

## Q&A Regarding News Reports:

Are you listening to the news these days? If you are like the rest of us, you are also trying to figure out what is true and what is not.

Besides the news of COVID-19, you might have also seen news about missions in Brazil, specifically our ministry partner organization Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil (MNTB) that owns and operates the helicopter that Ethnos360 Aviation just sent to them.

In an effort to combat the erroneous news, MNTB has released statements to clarify some of the details of misinformation disseminated in recent news articles in Brazil. Some of these news articles have been quoted by news articles here in the USA. Most of the accusations against MNTB involve one people group located on a huge reservation. We have been given permission by MNTB to release the following Q&As.

***Question 1: Biassetto, a reporter with O GLOBO in Brazil, accused one the MNTB's missionaries of remaining in an indigenous area after the president of MNTB, Edward Luz, had stated that all the missionaries of the organization were outside of the indigenous areas. Was Edward Luz wrong in what he stated, and is it true that the missionary stayed there longer than stated?***

No, to both parts of the question. MNTB stated that the missionary in question and two other missionaries left the Vida Nova community on March 23. This was the Monday after the Friday, March 20, policy had been made by MNTB, a policy requesting all missionaries to leave all indigenous areas, which in fact occurred. This corroborates Luz's information. The departure of the missionaries from indigenous Marubo lands occurred 17 days before Biassetto's first report. He was informed about this fact through the journalist Eliana Camejo, who works in the communication department of MNTB. She even sent him a picture of the missionary after he arrived in a nearby city, but Biassetto published his article and chose not to include that important information. Documented evidence and eyewitness accounts by the Marubo tribal people living in the city of Cruzeiro do Sul in the state of Acre contradict Biassetto's story.

***Question 2: Is the missionary presence in indigenous areas the main threat to the propagation of the coronavirus to the Marubo population as stated by the journalist of O GLOBO?***

No, that is not true. Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil (MNTB) stated that when they requested the departure of the missionaries from that village, the corona virus pandemic had not yet reached that northern region of Brazil, contrary to what was stated. The first cases of COVID-19 in the city of Rio Branco, capital of the state of Acre, occurred on March 27, and the first case in the city of Cruzeiro do Sul, also in the state of Acre, occurred on April 12. Therefore, the assertion that missionaries are a risk to the Marubo people is not true.

***Question 3: Did the president of MNTB say that missionaries had left all indigenous areas (not just the Javari Valley) in February as the newspaper report alleged?***

MNTB said that the president of MNTB did not say that, and that the reporter chose to make conclusions that did not line up with what Edward Luz, president of MNTB, clearly communicated through the MNTB communications department. Edward Luz said that the missionaries **had begun to leave** all indigenous areas (not just in the Javari Valley) in February — *not that they had all left by the time* — and that was what was happening.

***Question 4: Referring to the Javari Valley, the O Globo journalist declared that MNTB encroached on indigenous groups in isolation, convincing readers that the missionaries were deliberately endangering the very survival of these indigenous peoples. Is this really true?***

This is not true. MNTB points out that what the journalist did not highlight in his article is that in the Javari Valley there are also indigenous groups, such as the Mayoruna, Kulina, Kanamari and the Marubo, groups that have long been in contact with Brazilian society. Vida Nova is a Marubo community that has enjoyed a missionary presence for more than 60 years. This is not a group of recently contacted people, and they are not isolated. The Javari Valley indigenous reservation was established in 2001, but missionaries have lived there long before the setting up of the reservation. Anthropologist Júlio César Melatti, on his field research trip in 1974, cites the actions of missionaries as having helped the Marubos when they could have been decimated by tuberculosis. Contrary to what O GLOBO claims, MNTB does not work with isolated indigenous groups in the Javari Valley, neither is MNTB a threat to any communities living in the Vida Nova region.

***Question 5: Did MNTB enter on its own accord into an indigenous area and violate the operational rules established by ANAC?***

MNTB says no on both accounts. MNTB says that their activity in the Javari Valley is not with isolated indigenous groups, but with a well-known community that has had much interaction with the nearby towns and villages. In addition to the local indigenous leadership's knowledge of the missionary presence, both the FUNAI's coordinating group in Atalaia do Norte (AM) and the Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley (UNIVAJA) have long been aware of the missionary presence. As such, the ministry of MNTB among the Marubo people is a known fact and is also recognized for the respect, friendship and good contributions it makes to the indigenous communities.

MNTB also states that the flight for the removal of the missionaries took place within all legal boundaries and did not violate ANAC rules nor the rules of the Department of Airspace Control (DECEA - Departamento de Controle do Espaço Aéreo), which did not issue NOTAM (a communication on temporary changes and restrictions that impact air operations) prohibiting takeoffs at the time the flight plan was filed. The aircraft landed in Vida Nova with a previously signed authorization by the indigenous leadership, which serves as a supporting document for both the landing permit and the registration of the departure of the missionaries on March 23.

***Question 6: The O Globo journalist wrote that "a local health agent, who kept his identity confidential, told O GLOBO that between the last days of March and the first days of April***

***that at least three trips were made by this same helicopter to this region of the Javari Valley." Is that true?***

This is not true. MNTB states that the source that O GLOBO cites is completely unsubstantiated and that there is documented evidence, witnesses and technical evidence (DECEA) that the *last* flight of the aforementioned helicopter occurred in the Javari Valley on the March 23.

***Question 7: "Was MNTB cited in the lawsuit filed by UNIVAJ and, if so, why?"***

MNTB states that according to the lawyer of UNIVAJA and author of the lawsuit, Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil was cited in the lawsuit because there was information stating that the MNTB missionary was still in the indigenous area, which, as has already been proven, is and was not true.

***Question 8: In the O GLOBO article, journalist Daniel Biassetto posted a video with aerial images of a helicopter flying over a jungle area with the caption "A group of missionaries bought a helicopter to... evangelize Indians who have not yet had contact with civilization... Missionaries entered an area of isolated Indians without authorization...", causing the reader to believe that it was an ongoing illegal action. Was this an accurate caption?***

No, it was not. MNTB states that Biassetto used the organization's internal images without authorization and misrepresented the facts about the images. The images used in the video are of flights to a bilingual village outside an official indigenous area (not yet a reservation), landing in a place in Acre and including photos of three missionaries traveling on the Purus River in 2017, having nothing to do with isolated people groups in Brazil.

***Question 9: Was the CARTA CAPITAL magazine correct when it stated that Josiah McIntyre "apparently is connected with Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil"?***

No, MNTB states that Mr. Josiah McIntyre is not, and never has been, a member or associate of or collaborator with MNTB.

***Question 10: The CARTA CAPITAL magazine also stated that Mr. Ricardo Lopes Dias, of the CGIIRC FUNAI (department of uncontacted people groups of the Indian Affairs Agency), is a missionary of Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil. Is Mr. Dias in fact a missionary with MNTB?***

No, he is not. MNTB states that this statement was made despite that fact that it is a widely known and published fact that Ricardo Lopes Dias left the membership of MNTB more than 10 years ago.

***Question 11: Are MNTB and Ethnos360 the same organization or are they different, autonomous organizations?***

MNTB states that MNTB and Ethnos360 are not the same organization. Missão Novas Tribos do Brasil came into being through missionaries of what was then known as New Tribes Mission (now known as Ethnos360); however, MNTB is a Brazilian organization which has been legally functioning for almost 67 years with its own bylaws and leadership duly elected through the votes of the general assembly of its members. The two organizations are partners along with other global partners and share the same goals and objectives, but they are not the same organization.

MNTB has its own bylaws and legal accounting system and can easily prove that it is not financially tied to Ethnos360. The only exception to this separation is that some donations do come from outside of Brazil through MNTB from churches and individuals desiring to help missionaries and projects in Brazil. These donations are duly registered and legally and fiscally accounted for. MNTB is a Brazilian entity, supported primarily through gifts and donations from evangelical Brazilian churches.