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**Biological material returned to Brazil after negotiations between federal prosecutors and US university**



Photo: Leonardo Prado / SECOM / PGR

Yanomami Indians, accompanied by representatives of the Federal Public Ministry (MPF), buried in this Friday, April 3, 2693 bottles of blood of their ancestors, harvested without permission, at the end of the 60s by American scientists. A funeral ceremony in the village of Piau, in the region of Toototobi in Indigenous Yanomami in Roraima returned to the land of indigenous blood. Buried in a sacred site for the tribe, along one of the pillars of Yanoa (hut), the returning blood brought peace and rest to the Yanomami ancestors, according to David Kopenawa, the tribe leader, who also had samples collected when he was about 10 years old. "For our culture, was not to mess in our blood, today we are very happy, it was very sad, but happiness returned to our tribe. Blood was with our thinking, our people, our village. This place [where the material was buried] is sacred, cannot move [from] here," he said. In the ethnic culture, samples are remains that need to follow proper funeral ceremonies. For the people, the realization of these rituals is essential both for peace of mind of the relatives of the dead, and for the respect of their culture. The samples arrived in Brazil last March 26 and were treated to make them safe but, according to the university, the treatment did not alter the physical characteristics. Along with the package was sent by the university, a certificate attesting

the authenticity of the samples. **Agreement** - The agreement, brokered by the Department of International Cooperation (SCI) has allowed the arrival in Brazil of thousands of biological samples taken by US scientists without it was necessary to pump Justice. "The repatriation of the material is the result of joint effort of great commitment and many negotiations. For the MPF and the Yanomâmi tribe, this agreement has historical value, "said the attorney general's office, Rodrigo Janot, one of the signatories of the document. "It is the first agreement of its kind in history conducted by federal prosecutors," the Secretary of International Cooperation, regional prosecutor Vladimir Republic Aras, "For SCI, was a recovery very different assets. We have brought money back. Brought to the indigenous community Yanomâmi something that has significant intangible value and relevant symbology "he said." The link between the diplomat Marco Tulio Scarpelli Cabral, the Department of Human Rights of the Foreign Ministry and the MPF was key to this success, "added the secretary Aras. The material returned to the Yanomami after almost 15 years of negotiations and agreements between the Federal Public Ministry and The Pennsylvania State University. "We have a role in relation to what they want, what is theirs, what was removed without consent. The Federal Public Ministry has the duty to act for the indigenous traditions are guaranteed ", emphasized the Attorney Deborah Duprat Republic, responsible for indigenous issues in the MPF. The work for the repatriation of blood began in 2002, when Brazilian Yanomâmi leaders ordered the Federal Public Ministry to take measures to locate and recover these blood samples of dead relatives. In 2005, the Prosecutor's Office in Roraima initiated an administrative procedure. "The initiative has always been the Yanomâmi people, demonstrating the importance that was the repatriation of this material, which is to respect the culture and the value it has for them," said the prosecutor in Roraima, Gustavo Kenner. See more photos the ceremony: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mpfederal>