

Conclusions

The analysis of the statements issued by the Brazil's Indigenous Peoples Articulation (BIPA) reveals a consistently critical stance towards the European Union-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement. From a Decolonial perspective, it becomes evident that Indigenous concerns are primarily concerned with issues of human and environmental security, emphasising the heightened risks of deforestation, territorial violence, and food insecurity. These impacts are understood not as mere side effects, but as structural consequences of the current global economic model (neoliberalism), which prioritises corporate interests over the fundamental rights of historically marginalised groups.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that BIPA mobilises its own diplomatic strategies, combining political resistance with international articulation. This action reflects the Decolonial potential noted by Silva, Macedo and Monielle (2022) to challenge traditional Eurocentric narratives, while exposing the asymmetries of the negotiating process and the absence of effective mechanisms for the participation and protection of Indigenous peoples. Accordingly, BIPA's position is not confined to rejecting the agreement itself, but puts forward alternative frameworks for political coexistence grounded in environmental justice, respect for plurinationality, and the safeguarding of the commons.

Therefore, this study reinforces the importance of incorporating decolonial perspectives into debates on international security and trade agreements, rather than engaging in a mere display of concern for Indigenous peoples without consulting them or ensuring their presence in negotiation spaces. The case examined here demonstrates that the effective inclusion of Indigenous voices not only enhances the legitimacy of such processes but also provides concrete pathways towards the construction of a more equitable, and plural international system.

These findings constitute a call for decision-makers, institutions, and interest groups involved in the agreement's approval to take into account the status of this vulnerable group within the Brazilian political dynamic.

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