



ABYA YALA NEWS

Journal of the
**SOUTH AND MESO
AMERICAN
INDIAN
INFORMATION
CENTER**

Volume 7, Numbers 1 & 2, Winter/Spring 1993

Price \$3

1993 YEAR OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Linking Indian People of the Americas

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Abya Yala News (ISSN 1056-5876) is published four times per year and available for an annual \$15 personal membership, \$25 for an organizational membership, or \$3 at certain newsstands. For Canada or Mexico, add \$5, for international memberships, add \$10.

We would like to thank the following individuals for their generous assistance to SAIIC:

Alejandro Amaru, Jack Brown, Amy Corsun, George Franklin, Gia Grant, Deb Gray, Dan Greenwood, Samuel Guía, Norma Klahn, Pat Moony, Tom Reeves, Julie Rogers, Glen Switkes, Billy R. Trice Jr.

Thanks to the following foundations for their generous support:

The John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, General Service Foundation, Funding Exchange, Seventh Generation Fund, Vanguard Foundation.

Cover Photograph

Carrie Dann, *Western Shoshone* (USA) and Luis Macas, *Quichua* (Ecuador) at the United Nations for the opening ceremony of the 1993 Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

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Printed on 100% recycled paper
 with soybean inks



EDITORIAL

The commemoration of the 500 years of European invasion is now behind us. The wide-spread resistance to the officially planned events and the "official" version of history was very successful, increasing public awareness of the existence of the 45 million Indigenous people that live on the continent of Abya Yala. But even more importantly, native communities mobilized throughout the continent, not only to demonstrate their presence, but also to make concrete proposals presenting alternative solutions to the problems faced by Indigenous communities everywhere. Demarcation of Indigenous territories, Indigenous control over educational systems, sustainable economic development, and the right to self-determination are all demands that will not go away until they are fulfilled.

Indigenous communities are increasingly taking their destiny in their own hands, beginning by decolonizing themselves on an ideological level. The exploitative right-wing parties, paternalistic liberal parties, and dogmatic and manipulative sectors of the left wing — all arising from a Europeanized, Western perspective — have sought to prevent the autonomous development of the Indigenous Movement in South and Meso America. In spite of their diversionary tactics and attempts at control which continue to this day, Indigenous communities have strengthened themselves by affirming their distinct identity, and shaping their own political philosophies which reflect their traditional spiritual and cultural heritages.

The search for unity amongst Indigenous peoples — a unity which respects our diversity — is manifested in the many representative organizations which have been created on regional and national levels, organizations that seek to affirm our mutual solidarity and strengthen our common positions. Many of us share the vision of a strong movement of Indigenous Unity on a Continental level. The formation of the Continental Commission of Indigenous Nations and Organizations (CONIC) can be an instrument for developing and strengthening that unity. The Second Continental Encounter of Indigenous Nations and Organizations, to be held in Mexico from the 8th to the 13th of October, will be a significant step towards this vision.

It being 1993, it is important to examine the role of the United Nations as it affects the Indigenous struggle. Many years ago, Indigenous delegates to the UN's Working Group on Indigenous Populations proposed that 1992 be declared the Year of Indigenous Peoples as a gesture of reparation for 500 years of colonization. Governmental representatives at the UN refused, supporting instead Spain's proposal to commemorate 1992 as the "Encounter of Two Worlds", while agreeing to declare 1993 as the Year of Indigenous Peoples.

The inauguration of the Year of Indigenous Peoples took place on December 10, 1992 (see article page 4). It was the first time that Indigenous representatives were invited to speak to the UN's General Assembly. Indigenous delegations from all over the world made great efforts to travel to New York for this event at their own expense, since no UN funds were provided for this purpose. After the UN officials and government representatives addressed the General Assembly in the morning, the meeting was to continue in the afternoon with the speeches of the Indigenous representatives. Yet when the General Assembly reconvened, the Indigenous representatives witnessed, with great surprise and disillusionment, that almost all of the government representatives and many of the UN officials had left. Many took this as a bad augury for the "International Year of Indigenous Peoples", as well as a sign of great disrespect.

These inauspicious beginnings have yet to be overcome. Five months after the inauguration in New York, the many promises of "working in partnership" with Indigenous peoples have still not been fulfilled. For example, the Center for Human Rights in Geneva has announced that they have obtained several hundreds of thousands of dollars for Indigenous Peoples' Projects, but they have not yet consulted with any Indigenous organizations in order to decide what projects will be funded. Indigenous peoples have not been granted official participation at the upcoming World Conference of Human Rights in Vienna. The ILO's Convention 169 has not yet been ratified by the majority of the world's nation-states. While the Draft Declaration of Principles and Rights of Indigenous Peoples may be approved after 10 years of development (see page 5), it will then still need to be approved by the Human Rights Commission and ratified by the many governments represented in the UN before being adopted by the General Assembly.

While it is certainly both worthwhile and necessary to struggle for the establishment of these international accords — and then to ensure that governments act in compliance with them — it is important that this not replace the energy and attention that we need to give to strengthening our communities and organizations. Our vision is that, through organizing for self-determination, building alliances with each other, and consolidating our Indigenous unity on a continental level, we can ensure the well-being of all Indigenous peoples and of our Mother Earth.

YEAR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Opening of the United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples

On December 10, 1992 leaders and delegates of Indigenous communities from around the world convened at the United Nations headquarters in New York City for the official opening of the United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous leaders held strategy meetings in New York two days prior to the inaugural events to share critical problems and formulate a unified, pro-active platform to take to the U.N. (see declaration, page 6) The meetings were organized by the Continental Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Nations and hosted by the Native American Council of New York City.

During the morning General Assembly Plenary Meeting on December 10, the President General as well as representatives of Member States made official U.N. declarations regarding the role of the United Nations in "promoting and protecting the human rights of Indigenous peoples", and how the aim of the International Year is to focus attention on the special situations and needs of Indigenous peoples.

The Plenary meeting was then adjourned, to be continued by statements of Indigenous speakers. Unfortunately, few members of the General Assembly returned to attend the continuation of the opening ceremonies, and the diverse list of Indig-

enous speakers scheduled for the afternoon addressed a relatively empty assembly hall. Despite the absence of many U.N. officials, the meeting had historic importance, as it was the first time Indigenous peoples were allowed to address the U.N.

Speakers representing 20 Indigenous nations called on world leaders to halt the genocide of their peoples and the destruction of their lands. The speeches raised common concerns, including invasion and exploitation of Indigenous lands; pollution of air, water and land; violation of religious freedom and human rights; protection of Indigenous cultures and languages; and Indigenous self-determination of economic development.

"The most serious problems confronting Indigenous Peoples are the progressive expropriation of our lands and territories, the irrational exploitation of soil and subsoil, and the destruction and contamination of ecosystems which maintain the equilibrium of life," said Noeli Pocatererra Uliana, of the Wayuu nation of Venezuela. Many of the other Indigenous speakers also emphasized the relationship between ecological concerns and Indigenous concerns. In the words of Davi Yanomami, a representative of the Yanomami people of the Amazon:

Our word is to protect nature, the wind, the mountain, the forest, and the animals. This is what we want to teach you. The

1993 YEAR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Photo SAIIC

Indigenous delegates meet to formulate a unified platform prior to United Nations ceremony. From left: Margarito Ruiz, Maya (Mexico); Marcial Arias, Kuna (Panamá); Domingo Raien, Mapuche (Chile), unidentified Mapuche (Chile)

leaders in the rich, industrialized world think that they are the owners of the world. But the shaboris (shamans) are the ones who have true knowledge. They are the real first world. And if their knowledge is destroyed, then the white people too will die. It will be the end of the world. This is what we want to avoid.

SAIIC attended this historic event as a supporter of the inherent right of Indig-

enous peoples to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Yet the fact that this significant presence of Indigenous chiefs, political and spiritual leaders at the United Nations received little local, national or international press coverage bears witness to the fact that once again, the Indigenous peoples of the world were not treated with due respect.

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

In July of 1993, the UN's Working Group on Indigenous Populations is expected to approve the final draft of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which they have been working on for 10 years with the participation of Indigenous peoples from all over the world. The draft will then be submitted for approval to all of the member nations of the UN. If enough support is built, the Declaration will then be adopted by the General Assembly, and become an important instrument for protecting Indigenous rights.

We encourage individuals and organizations to help build support for the Declaration. You can educate yourself and others about the Declaration, circulate information among other peace and social justice organizations, and write to members of Congress and to the President. Copies of the current draft of the Declaration can be ordered from SAIIC for a small fee to cover copying, postage, and handling costs. To find out more background information, contact:

Center for Human Rights, United Nations
Room S-2914, New York, NY 10017, Tel. (212) 963-2283

1993 YEAR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Statement of Indigenous Nations, Peoples and Organizations

This statement was prepared and approved by representatives of the Indigenous peoples of the world present at the planning meetings held in New York for two days prior to the UN's Inauguration of the Year of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples (See article page 4).

Gucumatz, Condor, Father Sun, Eagle, Anahuac, Mother Earth

INVOKING the spirits of our ancestors and acting in our tradition of resistance in the defense of Mother Earth,

ASSERTING our fundamental and historical rights,

ASSERTING all the millions of brothers and sisters who have sacrificed their lives in defense of our millennial culture; in the name of the more than 300 million Indigenous people who inhabit the Earth, and the efforts over years of work by Indigenous peoples and NGOs, we, the members of the Indigenous nations and organizations, gathered in New York City, from the 8th to the 10th of December 1992,

Consider:

- I. That all Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination as expounded in the principles of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Accordingly, Indigenous peoples have the right to determine all matters relating to our political, economic, social, spiritual and cultural affairs. We call for the immediate adoption of the above declaration.
- II. The struggle for our territorial rights is common to all Indigenous nations and peoples, and this right is persistently denied by governments and dominant societies.
- III. Economic development practices of Nation States are destroying the natural resources which have been protected within Indigenous territories. As a consequence, the survival of all species is threatened.

IV. The Indigenous peoples' contribution to the social, intellectual and cultural diversity of the world, particularly to the ecology and harmony of Mother Earth must be valued and supported by nation states and international agencies.

V. The human rights of Indigenous peoples to our culture, identity, religions and languages are inalienable. These rights continue to be sacrificed in the programs, policies and budgets of the nation states and international agencies.

VI. While democracy is heralded by dominant societies, what this means to Indigenous peoples is repression, genocide, and misery in the Americas and in the rest of the world. As an example, the process by which the dialogue for peace is taking place in Central and South America, there is no direct participation by Indigenous organizations and nations in spite of the fact that Indigenous peoples are directly affected by the conditions of the wars.

VII. Governments continue to desecrate and appropriate religious and sacred places and objects, depriving Indigenous nations around the world of their basic spiritual ways of life.

THEREFORE: The International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, 1993, must not be merely celebrations or paternalistic declarations, but rather, the resolution of the above requires that the United Nations and its member states take the following actions:

1. Recognize Indigenous rights to Indigenous territories, including the recov-

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Photo SAJIC

Quechua girl wearing a ceremonial condor mask and cape

2. Recognize, honor, and document under international law all treaties, compacts, accords and other formal agreements concluded with Indigenous peoples of the world. Additionally the Study on Indigenous Treaties delegated to the Human Rights Commission must be given priority attention by the United Nations and its member states.
 3. Recognize and honor Indigenous forms of government when such governments are practiced according to traditional laws and customs.
 4. Promote and strengthen Indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights under International law and principles. Additionally, the study on intellectual and cultural property rights undertaken by the United Nations commission on Human Rights should be given top priority.
 5. Consult with Indigenous organizations and nations regarding the ratification of Covenant 169 of the International Labor Organization.
 6. Provide legal assistance and technical training to the Indigenous organizations and nations.
 7. Promote and strengthen Indigenous education, culture, art, religion, philosophies, literature and sciences of Indigenous nations.
 9. Return historic places and sacred sites and objects to the Indigenous nations to whom they belong.
 10. Demonstrate sincere commitment to the new partnership with Indigenous peoples by making adequate financial resources available to implement actions presented herein. Furthermore, make significant donations to the Voluntary Fund so that future projects be realized, and assure that the Indigenous peoples have direct input into the management of said fund.
 11. That the United Nations Secretary General and its specialized agencies, commissions and programs to convene special consultations with Indigenous peoples of the world at the most local level practical.
 12. That the Secretary general of the United Nations immediately create a specific Indigenous program to be administered and executed with direct participation of Indigenous organizations.
- Written in the City of New York, December 9, 1992.



1993 YEAR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The following organizations make up the organizing committee for the Continental Encounter:

Coordinating Body of
Indigenous Women of
Bolivia
Council of All Lands,
Chile
Council of Mayan
Organizations of
Guatemala (COMG)
Kunas United for
Nabguana, Panama
Mexican Organizing
Commission
National Organization of
Indigenous People of
Ecuador (CONAIE)
South and Meso
American Indian
Information Center
(SAIIC)
Tonatierra, USA



Second Continental Encounter of Indigenous Nations and Organizations

The fifth meeting of the Continental Commission of Indigenous Nations (CONIC) took place from April 2-4, 1993, in the Ceremonial Center Ixacacal Guardia, in Quintana Roo, Mexico.

The purpose of the meeting was to continue preparations for the Second Continental Encounter, a follow-up to the First Continental Encounter of Indigenous Nations and Organizations which took place in Quito, Ecuador in July 1990. At the April meeting, it was decided that the Second Continental Encounter will take place from October 8-13, 1993 in the Otomi - Nahuatl Ceremonial Center in the State of Mexico.

The aims of the Second Continental Encounter are:

- To promote Indian unity on a Continental level, upon the basis of our own spirituality, wisdom, traditional organization and political philosophy;
- To create systems of communication and coordination on a continental level;
- To propose viable alternatives and solutions, based upon self-determination, which address the issues facing our people.

The main themes for the Second Encounter are:

1. Spirituality and Tradition
2. Self-determination, Legislation, and Indigenous Rights

3. Land Rights, Development, and the Environment
4. Women, Family, and Community
5. Education, Culture and Youth
6. Organization and Coordination

An international organizing committee with representatives from six regions was formed to plan the Encounter. More than 300 hundred delegates and guests are expected to participate. The participation of spiritual leaders, women, and young people is strongly encouraged.

Given the historical pattern of domination of the South by the governments of the North, it seems very fitting that this effort to create Continental Indigenous Unity is being initiated by the Indigenous people of South and Meso America. Yet our unity will not be complete without the participation of our Indigenous brothers and sisters of the North. Any North American Indigenous communities and organizations that would like to send a representative to this meeting, please contact SAIIC or:

TONATIERRA
P.O. BOX 24009
Phoenix, AZ 85074
(602) 254-5230

A detailed outline for the Encounter can be obtained from SAIIC.

For information on the encounter, please contact SAIIC or:

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Colonia Centro
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783-8002
Fax: 52-5-
208-3044

1993 YEAR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Latin American Governments Establish Indigenous Peoples' Fund



Inspired by an initiative of the government of Bolivia, who met with other Latin American governments and with the government of Spain at the first Ibero-American Summit in Guadalajara, Mexico in July, 1991, an Indigenous Peoples' Fund has been established that expects to provide millions of dollars to Indigenous communities.

The process of developing this fund has taken place over the last two years, and has involved representatives from governments of the region, extra-regional governments, Indigenous peoples' organizations (Inter-American Indian Institute, the presidents of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, and COICA-the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples' Organizations of the Amazon Basin), non-governmental organizations, and international agencies.

The decision-making structure of the Fund is designed to ensure direct participation of Indigenous peoples. On the General Assembly and the Board of Directors, regional governments, Indigenous peoples of each regional member state, and extra-regional governments will all be equally represented.

The four areas of priority the Fund will consider are:

- **Resources for Sustainable Autonomous Development:** Securing legal recognition of land and territories, promoting natural resource management, restoring degraded

areas and ecosystems, and fostering sustainable productive activities.

- **Indigenous Peoples' Rights:** Promoting and protecting the rights of Indigenous people, reforming legislation and other regulatory codes.

- **Training for Management and Participation:** Strengthening representative organizations, establishing co-operative mechanisms for planning, consultation and action.

- **Identity and Culture:** Protecting the cultural knowledge and technology of Indigenous peoples, promoting recognition of their identity and awareness of Indigenous contributions.

At a Fund meeting on April 13, 1993 in Mexico, an interim committee was formed to preside over the development process. Rodolfo Stavenhagen, a well-known Mexican anthropologist, was chosen as the interim president of the committee which, once the Fund is formally established, will serve as the Board of Directors.

Not all Latin American governments have yet ratified this proposal. To aid in this effort, please send your letters of support for the Indigenous Peoples' Fund to:

Rodolfo Stavenhagen
Interim President, Indigenous People's Fund
Stanford Institute for International Studies
Stanford, CA 94305

For more information please contact:

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Stealing Indigenous Genes Genome Project Places Indigenous Peoples at Risk

A band of molecular anthropologists are planning to collect samples from the hair roots, cheeks and blood of 722 "endangered" Indigenous peoples scattered throughout the globe to immortalize their genetic make-up and possibly turn a profit.

A draft report from the second Human Genome diversity Workshop held at Penn State University on October 29-31, 1992 refers to Indigenous people as "Isolates of Historic Interest (IHI's), because they represent groups that should be sampled before they disappear as integral units so that their role in human history can be preserved."

By recording gene codes the plan's participants hope to find unique genes which can be used to cure diseases, which they will patent and make millions.

The plan is being advanced by the Human Genome Diversity Project, an informal consortium of universities in North America and Europe backed by the U.S. National Institute of Health (NIH) as part of the Human Genome Organization (HUGO). HUGO is the multinational, multi-billion dollar initiative to map the human genetic structure.

Part of the plan is to leave a duplicate sample of the DNA of each Indigenous community with their national governments or regional institutions. Access to an IHI's complete genetic make-up makes it theoretically possible to devise cheap and targeted biological weapons trained solely on that community. Human rights violations against Indigenous peoples, by their own governments and/or other governments within their region, is a major cause of their "physical extinction".

Permanent samples of human genetic material are invaluable to the Human Genome Project and to medical research. Under

U.S. law, any products or processes derived from the unique collection will be patentable.

The commercial profit in Indigenous germplasm was brought home to pharmaceutical companies earlier this year when thirty citizens of Limone, an isolated Italian community, were discovered to have a unique gene that codes against many forms of cardiovascular disease. Swedish and Swiss pharmaceutical companies, as well as the University of Milan, have since swarmed over the townspeople, taking blood and other samples and applying for patents. If the gene can be turned into a marketable drug the profits will be tremendous. Will Indigenous peoples have a share in such profits?

The members of the Human Genome Diversity Project estimate that an initial five year sweep of relatively accessible populations will cost between \$23 million and \$35 million and will allow sampling from 10,000 to 15,000 human specimens. White blood cells from each person will be "immortalized" at the American Type Culture Collection in Rockville, Maryland. Human blood can only survive 48 hours outside of storage so samples collected will have to be air-lifted immediately. "One person can bleed 50 people and get to the airport in one day," the report estimates.

The Indigenous Peoples and Health Workshop held in Winnipeg, Canada April 13-18, 1993, which was organized by the Pan American Health Organization (see article page 11), passed a resolution criticizing the Genome project. The resolution states:

This is yet another example of research being done on Indigenous people without their consent and without all relevant information being provided to them.

The consequences of this research have not been fully explored nationally, inter-



Pan American Health Organization Conference on Indigenous Health

The first conference ever sponsored by the Pan American Health Organization that focused exclusively on Indigenous peoples health issues was held from April 13 - 18 in Villa Maria, Winnipeg Canada. Forty Indigenous delegates from South, Meso and North America as well as Canadian government and non-governmental representatives attended the Indigenous Peoples & Health Workshop '93 "in hopes of launching a dialogue on the health status of Indigenous peoples."

Presentations, seminars and discussions addressed the gravity of the health crisis in Native communities, covering topics ranging from the dearth of health services and facilities in Native communities, to the significant role of traditional Indigenous medicine, to the ominous Human Genome Development Project. Poverty, oppression and lack of self-determination were seen to be the pri-

mary culprits of the alarming health situation confronting Indigenous peoples.

In light of the crisis, a recommendation to declare a state of emergency in specific communities and populations was put forth. Systematic community participation in defining and implementing health policies was regarded as crucial for achieving positive results. The necessity of pursuing ongoing efforts to defend Indigenous lands, improve nutrition and housing, prevent environmental pollution, and legalize Indigenous medicine and practices was discussed at length.

As a result of this conference, a commission of Indigenous delegates, working in conjunction with PAHO to promote Indigenous health issues on local, national and international levels is being established. In addition, an international task force dedicated to ensuring that Indigenous health issues find a place on the agendas of any meetings pertaining to Native peoples is planned, as well as an information network to educate and update Native communities on relevant issues and new developments concerning health.

Genome continued

nationally, or in consultation with Indigenous people.

This type of research will have a negative impact on future health programs and projects in Indigenous communities, by undermining Indigenous peoples' trust in the medical and health professions.

Source: Rural Advancement Foundation International

For more information contact SAIC or:

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Foundation International
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Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5N2
Canada
Tel: 613-567-6880
Fax: 613-567-6884



Delegates to the PAHO conference from left to right: Rosa Baldizón, Maya (Guatemala); Rosa García, Purepecha (México); Carmen Pereira, Mojeña (Bolivia); Yolanda Nahuelcheo, Mapuche (Chile); and Gilberta Batz, Maya (Guatemala)

Photo SAIC



Organizing to Save the Amazon

An Interview with Valerio Grefa, new Coordinator of COICA

Valerio Grefa was elected General Coordinator of the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples' Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) in Manaus, Brazil, in November 1992. He is a member of the Quichua nation, from the community of San Pablo, Napo Province, Ecuador. The community is part of FECUNAE, the Federation of Native Communities of the Ecuadorian Amazon, which is part of CONFENIAE, the Confederation of Indigenous Nations of the Ecuadorian Amazon, which in turn is affiliated with COICA. In the Amazon basin there are more than one and a half million Indigenous inhabitants, from more than 400 nations.

SAIIC: How long have you been active in the Indigenous movement?

VG: I have been active in the Indigenous movement since 1976. I am one of the first leaders that had the honor of establishing the Union of Natives of the Ecuadorian Amazon [UNAE].

SAIIC: What are the chief problems you had at that time in the Napo area?

VG: The first problems were to end the slavery that the *criollo* land owners maintained along the shore of the Napo River, especially between Coca and Nuevo Rocafuerte. They owned large haciendas, and made people work for meager wages. They used debts that were passed from generation to generation, which were unpayable debts, as an excuse to make the people work. The organization ended this abuse by the *criollo* land owners once and for all. The lands for the most part passed into the community's hands.

SAIIC: Your community, San Pedro, is part of FECUNAE. Who does FECUNAE represent?

VG: FECUNAE represents in particular the Quichua peoples of the lower Napo in Ecuador. There are 53 organizations now that make up FECUNAE.

SAIIC: You have represented both FECUNAE and CONFENIAE?

VG: Yes, twice I was president of FECUNAE, and then I was honored with representing CONFENIAE in 1989, 1990, and 1991. And now I am representing COICA as General Coordinator.

SAIIC: So you resigned from your position as president of CONFENIAE to assume the post in COICA.

VG: Yes, when I was elected Coordinator of COICA, I immediately called a meeting, — an amplified assembly, as we call it — of CONFENIAE to formally resign the presidency. On the 17th of December this ceremony took place, in which Angel Samarenda became the new president of CONFENIAE.

SAIIC: Who carried out the meeting in Brazil? Which local organization hosted it?

VG: The organizer was COICA. The host organization was the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB). COIAB is a new member of COICA.

SAIIC: And I understand that in this meeting of COICA there was increased participation. What other countries participated, and what other Indigenous organizations?

VG: In this case Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam, and French Guyana became new members. So COICA now has nine members.

SAIIC: Can you tell us what the structure of COICA is like, the governing board, the coordinating board, or the coordinators?

VG: There have been two levels of organization in COICA since our last assembly. First there is the coordinating council, which is made up of all the presidents of the member organizations of COICA, that is, nine members now. Then on a more opera-

AMAZON

tive level we have established the governing coordinating board, as we call it, which is made up of five coordinators, including four area coordinators and the General Coordinator.

SAIIC: What contacts do you have on a regional and international level, like in Europe and the United States?

VG: Well, COICA has put a lot of effort into establishing international contacts. But it is our objective to respond in a coordinated way to the proposals of our base communities. That is how it was possible to sign an environmental agreement between the NGOs of the north and COICA. In the same way it was possible to sign the climate agreement, as it's called, between European cities and COICA. We began with seventeen cities, and now there are more than 200 cities.

In the same way, there are other proposals in the World Bank, proposals in the United Nations, in the Organization of American States (OAS), and to organizations that have to do with the rights of Indigenous peoples. We have as our work agenda the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Agreement 169, and we are in dialogue with governments to get them to pass this agreement. We support it because it is an international or legal tool that takes Indigenous demands into account in a more concrete way.

SAIIC: What is COICA's proposal to the environmental groups of Europe and the United States? Is it only economic support or is it something more profound?

VG: We have established as one of our basic objectives that the Amazon basin be considered a universal unit, a global unit, which calls on its protagonists — the Indigenous people — to raise our voice of attention, our voice of protest to the world, because the Amazon basin is the last frontier



Valerio Greff (2nd from left) on a recent visit to SAIIC

Photo SAIIC

of tropical forest and of biodiversity in which the basic rights of the first nations are involved.

That is the basic objective. The second objective is, proposing to international development organizations development alternatives proposed by the Indigenous peoples, what we call autonomous development, which permits the peoples' self-determination. Because we cannot isolate the development of the Indigenous peoples from the preservation of nature and the environment, we seek sustainable development, a harmonic development between man and nature.

SAIIC: When do you plan to begin COICA's actual work?

VG: Among the fundamental resolutions that were made in Brazil is the approval of the statute, and in its approval COICA's definitive seat was established in Quito, Ecuador. So our first activities correspond to that, to the transference of belongings that we have in Lima and to establish a permanent office in Quito. Our aspiration is to establish a basic infrastructure which will allow us to work with satisfaction and attend to the demands of our Indigenous organizations.

SAIIC: In addition to COICA's work in the Amazon, do you plan to make contact with other Indigenous peoples in the highlands, the plains, and throughout the continent?



AMAZON



"I believe that we have to reclaim the power of our Pacha Mama, the wisdom of our Pachacama, and all the spirituality of our earth, of our territory, of our power. Only when we respond to this material struggle spiritually, will we have a complete struggle."

Valerio Grefa continued

VG: If we are protecting the Amazon basin, its floral life, it is obvious that we need to sign agreements with other forests that still exist on the planet. That is the reason that in 1992 in the month of February we held a world conference of the Indigenous and tribal peoples of tropical forests in Malaysia. The second meeting is expected to take place in May, possibly in Peru.

SAIIC: We also understand that on a continental level there is coordination, a network among Indigenous peoples from all geographical areas, and there is an organization called CONIC. Do you have contact with these brothers and sisters?

VG: Our intention is to coordinate all the actions that other groups, other Indigenous organizations are taking on a continental or world level, to demand the rights that belong to us. So the doors are open, we are very willing to coordinate and have solidarity with all those organizations that are fighting in a sincere way for the rights of Indigenous peoples. We cannot remain isolated, we cannot keep our distance from the leaders of organizations that have similar goals.

SAIIC: The U.N. declared 1993 the Year of Indigenous Peoples. What do you think about that?

VG: Actually, I have my doubts about this declaration. I think that maybe the United Nations wants to use 1993 to cover up the 500 Years of genocide, of barbarism, since the arrival of Columbus to America. Indigenous peoples have to unite to raise that voice of protest as soon as someone tries to make it a folkloric year.

I understand that if there are good intentions on the United Nations' part, it should be a year of reflection, a year of decision-making, a year of recognition of the fundamental rights of Indigenous peoples, recognition of the organizations that are representative of the Indigenous peoples of America and the world. It should be a year of passing laws, international norms that benefit Indigenous peoples. Otherwise it will be a

world maneuver to control, to separate us. I'm not very optimistic, but rather hopeful.

SAIIC: Is there a movement among the Indigenous peoples in Ecuador to reclaim Indigenous spirituality?

VG: I think that when we talk of spirituality, in an indirect way we are talking of the philosophy of the Indigenous peoples. I understand that we, the Indigenous peoples, must recover the spirit — the spirit that has led our peoples for millenniums, and which has been seized by the spirits brought by Columbus, so many saints, so many Virgins, that we are practically idolatrizing in churches, monuments, and that in this way we have abandoned our own spirits which have guided us — the spirit of the lakes, the spirit of the waterfalls, the spirit of the mountains, the spirit of the whole world vision of the peoples.

I believe that we have to reclaim the power of our Pacha Mama, the wisdom of our Pachacama, and all the spirituality of our earth, of our territory, of our power. Only when we respond to this material struggle spiritually will we have a complete struggle. I think that not only in Ecuador but also in Central America, in South America, in all of the places where Indigenous peoples are, we are reclaiming our true spirituality.

SAIIC: Some last message for the peoples of North America?

VG: Truly, a call to solidarity, to the unity of Indigenous peoples within the diversity of cultures that we have, so that in the immediate future we have a unified voice, a monolithic voice, and that we can be heard by the governments in the international arena.

I understand that now we have to make an effort to find ourselves and that, setting aside any resentment, any individual interest, we search for a consensual interest, we seek a way sought by all the Indigenous initiatives. Only in that way will we be able to obtain in an organized manner the rights which we proclaim.

"If we are protecting the Amazon basin, its floral life, it is obvious that we need to sign agreements with other forests that still exist on the planet."

Amazon Indigenous Coordinating Body Elects New Officers

The Coordinating Body for the Indigenous Peoples' Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) held its annual meeting in November, 1992 in Manaus, and elected Valerio Grefa of CONFENIAE in Ecuador as its new General Coordinator.

The delegates also approved a new, more horizontal structure, abolishing the position of President. In its place, they created a Board of Directors to preside over the General Assembly, a Coordinating Committee comprised of the leaders of each of the nine national affiliates or their delegates, and an Executive Committee comprised of four thematic coordinators. Antonio Jacanamijoy (ONIC, Colombia) will be the coordinator for Territorial Defense, José Luis Gonzáles (CONIVE, Venezuela) will be the coordinator for Environment and Natural Resources, Evaristo Nugkuag (AIDSEP, Peru) will be the coordinator for Economy and Development, Orlando Melgueiro da Silva (COIAB, Brazil) will be the coordinator for Human, Political and Social Rights.

COICA also expanded its membership to include the national Amazonian federations from Venezuela (CONIVE), Surinam (OIS), Guyana (OIG), and French Guyana (FOAG). COIAB was selected the representative from Brazil. COICA's headquarters will move from Lima to Quito.

A working meeting between COICA's Coordinators and U.S. environmental and human rights organizations will be held in Washington DC on May 11-12.

COICA has also moved its offices from Lima, Peru to Quito, Ecuador and can be now contacted at:

Calle Alemania No. 832 y
Av. Mariana de Jesús
Casilla Postal 17-21-7531
Quito, Ecuador
Telephone and Fax: 553-297



Photo Joseane Z. Daher

Siá Kaxinawá and Paulo Cipassé Xauante from Brazil visit New York

Amazon Initiative: A working conference to protect Indigenous rights

The Amazon Initiative conference will be held on May 11 and 12, 1993 in Washington, DC with the purpose of forming a permanent coalition of NGOs with interests in the Amazon Basin. The conference will bring together northern NGOs and Indigenous representatives from the Amazon to develop concrete strategies for protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and safeguarding their environment. The conference will also focus on the logistics of creating a permanent coalition based in Washington, DC.

Co-coordinators and participants include: Cultural Survival, Environmental Defense Fund, Friends of the Earth, Global Exchange, Oxfam America, Rainforest Action Network, Rainforest Foundation International, Sierra Club, SAIIC, World Resources Institute and World Wildlife Fund.

For more information contact SAIIC.



ECUADOR

President of CONFENIAE Speaks to Maxus Shareholders

On April 27, Angel Zamarenda (Shuar), President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) addressed the annual shareholders' meeting of Maxus Energy Corp. in Amarillo, Texas. His speech was part of a protest against Maxus' Block 16 oil project, organized by Rainforest Action Network and the Campaña Amazonia por la Vida, a coalition of Ecuadorian environmental and human rights groups. Maxus is building a road into the Huaorani Indian Reserve and Yasuni National Park to extract heavy crude oil. The following is an excerpt from his statement.

Greetings to the press and the American public. I represent six Indigenous peoples of the Ecuadorian Amazon - the Shuar, Aohuar, Quichua, Huaorani, Cofan and Siona-Secoya nations - consisting of 300,000 Indian people, organized as CONFENIAE, which in turn is part of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador, CONAIE.

With this political force, we have come to tell the oil companies, lumber companies, agribusiness companies, and mining companies of the U.S. that their activities in our

territory represent a massacre. This misuse of technology threatens the life of more than 300,000 Indigenous people, as well as farmers and city dwellers of the Amazon region.

These companies are responsible for the destruction of the wildlife in our territory, the destruction of our sacred sites, lakes and rivers, our fish and game, and the water and air, vital elements for all living things.

CONFENIAE has presented a negotiation plan to the Ecuadorian government, Petroecuador and Maxus, and CONAIE has made repeated efforts to negotiate, but all this has been rejected. The Indigenous people of the Ecuadorian Amazon are not saying "No" to oil extraction, but rather are seeking an alternative. This alternative is not difficult to understand nor to apply with current technology. But, Maxus is blind to this reality.

Maxus cleverly gave money to government officials, and isolated the Huaorani from CONFENIAE and CONAIE. For the second time Maxus signed a document that has no legal value; it tricked a few naive Huaorani representatives by offering them things which mean nothing to Maxus and convinced them to sign the agreement.

Now Maxus is moving forward with its destruction. Maxus is responsible for spilling 15 tons of toxic chemicals into the Tiputini River this month, for spilling crude oil along the road, for pressuring the Cofan people in Dureno to leave their village to work transporting road construction materials, for the indiscriminate felling of trees, for the increasing disintegration of the Huaorani people and for the proliferation of contagious diseases, such as cholera, dengue, yellow fever and parasites.

I have come to say, 'Enough of this running over of our people, enough of this genocide'. We demand that the representatives of Maxus discuss with CONFENIAE and CONAIE the proposals that we have already presented. If they do not, we will do everything that remains possible to defend our existence.

We demand a moratorium to oil development and road construction in Huaorani territory until a complete investigation of their environmental and human rights impact can be completed. An environmental management plan must be presented which meets the requirements of the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon. Only in this way can oil activity continue!



Photo Glen Switkes

Maxus roadhead in Huaorani territory

BOLIVIA

The Indian March Continues

More than 200 representatives and magistrates of the Isiboro-Secure National Indian Park Territory (TIPNIS) met in their Second Special Session in the town of San Bernardo. They resolved to march on Trinidad to demand compliance with Supreme Decree 22610 and to assert the rights of the Mojenos, Chimanos and Yuracares who live in that region.

The Bolivian government issued Supreme Decree 22610 following the historic march "For Territory and Dignity" in 1990, but its provisions have not been implemented or enforced.

In a communiqué, the Indians of the TIPNIS asserted that this time, "despite the good intentions of some members of the government, we have encountered many problems including opposition from several groups and individuals who do not wish to grant us the same rights enjoyed by every other Bolivian citizen. This behavior indicates that there are people who continue to think like the Spaniards of 500 years ago."

The representatives assert that Article 2 of Supreme Decree 22610 expands the area of TIPNIS to the Isiboro and Secure rivers, incorporating the communities situated on the banks of the rivers and forming a buffer zone.

On October 19, 1992, TIPNIS brought a case before the prefect of the Beni regarding a wealthy land owner, Sergio Zelada, who was attempting to deny the rights of the community of Loma Alta, located on the right bank of the Isiboro River within TIPNIS.

On October 27 the legal counselor of the prefecture of the Beni visited Loma Alta and decided that there was no infraction. The Prefect then denied the TIPNIS claim.

The Indian representatives who attended the second special session in San Bernardo resolved to reject the opinion of the public attorney and the prefectural resolution, because the title that Mr. Zelada has in his possession belongs to another person and was obtained after Supreme Decree 22610.

The delegates denounced these anti-Indian acts and bureaucratic decisions. They stated that in this democratic day and age, there are bad Bolivians in government who neither execute nor respect the laws which the government itself has made.

For these reasons, the authorities of TIPNIS marched to Trinidad to demand a public hearing to force the execution of the decree. If this is not done, the delegates will be obliged to fight until their territorial rights are respected.

Source: Aquí, Bolivia

Moseten Indians Compete with Loggers for Land Title

Approximately six years ago, the Moseten Indians of Santa Ana de Huachi, Beni Province, began proceedings to obtain the deeds to the lands that they have lived on for generations. With the support of the Lay Movement for Latin America (MLAL), they succeeded in attaining 8,000 hectares of land. But the land that was granted turned out to be ill-suited for hunting, fishing, and agriculture, the mainstays of the Mosetenes. In addition, the lands have already been exploited by colonizers, who have cut down the most important and valuable trees.

In November 1992, the community decided to ask the Minister of Campesinos, Agriculture, and Fishing, the Indigenous Institute of Bolivia (IIB), and the government for land in the Muchane plains as compensation. An 1880 document gives the Mosetenes sole ownership of the territory, which is four hours away from Santa Ana. The

director of the IIB assures the community that their demand will be considered, but there are other people interested in the land.

Juan Torres, National Deputy and former member of the Conscience of the Country (CONDEPA, a neopopulist organization) claims to have deeds to the territory. According to the Mosetenes he has been extracting resources from the land.

A company named San Lorenzo also intends to take advantage of the lumber resources. Timber exploitation is intense in that region of La Paz. According to a report by the Coordinator of Solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples, approximately 60 trucks, each with five logs, leaves the forest along one road each day. This means that at least 108,000 trees are cut annually. Much of the wood goes to waste because it is cut poorly.

BRAZIL

Stopping The Clearing Of Timber From Indigenous Lands



For more information contact:

Rainforest Action Network
450 Sansome St.
Suite 700
San Francisco, CA
94111, USA

Rainforest Foundation
270 Lafayette St.
Suite 1205
New York NY
10012, USA.

For decades, loggers have invaded Indigenous lands in Brazil with impunity, creating violent confrontations with Indian people, and devastating the environment. Now, a Brazilian judge has ordered a halt to timber extraction from Indian lands in the eastern Amazon state of Pará.

According to estimates, between 1985 and 1990, over 640,000 cubic meters of valuable mahogany were extracted from Indian lands in Pará, which required the construction of over 3000 km of illegal logging roads.

To halt the logging, a suit was filed by the Nucleus for Indigenous Rights, based in Brasília. The decision, on January 15, 1993 by Federal Judge Selene Maria de Almeida, calls for an immediate closing of the logging roads and removal of all equipment and workers from the Indigenous reserves of Arawete,

Apyterewa, and Trinchiera Bacajá, it also requires the Brazilian government to set up permanent checkpoints to ensure that the loggers do not reenter the zone.

One recent conflict between loggers and an Indian community resulted in the shooting death of Domingos Paulino, a Gavião Pukoby who had tried to stop a truck carrying an illegal shipment of wood from passing through his people's land in Maranhão. The wood had been cut from the nearby Guajajara reserve, where Indians had agreed to sell timber for very low prices. Most of this wood is used to produce charcoal, which fuels the pig iron processing plants which are Part of the Greater Carajás mineral zone.

Sources: Rainforest Action Network and Rainforest Foundation

Violence Against Indian Peoples in Brazil in 1992

These are the 1992 results of an annual survey carried out by the Indianist Missionary Council (CIMI) of violence against Indian peoples in Brazil.

In most categories Indians suffered as much or more aggression as in previous years. In the case of the murders none of the aggressors was punished.

CIMI notes: "Diseases have been killing more Indians in Brazil than any other type of aggression. It seems that they are the subtlest and most disguised way to exterminate Indians."

Murders 24

Victims of attempts on the lives 20

Death threats 21

Illegal detentions 5

Victims of physical aggression 10

Rapes 7

Suicides 24

Deaths due to malaria 87

Deaths due to measles 64

Deaths due to Cholera 14

Deaths in car accidents 6

Areas invaded by woodcutters 37

Invasions by miners 16



Constitutional Revision Threatens Indigenous Rights

Orlando Melgueiro da Silva Baré, General Coordinator of the Council of Articulation of Indigenous Peoples and Organizations of Brazil, offers these observations on how Indigenous rights may be challenged under the 1993 Constitutional revision in Brazil:

"Brazil is preparing to revise its constitution. Within this, questions affecting Indian people are involved, principally when one speaks of mineral wealth and natural resources found in Indian areas. All this is being looked at with big eyes by large economic groups, which worries us.

"The new Indian statute will consider the proposals presented by Indigenous people in Brasilia at the end of April of this year. Among the questions we are considering are the demarcation and self-demarcation of our land, and the exploitation of mineral and hydroelectric resources.

"The military is pressing conservative legislators, and even some on the left, so that

they favor the revision of already demarcated Indian lands. This despite the fact that demarcating lands in the border regions is no risk to national security, and not even the Indians want to construct independent states. On the contrary, Indigenous peoples also obey the constitution, and above all we want the Brazilian government to obey the constitution.

"We are looking for alternatives - among them, to form a stronger alliance between Indigenous organizations themselves, with popular movements, and with the legislators who are for the Indigenous cause. We look to merge our forces so that Indigenous proposals be considered, and so that the rights which were guaranteed in the 1988 constitution not be overturned."

Source: Informe Jurídico - Address: Comissão Pró Índio de São Paulo, Rua Ministro Godoy 1484, Salas 56 e 57, CEP 05015 Perdizes, São Paulo SP, Brazil.

Suicides Increase Among Guarani Kaiova

An alarming rate of suicides has been registered among the Guarani-Kaiova of Brazil's Mato Grosso do Sul, caused by despair at their estrangement from traditional lands and way of life.

According to the Indigenist Missionary Council (CIMI) and the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), 20 Guarani-Kaiova hanged themselves in 1992, bringing the suicides to a seven-year total of 100. Of the 20

who died last year, 12 were under 20 years of age (See CIMI statistics page 18).

With most of their traditional territories still not demarcated, and their lands invaded by ranchers, the Guarani are forced to seek work on sugarcane plantations and at alcohol plants. There, they are paid very little, and are not accorded benefits proscribed for workers under law.

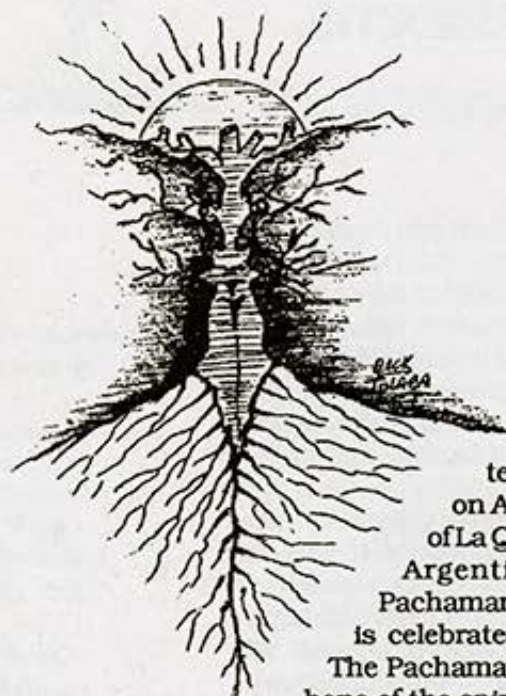
Source: Indigenist Missionary Council (CIMI)

Contact CIMI for more information:

SDS - Edifício Venancio III, Sala 309/14, C.P. 03679 CEP 70.084-970 Brasília, D.F. Brazil



ARGENTINA



Pachamama Day and the Kolla People of Argentina

Cultural Center "1st of August"

The Cultural Center "1st of August" was born on August 1, 1988 in the city of La Quiaca, province of Jujuy, Argentina to honor the Pachamama (Mother Earth), who is celebrated every year in August. The Pachamama constitutes the backbone of the spiritual and material life of the Kolla people of Argentina.

The group is made up of people from different branches of life: teachers, housekeepers, students, priests, athletes and housewives. Most of the members are from rural areas. They share a common and global destiny and vision: to contribute to the vitalization and fulfillment of the Kolla people and of Indian people in general and to the humanize the hostile and mechanizing system of life which surrounds us.

The germinating and multiplying impulse of the Center is represented in one central objective: "Attain the historical restoration of the Andean people, restructure, revalue, vitalize and project our way of life, which contains essential and sufficiently valid guide-lines to provide new alternatives for this permanently decadent society."

The friends of the Center have common fears and concerns about problems which not only threaten the Kolla people but all the inhabitants of the earth: pollution, hunger, discrimination, extinction of Nations, alienation, arms build-ups, etc.

The Center acts as a recuperation and transformation agent. It works to permanently rediscover and share essential aspects of identity in terms of religion, social organization, literature, agricultural practices, food production and preservation methods, etc. The Center also works to promote environmental attitudes and to offer alternative ways for society to solve multiple problems.

This commitment is directed toward educating and raising consciences about our right to improve our quality of life.

To these ends the Cultural Center "1st of August" organizes camping trips, bicycle races and foot races with the motto "Youth, Let's Know our Land". Young people from both rural and urban areas participate. They cover 200 miles at altitudes of 10,000 to 13,000 feet in order to get to know the countryside and to give the credit due to the human, cultural and natural landscape.

The participants and the communities they visit learn from each other with the purpose of renewing their faith and hope of revitalizing the Kolla culture.

To these same ends, every year in the month of August the Cultural Center, together with neighbors and friends, celebrate the religious homage to the Pachamama at the *apacheta* (altar to the Pachamama) of the community.

The Center supports and promotes cultural activities such as music, theater and poetry, giving priority to those which repre-

In 1991 the Catholic Church invaded this cosmic spiritual center by placing a Christian cross next to the *apacheta*

ARGENTINA

International Congress on Indigenous Languages

The Instituto Qheshwa "Jujuymanta" (Argentina) is organizing the V International Academic Congress on Indigenous Languages to take place in Jujuy-Argentina in September of 1993.

The Institute works to make Indigenous people aware of the value of their languages. During the last years the Institute has devoted itself to promoting Indigenous languages such as Qhishwa (or Quechua) and Aymara, which are widely used in the Andean region of South America, and Guaraní of the Gran Chaco of South America.

The purpose of this effort is to organize native peoples and make them aware of their cultural roots and of how important it is that their languages survive. So far there have been four congresses organized by Indigenous groups which have documented the wide use of Indigenous languages.

Pachamama Day continued

sent recovery or creations within the framework of Indian American identity.

The Center gives presentations to schools at different levels in order to provide traditional role-models, and expose the students to diverse experiences. They produce educational radio programs and also participate in programs to improve methods of sheep farming in order to improve the economic situation for Puna families.

The last congress took place in Cochabamba (Bolivia), with the assistance of the Universidad Mayor de San Simón, and local Indigenous organizations. Rene Sainz Vega, the President of the IV Congress (October 1992), reported the following conclusions.

The congress requested:

1. That the governments of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile work on informing about and teaching Indigenous languages in their countries;
2. That educational agencies and ministries support Indigenous organizations working on revalorization of their own Indigenous languages;
3. That Latin American governments formally teach Indigenous languages at schools and universities.
4. That Latin American governments recognize demands and territorial rights of Indigenous peoples.

The IV Congress worked under six commissions: Writing, Grammar and Structure, Culture, History, Education and Law.

Instituto Qheshwa "Jujuymanta" is open to your input, contributions, and assistance.

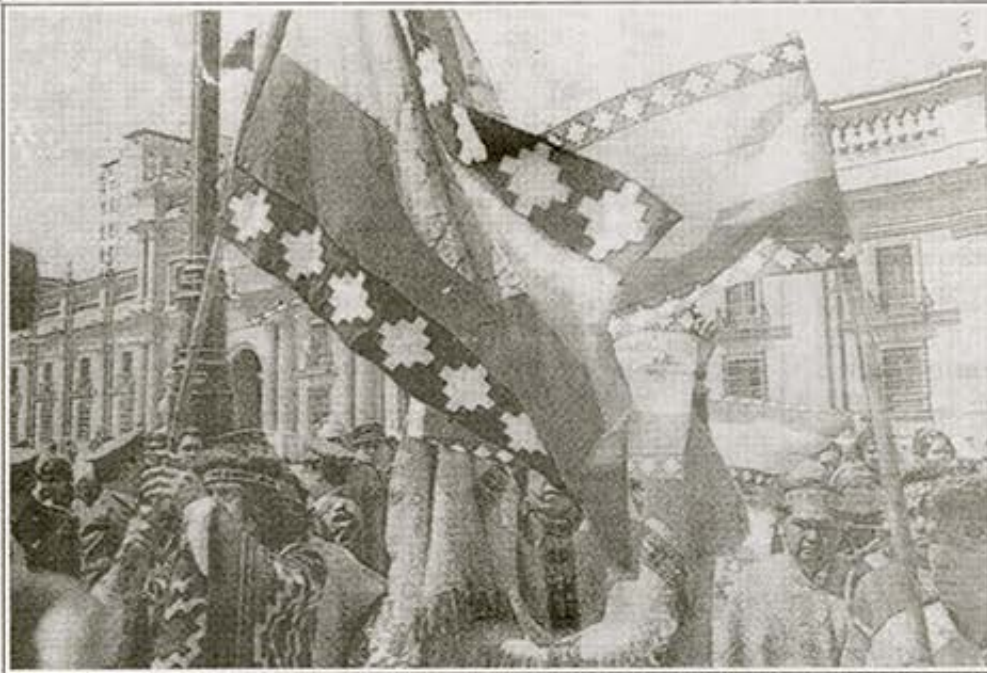


If you are interested in attending the V Congress in October please contact:

Instituto Qheshwa
"Jujuymanta"
Alvear 966,
Local 6
Código Postal 4600
San Salvador
de Jujuy,
Argentina

CHILE

Photo Aukin



Hoisting the Mapuche Flag

The Mapuche Coordinating Body of Argentina Tañi Kiñe Nguetuam (To Be One Again) raising the Mapuche National Flag in the city of Nuequén. The flag was created last year during the historical reunion of the Mapuche Nation from the Argentine and Chilean sides of the border.

Mapuches Convicted for Occupying Land

The Chilean government has convicted one hundred and forty-four Mapuche people for the "illegal usurpation of land" and sentenced them to pay a fine equal to about one year's wages.

The alleged usurpation of land took place in June 1991 when the Mapuche organization Aukin Wallmapu Ngullam (Council of All Land) began to occupy lands in an attempt to "exercise our rights as Mapuches to this land which is in the hands of private companies and the State of Chile."

As a result of these actions the Interior Minister Enrique Krauss and the regional Governor Fernando Chuecas detained hundreds of Mapuche people and filed charges against them. The government officials claimed that the "Association was involved in the illegal take-over of the land."

Krauss insisted that "the Counsel of All Land's actions do not fit into the legal framework of Chilean society. Moreover, their efforts to establish a separate Mapuche nation, including their own flag, is an act that is in direct contradiction to Chilean national unity." The Counsel of All Land responded to the accusations on January 25, 1993 and

made the following statement through their lawyer:

"The Mapuche people have a distinct historical background in terms of social, political, and religious structure that differs from the rest of Chilean society. Not only has Chile refused to recognize these unique attributes of our culture but has systematically tried to destroy us."

On March 10, 1993, the Attorney General informed the one hundred and forty four accused Mapuches that they are each required to pay 11 months of their wages, the equivalent of \$60 a month, for their illegal occupation of the land. The other detainees were convicted of "illegal activities and alliances" and condemned to eighteen months of police surveillance and are not allowed to organize politically.

Those accused of illegal land acquisition are appealing their sentences claiming that they have not committed any crime. They are currently trying to educate the public about the injustices imposed upon them by the government. In May the Appellate Court of Temuco will decide whether uphold or overturn the convictions.

"Their efforts to establish a separate Mapuche nation, including their own flag, is an act that is in direct contradiction to Chilean national unity."

-Enrique Krauss, Chilean Minister of the Interior

CHILE

URGENT ACTION: CHILEAN GOVERNMENT MUST OVERTURN THE CONVICTIONS



We at SAIC are organizing a campaign to put pressure on the Chilean government. Please write letters to the officials listed below demanding and end to the persecution of the Mapuche people.

Patricio Aylwin Azocar
Presidente de la República de Chile
Palacio de La Moneda
Santiago, Chile
Fax: (56) (2) 697 3262

Fernando Chuecas
Intendente de Temuco
Manuel Bulnes 590 p. 2
Temuco, Chile
Fax: (56) (45) 21 30 64

Please send copies of your letters to
SAIC and:
Aukin Wallmapu Ngulam
Casilla 448
Temuco, Chile
Fax: (56) (45) 21 30 64

Enrique Krauss
Ministro de Interior
Casa de la Moneda
Santiago, Chile
Fax: (56) (2) 696 8740

Second Tribunal of the Mapuche Nation

Aukin Wallmapu Ngulam (The Council of All Land) has announced that the Second Tribunal of the Mapuche Nation will be held from March 29 to April 1, 1993 in Temuco, Mapuche Territory. "In the context of ideological decolonization, we call for this Second Tribunal in order to identify violations against our historical rights to land and human dignity."

The tribunal will analyze different cases of violations committed against the Mapuche nation such as the invasion of territories, ecological destruction and denial of Mapuche religion, and will end with a traditional Nguillatun ceremony.



Photo: SAIC Archives

The Mapuches are demanding that their culture be recognized and respected.

"We invite traditional leaders and communities of the Mapuche Nation, Indigenous peoples of the Americas and those involved in national and international political movements to join us."

For more information contact Aukin Wallmapu Ngulam.



BOLIVIA

Indians Seek representation in Peasant Confederation

Interview with Genaro Oliver, CSUTCB

The following is an interview with Genaro Oliver, an active member of the Confederation of Campesino Unions of Bolivia (CSUTCB). We spoke with him in Genoa, Italy in August 1992, at the Soconas/Incomindios meeting of European organizations in solidarity with the Indian Nations of the American Continent. We offer Mr. Oliver's perspective as a new current within the CSUTCB. His main tenant is that the Campesino Confederation must consider the reality of ethnic identity.

SAIIC: Who do you represent Genaro Oliver?

Genaro Oliver: I am a member of the Confederation of Campesino Unions of Bolivia (CSUTCB). The CSUTCB is organizing the First Meeting of Nationalities in October 1992. This First Meeting seeks to bring together all Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia, and its main objective is to regain the participation of the Indigenous Peoples that have not been taken into account by the Campesino Confederation.

The name "Confederation of Campesino Unions" shows the lack of genuine representation of the Indigenous people of Bolivia. The name indicates that the organization represents "unions", and unions were imported from Europe. The term "campesino" (peasant) is an imposed name as well. In the "Indigenous Peoples Meeting" we would like to re-establish our ancient ways of organizing ourselves.

SAIIC: What is the Labor Confederation of Bolivia's (COB) position?

GO: The COB is rethinking some issues. If the Campesino Confederation tries to reestablish contact with its Indigenous base, the COB will also have to address the issue of representation. At the moment it only represents waged workers but not Indigenous Peoples.

SAIIC: Do you believe that out of the meeting a larger entity will arise, maybe an entity that will be larger than the current COB or even the CSUTCB?

GO: This is what we are thinking. The Indigenous people are a majority. There are more of us than there are waged workers, and waged workers are not the only people to be represented. We think there will be interesting discussions with other workers' organizations.

SAIIC: What is your opinion about women's participation in the Indigenous Peoples' Meeting?

GO: This is a topic that will have to be discussed by women. There is a large women's organization which is a part of the Campesino Confederation. But as is the case with Indigenous people, the Campesino Confederation does not adequately deal with the problems of women. Their participation as women and as Indian women in the Indigenous Peoples' Meeting will be extremely important.

"The name 'Confederation of Campesino Unions' shows the lack of genuine representation of the Indigenous people of Bolivia"

BOLIVIA



Aymaras Replace Peasant Union with Traditional Ayllu Federation

In the rural community of San Andrés de Machaca, in the Ingavi Province of the Department of La Paz, traditional forms of social and political organization have prevailed over the nation-state proposals to assimilate Indigenous cultures.

Following the recommendations of the October 1992 National Congress of the Confederation of Campesino Unions of Bolivia, CSUTCB, a regional congress gathered on April 10-11, 1993, in the province of Ingavi. Four hundred and fifty Indigenous campesino delegates, angry at established political parties of the left and the right who had manipulated their leaders in the past century, unanimously voted to dissolve the former campesino union and replace it with a Federation of Ayllus and Indigenous Nations.

Genero Oliver continued

SAIIC: Would you like to add anything to this interview?

GO: I would like to let people know that this kind of direct interview with a true representative of an Indigenous community allows others to learn about what is really happening in those communities. Traveling in Europe, we have found that invited political representatives are often people disengaged from the Indigenous Peoples. Many no longer live nor know what is happening in the communities themselves.

Paulino Guarachi, executive secretary of the CSUTCB, and Florencio Mendoza of the Tupa Katari Federation attended the congress but only as guests. The Indigenous campesinos of San Andrés de Machaca discussed how traditional Aransaya and Urinsaya sections of the community have reinstituted a communal regime where *mallku* and *mama ta'qlla*, the Indigenous authorities, follow the ancient dictates of their ancestors. Political power has also been restored to the elders of the community.

The native authorities believe that the *Anuqara*, *llunk'u*, and *sallka*, corrupt local politicians of the past, had betrayed the community by selling the political positions of the traditional authorities to national political parties. "The result was the transformation of the Indigenous community into an urban dominated appendix of the nation-state, which has only sporadically answered the needs of the community itself."

Community representatives at the congress agreed to end all affiliation with political parties, speak and write Aymara-Spanish and respect cultural traditions.

Source: Aquí, La Paz, Bolivia



The province of Ingavi is reinstating its Indigenous authorities

Photo Aquí



"Women from different regions will be meeting and working together to solve our common problems"

Indigenous Women Organizing National Encounter

The First National Encounter of Indigenous Women of Bolivia will be held from June 21-23, 1993 in the historical Tiwanaku. This encounter is the culmination of two years of grass roots community organizing by Bolivian women.

The encounter is being organized by the Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Women of Bolivia which is made up of the following organizations: Centro de Discusión Ideológica de la Mujer Aymara (CDIMA), Organización de Mujeres Aymaras del Kollasuyu (OMAK), Coordinadora de Mujeres Indígenas del Beni (CMIB), Federación Nacional Campesina Bartolina Sisa (FNMCBS), Mujeres Pastoras de la Asociación de Criadores de Camelida and Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Radialistas (ANRCINB).

The Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Women of Bolivia is a member of the Coordinating Commission of Women of South and Meso America and of CONIC. More than 600 delegates are expected to participate. Two representatives from SAIIC will be attending the encounter as observers.

"The strength of this encounter is that women from different regions will be meeting and working together to solve our common problems," said Alicia Canaviri (Aymara), President of the Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Women of Bolivia.

Financial support is needed.

Curacas and Jilakatas Recover their Authority



On December 7, 1992, the first Assembly of Indigenous Authorities of the Southern Altiplano was held to define the function of Indigenous communal authorities.

This assembly, organized by the Regional Federation of Southern Altiplano Farmers (FRUTCAS), took place in Tomave, in the Potosí region of Bolivia.

The attendees emphasized the necessity for Curacas (primary traditional leaders) and Jilakatas (those in secondary positions) to regain the authority they had years ago. "With the traditional leaders in place we did not have as many problems. But since the government imposed political authorities (Corregidores) and agents in charge of the Cantons, problems multiplied, resulting in conflict among brothers," the attendees stated.

The regional delegates noted that traditionally the Indigenous authorities had maintained a harmonious relationship between nature and the local populations. They concerned themselves with such issues as assuring that everyone within their jurisdiction maintain orderly and dignified life. However, in recent times the role of these leaders has been reduced to organizing community festivals and carnivals.

The local attendees explained that traditional authorities distinguished themselves in their own communities by their attire. Curacas and Jilakatas wore a poncho, a *lluch'u* (hat) and a ceremonial cane. These leaders were the only ones who could dress in this manner, thus commanding respect.

Source: *Aquí*, Bolivia Dec. 18, 1992

For more information please contact:

Coordinadora de
Mujeres Indígenas
de Bolivia
Casilla 2315
La Paz, Bolivia
Tel: (592)(2) 36
99 63
Fax: (592)(2) 39
13 65

COLOMBIA

Plan Pacífico Threatens to Destroy Untouched Rainforest

Embera, Waunana and Awa Peoples Defend El Choco



Along Colombia's Pacific coast lies one of the most biologically diverse tropical rainforest regions left on Earth. Known as El Choco, this verdant terrain has, until recently, managed to escape the nefarious claws of development with 83% of the forest still intact. But now the Embera, Waunana and Awa peoples who have lived in harmony with the environment for millennia are facing a massive government development program for El Choco known as the Plan Pacífico.

Mangrove forests line the coast while tropical rainforests pervade inland. Above the treeline, the distinct alpine shrub land known as the Páramo adds to the array of complex ecosystems. A massive river network connects the rainforests to the Pacific ocean. El Choco contains more insect species and two and a half time more bird species than all of North America. One hectare contains more tree species than the whole of the British Isles..

In the last ten years this haven of biodiversity and life, has been "discovered". El Choco is now regarded by multinational corporations and governments as a "gold mine" for its abundance of tropical hardwoods, potential for oil, gold, and other minerals, and hydroelectric dam potential. Plan Pacífico would include a network of roads, hydroelectric facilities, new ports and a land-bridge linking Pacific and Caribbean coast with hopes of competing with the Panama Canal. A naval port has already been completed and has militarized the zone and displaced traditional fishing communities in Malaga Bay.

Approximately 110,000 Indigenous people live in El Choco from eleven different tribal groups. The dominant nations are the Embera, Waunana and Awa. They have been driven from their traditional lands and live in

isolated groups throughout the region. As a result of a long struggle, the Indigenous people have won legal title to 64 "resguardos" which cover approximately five percent of El Choco.

In an attempt to salvage their "home" and way of life the Indigenous people, through the Ebera-Wauana Regional Organization (OREWA), have united on various occasions with Afro-Colombians, who make up the majority in the region, to block illegal activities such as logging by multinationals. In 1992 they successfully blockaded construction of the Pan American Highway and forced the government to negotiate with OREWA and pay for an OREWA designed environmental impact assessment of the road.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which has assisted people in the Choco region since 1975 has now withdrawn funding for the Cultural Survival Canada (CUSO)-OREWA partnership program, a viable and successful series of projects that have significantly empowered the people in of the Choco.

Please write the two responsible Canadian ministers to urge that funding be restored to the CUSO-OREWA project in Colombia:

The Hon. Barbara MacDougall
Minister of External Affairs
Lester Pearson Building
Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Canada

The Hon. Monique Vezina
Minister for CIDA
Promenade de Portage
Phase 4
Hull, Canada





GUATEMALA



Drawing: Rita Corbin

Guatemalan Refugees Return

On January 20, after more than ten years of suffering in exile, having lost their land and their loved ones, 507 Guatemalan families returned to their native land from Mexico. Amidst laughter and tears, 21,480 refugees, young and old, crossed the border in 67 buses to start anew and recapture what was lost at the beginning of the last decade.

After an eight-hour trip from Comitán, Chiapas, Mexico, the refugees arrived at Huehuetenango at 3 p.m., carrying their most precious belongings on their backs. They were received by governmental and non-governmental agencies at a reception center prepared by the Special Commission on Refugee Affairs (CEAR). The toll of living in exile could be seen in the children, who are the same height as other Guatemalan children of the same age, but are much thinner. The refugees stayed in Huehuetenango until Saturday, Jan. 23, and from there continued their journey toward the capital.

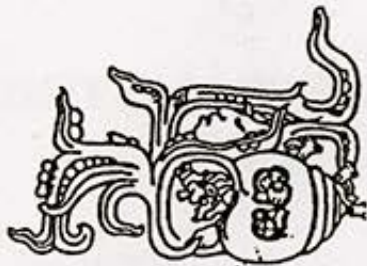
In the capital, the ex-refugees staged a rally in the city's central park and then went

on to Cobán in Alta Verapaz. They stayed for a few days in Cobán before boarding covered trucks that took them to Polígono 14, the site in the Ixcán region designated for their resettlement. About 400 of them left Cobán in the first caravan of trucks and, after traveling two days with an overnight stop in the town of Chisec, they arrived in Cantabal, just a couple of hours away from Polígono 14. They stayed overnight in Cantabal and, the following morning, the trucks carried them to within walking distance of their new home.

Walking the last leg of the journey, the refugees carried, in addition to their children, cooking utensils and tools they would need to seed and prepare the new land for resettlement. For those who couldn't make the journey by truck, such as the ill, the elderly, small children and pregnant women, the governments of France and England provided small planes to transport them.

Thousands of mostly Indigenous refugees fled in the early 1980s to escape the army's scorched earth tactics and massacres.

GUATEMALA



Ixíl Woman Returns Home

The January 20th return was the first organized and negotiated by the Permanent Commission (CCPP) which represents the refugees. The CCPP finally reached an agreement with the Guatemalan government on October 8, 1992 which determined the terms of the return, including credits for the purchase of land, exemption from military service for three years and the establishment of a Verification Council. On March 29 the Permanent Commission issued an Operative Plan for five more returns between May and August of this year of a total of 1,619 families or 8,147 individuals who will go to the Ixcán, Varillas and Nentón.

The primary obstacle to the refugees' safe and dignified resettlement is the high level of militarization in the countryside. The army maintains bases in the resettlement areas and has carried out several attacks against the neighboring Communities of Populations in Resistance (CPR). The CPR are nomad communities in remote jungle areas who have chosen not to seek refuge in Mexico despite a decade of repression.

The army considers the CPR to be supporters of the Guerrillas and wants to prevent any contact between the CPR and the returnees, who it considers subversive. Since the first return, the army has destroyed CPR villages and forced the communities across the border into Mexico. The people are then prevented from returning by mines planted along the border. In general the army has been mining the whole region to inhibit free movement of the CPR and of the returnees.

Source: Peace Brigades International, Proceso International, Noticias de Guatemala, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant

We are coming from Mexico. We are from the Ixcán, from Salcón. When I left the Ixcán there were some problems with the army. They burned my house, my whole house, my clothes. I was left naked.

After much sacrifice I now have a little bit of clothing. My husband died and I became a widow. My son stayed behind with the soldiers. After my husband died I was able with much sacrifice to raise my youngest son.

All my animals stayed behind. My house was burned. I cry from such pain. I will die of sorrow with such suffering. I am not content. I am crying.

But now there is a little bit of hope. Things are a little better. I thank Mexico for giving us refuge. But now I am going back to my village, where my land is, where I have my land. I am going back to live in my village, with my people, after living in the camps in Mexico.

The Mexicans charged us rent. But now I am going back to my land. In Guatemala I have my land, my village, my country. I am going to my country. We will all have to fight to rebuild our village. We have always had to fight and it will be no different now.

We left because we wanted to, and we are going back because we want to, the whole village, the whole community. The people are going back now because we didn't want to stay in Mexico. The whole community is going because we want to and we are organized.

Right now my heart is happy because I am returning to my village.

Source: PBI

"Right now my heart is happy because I am returning to my village"



"We have always had to fight and it will be no different now"

PBI Photo

GUATEMALA



The Land is Our Life Statement by a Returnee

My name is Pedro Coq Chen. I was in the Mayatecún camp in the state of Campeche. I lived there for nine years. We lived in Chiapas near the Echeverría border for a year and a half before that. From there we went to Campeche in 1984. Now we are coming back from Campeche.

We hope that our return goes well. We have decided to get to know our land again, because the land is our life, the life of all campesinos. A campesino cannot live without land. That is why we refugees and our leaders have been making plans since 1985 to return to plots of land which we left behind.

Now we want to go back there and get to know our country again. We separated ourselves from our country, but not because we wanted to. The government has said we went to Mexico because we are arrogant or because we do not want to work. This is not true. We suffered.

We suffered exploitation, violence, massacres. Those who were suffering left. We left to seek refuge. Many of those who could not leave died - men, women, children and old people. They were far away in other departments such as Cobán and Alta Verapaz.

People do not know what the army has been doing. Children were murdered. We suffered a lot. In México we met up with brothers and sisters who had also suffered; who had been treated badly by the army. We had to leave to escape the massacres.

In Mexico we realized that we are the same people even if we are from different ethnic groups. I hope that which happened to

us does not happen again. For us it started in 1980. That is when we started leaving.

Those who were able to leave are going back now. When we came to Mexico we brought young children. When I came I brought two children, one girl and one boy. Now they are big. I hope it does not happen to us again. We suffered a lot. There was much sorrow.

Despite the fact that the government is allowing us to return, I have very strong feelings. It is not our fault that we work in the country side. We live in the Reina area so they thought we were involved in certain problems, certain organizations. But we were working peacefully in our cooperatives.

I would go to the capital, Guatemala City, to settle accounts with the Colonel, the coordinator of INACOP (National Agricultural Institute for Cooperatives). I would go see him once a month. But I always had difficulty to get back to my land.

The problems began in 1981. By 1982 it had become very bad and we had to leave. The government pursued us night and day in the jungle. They pressured us a lot. They let us suffer hunger and fatigue.

Those of us who were able to leave were only able to save our bodies. Our bodies and our children were the only things we saved. The belongings we had were lost. We lost them because we were no longer able to carry them day and night. We suffered a lot on the days when it rained. This is what I experienced and there is nothing else I can say.

Source: Peace Brigades International

"The government has said we went to Mexico because we are arrogant or because we do not want to work. This is not true. We suffered."

CENTRAL AMERICA

Learn a Mayan Language in Guatemala

Iximché Language Center

The Iximché Language Center (CLI) is a project of Cojib'iyin Riq'uin Catinamit, which in Caqchiquel means "we walk with our people". We are an association of Maya Caqchiquel Indian professionals, workers, farmers and craftspeople who are taking up the challenge of conserving and promoting our culture and our identity.

We have created the language school as part of an integrated program of sustainable development. At CLI, we offer proven language instruction techniques, as well as the opportunity to share our Mayan spiritual traditions and our way of living.

The school is located in the town of Chimaltenango, in the central-western region of the highlands. Unlike the larger cities where

tourists congregate, Chimaltenango presents the opportunity to witness the true life of an Indian town.

The program offers the student a choice of instruction in the Spanish language, or in one of two Mayan languages: Caqchiquel and Quiche. It features individual, one-on-one classes with teachers who are carefully trained and dedicated to sharing the cultural values of our community.

While studying at CLI, students are encouraged to stay with a Maya-Caqchiquel family to practice their language skills. A portion of the proceeds of the Linguistic Center Iximché is dedicated to the development of an educational and cultural center for Caqchiquel Maya children.

For more information please contact:

Grupo Maya
Quj Semej Junan
P.O. Box 40892
San Francisco, CA 94140
Tel: (415) 824-2534

Centro Lingüístico Iximché
4a. Avenida 4-53 Zona 3
Chimaltenango
Guatemala
Tel: (502) (9) 39-2331

Kunas Protest Land Invasions

On April 15, 1993 colonizers destroyed a house within Kuna territory which had just been constructed by members of the Ibedi Kuna community in collaboration with the Association of Kunas United for Nabguana. The house, in the Kuna district of Madungandi (Alto Bayano), was to be used by Kuna villagers who were planning to begin work on demarcating this part of Kuna territory.

Because the law which establishes the Kuna District of Madungandi is languishing in the National Assembly and the government claims it does not have the money to demarcate the land, the community members decided to do the job themselves.

There has been poaching of endangered animals, indiscriminate logging and the

pollution of the rivers in the Alto Bayano region. The Kunas feel that demarcation of the land is the first step toward gaining respect for the boundaries of their territory.

The following is an excerpt from a statement made by the Association of Kunas United for Nabguana responding to the destruction of the house:

"We condemn this hostile act by the colonizers who want to sabotage any activity which might bring about a real solution to the problems the Kuna people face in Alto Bayano due to illegal invasions of our territories by people who care little about conserving nature and who are trying to provoke our people so they can later accuse us of being the instigators."



For more information contact:

Asociación Nabguana,
Apdo. Postal 536,
Panamá 1,
Panamá

GUATEMALA

URGENT ACTION

Mayan Leaders Receive Death Threats



Council of Mayan Organizations Calls for a Halt to the Violence

On MAY 7, 1993 SAIIC received a fax from the Council of Mayan Organizations (COM-G), a coalition of 13 Mayan organizations, regarding death threats sent to leaders of the Cooperación Indígena para el Desarrollo Integral (COINDI) in Sololá. Since April 28th 1993, many leaders have been the target of anonymous and unrelenting death threats. Among them Victor Saló, Carlo Zunatx and Calmum Cicajan have been singled out and targeted.

Their lives are under direct threat and quick action is needed to abate the immediate danger.

COM-G and COINDI officials are appealing to the international community and human rights organizations to take a stand against death threats and the climate of insecurity that prevails in Guatemala. COM-G is looking to build alliances to halt the violence, terror and the ideological polarization that reigns throughout the country.

COINDI officials are requesting that concerned citizens and human rights activists and organizations make the following demands of the Guatemalan government:

- that respect for basic human rights, physical integrity and life be upheld.
- that the Guatemalan government investigate the origin of the threats against the members of COINDI and report the find-

ings to the Guatemalan people.

→ that the Guatemalan government act to assure basic human rights to all citizens by fighting against unjust impunity and senseless violence.

Please send letters to:

Ingeniero Jorge Serrano Elías
President de la República
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala
Telex: 305-5331 CAPRES GU
Fax: (502) (2) 537472 or (502) (2) 519702
Phone: (502) (2) 21212 or (502) (2) 22266

Gral. José García Samayoa
Ministro de Defensa
Palacio Nacional
Guatemala, Guatemala
Telex: 305-5361 COMGUA GU
Fax: (502) (2) 5367 472
Phone: (502) (2) 21212, ext.743

Please send copies of letters to SAIIC and:

COM-G
2a Calle 3-40 Zona 3
Chimaltenango, Guatemala C.A.
Phone & Fax: (502) (9) 39-2709

MESO AMERICA

117 Year Old Nahuat Dies in El Salvador



Anastasio Esquino, Center, surrounded by his family in a picture taken last year. He died in April at age 117 in his home village of San Ramón, Department of Sonsonate.

Anastasio Esquino was a Nahuat who survived the 1935 massacre in which the Salvadoran army killed 30,000 Indians following a rebellion against the large land owners. At 117 he was one of the oldest men in the world. His wife died in 1991 at the age of 109.

His son Adrian Esquino, left foreground, is head of the National Indigenous Association of El Salvador (ANIS).

Condolences and messages of solidarity can be sent to:

ANIS
Antigua Aduana Ferria 5-1
Sonsonate, El Salvador

Second Encounter of Indigenous Press

The second Encounter of the International Committee of the Indigenous Press took place in Mexico City from April 25-27. The purpose of the meeting was to continue the process of decolonization of the media and to launch the First Continental Office of the Indigenous Press.

The International Committee is made up of the following publications: *Nabguana*, the Kuna Unidos por Nabguana newsletter (Panama); *Abya Yala News*, the SAIIC journal (USA); *Etnías* (Mexico); *Communications Autochtones* (Canada), and as an observer *Unidad Indígena*, the ONIC newspaper (Colombia).

The International Indian Press Agency (AIPIN) also participated in the encounter.

AIPIN is the first continental attempt to present an accurate image of Indigenous people and to professionally report on Indigenous issues from an Indigenous perspective. AIPIN is now inviting open participation of Indigenous people who have been practicing journalism in various media: radio, video, newspaper, electronic mail.

For further information please contact:

AIPIN
Calle Madero 67-611
Colonia Centro Mexico
México, DF 06000
Mexico
Tel: 576-50-99
Fax: 761-85-73



Mixtecs and Zapotecs Organizing in Oaxaca and California

Interview with Arturo Pimentel:

In September of 1992 Arturo Pimentel became General Coordinator of the Binational Mixtec and Zapotec Front, which is based in California and Mexico. This organization is made up of agricultural workers of Mixtec and Zapotec origin who work in the United States.

The Front is made up of the Civic and Popular Mixtec Committee, Comité Tlacolulense of Los Angeles, the Benito Juárez Civic Association, the Regional Organization of Oaxaca, Yajsachi El Bajo Association, Yajsachi El Alto Association, Tlacochoauaya Association, San Miguel Cuevas Oppressed Peoples, and OPAN.

Arturo Pimentel represented the Civic and Popular Mixtec Front of California at the First International Meeting on Migration and Human Rights that took place in Huejapan, Oaxaca in July 1992.

SAIIC: Please tell us about the First International Meeting on Migration and Human Rights.

AP: The meeting was organized by two main organizations: the Civic and Popular Mixtec Front, which is part of the Binational Mixtec and Zapotec Front and the Technological University of La Mixteca. The objective was to appraise human rights and migration issues related to the Mixtec people.

SAIIC: How was this meeting received by the participants?

AP: There was a lot of interest. There were Indigenous organizations, academics, governmental organizations and Indigenous peoples.

SAIIC: What have been the results?

AP: The Meeting established a communication system so that we would be considered part of a larger organization which is the Indigenous peoples of South and Meso America. Another result was to channel our Mixtec and Zapotec demands; these demands have been designed to press the Mexican

government to respond to our needs: drinking water, water for irrigation, electricity, schools and roads. We also ask that the government respect our political will, which has been subject to official governmental interference.

So, we agreed on a set of demands brought by the different Zapotec and Mixtec communities. But we also agreed to press for them, so that all these demands be met. We also agreed to organize an inter-ethnic conference, inviting all Indigenous organizations of our Oaxaca State.

SAIIC: I understand that officials of the local government tried to take over this Zapotec/Mixtec meeting. Is this true?

AP: Yes. Our Indigenous organization and the University's Chancellor, who answers to the interests of the state, agreed on a policy of non-intervention. There were no invitations made to any public official because we wanted a meeting free of state control. We wanted to have an independent meeting. But without previous announcement, the governor of Oaxaca Mr. Eladio Ramírez López showed up at the opening ceremony.

This moment was important for the official party. Oaxaca was about to elect political authorities. We did not want our conference to be used politically. The political situation at the time made Eladio's presence at the conference even less appropriate. The majority of the organizations rejected the presence of the governor. There was an exchange of words with the Chancellor, but we insisted on our autonomy. All organizations remained firm, rejecting manipulations, and we were able to defend our position of autonomy.

SAIIC: Are other Indigenous organizations in Oaxaca, besides those representing Zapotec and Mixtec living in California, thinking about autonomy?

"I think that we have to reject the rhetoric of Mexico's Indigenist policy which prescribes for us, in a paternalistic manner, everything that we as Indigenous peoples have to do."

MÉXICO

For more information contact:
The Binational Mixtec and Zapotec Front
104 Koshland Way
Santa Cruz, CA 95064, USA
Tel: (408) 459-8827



"Traditionally historians thought that Zapotec and Mixtecs could not get along. But here we are working together."

AP: When we talk about autonomy we are talking about a movement that has to be built and that has to move beyond political parties or the control of state. Autonomy is a fundamental issue. As an Indigenous movement we have our own demands which arise from our circumstances and needs.

I think that we have to reject the rhetoric of Mexico's Indigenist policy which prescribes for us, in a paternalistic manner, everything that we as Indigenous peoples have to do. We believe that autonomy should exist and that it must be respected by the state.

SAIIC: Your statement about autonomy is clear. Do the grassroots understand this position. Do you think that Indigenous communities are ready to work on autonomy?

AP: Unfortunately there are different levels of understanding. The state's control has been so pervasive through programs such as COPLAMAR, PRONASOL, and even the Indigenist Institute. The government's policies have made people so dependent and manipulated that there are sectors that are not clear about themselves, or about the issue of autonomy.

However, there are other sectors in Oaxaca — the Trique, Zapotec and Mixtec organizations — that are thinking about autonomy. There is a clear vision and we are moving toward it. We are trying to define our vision of autonomy, but also we are reacting to the state. So, we are in that struggle.

Autonomy will also consider ideological and political issues. We know that government programs have addressed some needs, but those are patches. We need to address the issue from the base. We think that if we retrieve our own cultural roots and fight to retrieve our culture, this is autonomy too.

We want Mexico to recognize our autonomy, but it is not only a political autonomy. It is also a struggle that searches for political alternatives, such as promoting Indigenous cultures. Autonomy will not be total if it remains only political. Autonomy is also recognition, real recognition, of our existence as Indigenous peoples.

As you know Oaxaca has two main Indigenous peoples. There are also sixteen Indigenous languages and fifty-six dialectics. Traditionally historians thought that Zapotec and Mixtecs could not get along. But here we are working together. That is important. We can do it. We have to continue building our strength.

SAIIC: How are women participating in the organization?

AP: Their participation is important. They have always been important. We have to recognize, as a movement, that changes have not been made. We still notice their oppression. We are conscious of the need to break away from past behaviors that discriminated against women. Oppression and subordination is serious. We really have to work on this. They definitely participate, but not with the force that they should have in the movement.

SAIIC: Would you like to add something to this interview?

AP: I would like to call, not only the Indigenous peoples of Oaxaca, but also others who are migrant workers in the U.S. I would like to propose to these Indigenous brothers and sisters the creation of a larger entity, an independent Indigenous organization. Because we are in constant communication with our own communities, we can be part of their solutions, not only in a material way but also politically and economically. This is a call to organize and to continue working through the Binational Mixtec and Zapotec Front.





United States Invasion of Shoshone Land

**"By taking away
our livestock
and our lands
you are taking
away our lives."
-Clifford Dann**

For five days, November 19-24, 1992, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) invaded Western Shoshone territory in Nevada, stating its intention to round up "unauthorized horses" found grazing on "public lands". Two hundred and forty-six horses were rounded up, of which 40 were tended by Mary and Carrie Dann and 229 were wild.

On the first day of the round up Shoshone elder Clifford Dann, father of the two sisters, was injured while trying to block the confiscation of the horses. In desperation, he doused himself with gasoline declaring, "by taking away our livestock and our lands you are taking away our lives." He was subsequently charged with assault on federal officers. Through this action the BLM not only stole the horses from land which belongs to the Western Shoshone, as recognized by the Treaty of Ruby Valley, but the government also violated its own Federal Wild Horse and Burro Act which regulates removal of wild horses.

During his trial, Clifford's only witness was an expert in ethnological jurisprudence who testified that existing law precluded the U.S. Court's jurisdiction in Western Shoshone territory. This was the defense strategy, because Clifford preferred to be convicted rather than "get off" on a technicality. On March 3, 1993 Clifford Dann was convicted and imprisoned. The Western Shoshone Defense Project is organizing a demonstration to coincide with Clifford's sentencing hearing in Reno on May 17, 1993. The critical jurisdictional issues will serve as the basis for an appeal.

Since 1773, the Treaty of Ruby Valley confirms the Shoshone Indians' "jurisdiction," while arguably surrendering legal "title" to the land over which that jurisdiction still exists. In 1863 the Western Shoshone Nation signed a treaty of Peace and Friendship with the United States that granted rights of passage to U.S. citizens without giving up the land. Since its ratification in 1869, this document delineates the boundaries of Western Shoshone territory. However, the presiding judge in the Dann case has decided not to acknowledge that "title" and "jurisdiction" are different legal concepts. Even though so far the U.S. government has failed to produce any evidence of documents giving the U.S. title to the land.

The jurisdictional and "title" issues are convoluted with a claim of U.S. purchase of land from the Shoshone in 1872. This claim was made by a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) puppet "representing the interests" of the Shoshone and who also benefited financially from the agreement. Even if the Shoshone wanted to give up their land, the only date it could be said they gave up title to their land was in 1979, when the Indian Claims Commission granted the award to the BIA hired attorney "representing" the Shoshone. Even according to this agreement, the Shoshone should be paid approximately \$40 billion and not the \$21 million, the 1872 price of the land, which is what the U.S. wants to pay. However, the land has not been sold and is not now for sale. When the Shoshone found that they had been deceived, they refused to accept the money.

For more information
and updates, please
contact:

Western Shoshone
Defense Project
General Delivery
Crescent Valley,
Nevada 89821
Tel: (702) 386-9834
Fax: (702) 386-9335

HAWAI'I



Natives Hawaiians Mark Centenary of US Takeover

On January 17, 1993 12,000 Native Hawaiians and supporters marched from the Aloha Tower to Iolani Palace in Honolulu to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani. It was the largest public political demonstration seen on the islands in recent history, and it marks a qualitative shift in the consciousness of the Native islanders.

Queen Lili'uokalani, the last queen of the Kanaka Maoli nation, was overthrown by the United States Marines on January 17, 1893. She had attempted to protect the sovereignty of Hawai'i by changing the constitution and cabinet. But that didn't sit well with a group of mostly wealthy American merchants and sugar planters who belonged to the Annexation Club.

These *haoles*, or whites - men with names like Castle, as in Castle and Cooke, and Dole, as in Dole Pineapple - wanted to be part of the United States to avoid high import tariffs. So with the help of 162 U.S. Marines, the haoles overthrew the queen, tried her for treason and stripped her of her royal lands (see Queen's statement, box this page).

Former U.S. President Grover Cleveland wrote in 1893, upon hearing of Hawai'i's annexation to the United States: "Hawai'i is ours. As I look back upon the first steps in this miserable business and as I contemplate the means used to complete the outrage, I am ashamed of the whole affair."

Native Hawaiians make up only about 20 percent of the population of the islands today. Their land is covered with golf courses and sugar plantations, overrun by tourists and bombarded by the U.S. military.

Recently the movement for Hawaiian sovereignty has been growing and most native Hawaiians now support some kind of sovereignty. One organization, the Pro-Hawaiian Sovereignty Working Group, is putting the U.S. government on trial.

They write: "Our primary charge against the United States government is its illegal invasion of our country in 1893, and the 1898 illegal annexation and continued occupation and plunder of our homeland. These acts flowed from a long-standing U.S. policy - since 1789 - of exploiting the Kanaka Maoli nation and its resources to serve U.S. interests."

Queen's Protest

I, Lili'uokalani, Queen by the grace of God and under the constitution of the Hawaiian kingdom, do hereby solemnly protest against any and all acts done against myself and the constitutional government of the Hawaiian kingdom by certain persons claiming to have established a Provisional Government of and for this kingdom.

That I yield to the superior force of the United States of America, whose Minister Plenipotentiary, His Excellency John L. Stevens, has caused United States troops to be landed at Honolulu, and declared that he would support the said Provisional government.

Now, to avoid any collision of armed forces, and perhaps the loss of life, I do, under this protest and impelled by said forces, yield my authority until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon the facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representative, and reinstate me in the authority which I claim as the constitutional sovereign of the Hawaiian Islands.

Done at Honolulu this seventeenth day of January, 1893.

For more information contact:
Pro-Hawaiian Sovereignty Working Group
3333 Ka'ohinani Drive, Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: (808) 595-6691
Fax: (808) 595-0303

Source: SF Weekly, Third Force

SAIIC ACTIVITIES



A Word From SAIIC's Board, Staff and Volunteers

Beginning with this issue, we are inaugurating two new sections of our newsletter. In this column, we would like to offer you news about SAIIC, and some of the many activities in which our board members are engaged.

SAIIC has been in existence now for ten years. The decade ends this year, which the United Nations has declared the "Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples". Along with many other Indigenous peoples, organizations, and their allies throughout the continent, SAIIC's goal in 1992 was to raise public awareness of what Columbus' "discovery" meant, and continues to mean, to the 45 million Indigenous people throughout the continent.

Yet our work has always had a long-term focus, as the struggle for Indigenous self-determination is ongoing. In 1993, we are looking forward to the Second Continental Encounter of Indigenous Nations and Organizations (see article page 8), as well as taking the time, after a decade of organizing, to engage in a process of self-assessment, organizational development, and strategic planning in relation to the current situation of Indigenous people today.

Changes are taking place internally as we look ahead toward the next ten years and SAIIC's role in the work ahead. Isidro García, Quechua from Ecuador and SAIIC's accountant, is working closely with Kimberly Rosa, the new development coordinator and Daniela Spiwak, the new office manager, to improve our internal structures in order to address the increase in demand for informa-

tion and enlarged scope of our networking activities. Jim Freeman is coordinating the production of the SAIIC newsletter, renamed *Abya Yala News* as of this issue in honor of the name given by the Kuna people of Panama to this continent. And Rosa Alegría is coordinating SAIIC's growing volunteer base and editing *Noticias de Abya Yala*, the Spanish version of *Abya Yala News*.

The SAIIC Women's Project is happy to announce the publication of *Daughters of Abya Yala*, the newest SAIIC publication. Any assistance in marketing the book is welcome, so if you know of any bookstores in your area that may be interested in carrying it, please let us (and them) know.

SAIIC's board members continue to participate in many events and activities of note. Xihuanel Huerta has been working with the Public Media Center in order to develop a campaign for increasing SAIIC's visibility. Wara Alderete and Gina Pacaldo will be attending the National Conference of Indigenous Women in Bolivia, June 21-23.

Guillermo Delgado will be representing SAIIC at the European Conference on Indian Questions, taking place in Norway July 14-17. He will be offering a workshop there on the networking activity of Indigenous peoples of the American continent. He will subsequently be attending the U.N.'s Working Group on Indigenous Populations in Geneva, July 19-30, at which meeting we hope the final Declaration of Principles and Rights of Indigenous Peoples will be approved (see article page 5).



SAIIC ACTIVITIES



Nilo Cayuqueo represented SAIIC at the meeting of the Continental Coordinating Commission in Mexico, in preparation for the Second Continental Encounter. Nilo was also present at the United Nations Development Project meeting in New York on April 23rd, to discuss intellectual property rights in relation to Indigenous peoples. Nilo and Wara were both present at the Indigenous health Conference in Canada (see article page 11).

Carlos Maibeth is working with Nilo on the Spanish language radio program which SAIIC broadcasts through community radio stations in South and Meso America. Lucilene Lira Whitesell and her husband Ted have moved to Wisconsin, where Ted will be teaching Geography at the University of Wisconsin. Good luck to both of them.

A very special thanks is in order to one of our most tireless volunteers, Billy R. Trice, Jr., who has been faithfully providing us with much-needed office assistance on a regular basis.

Just as many other people and non-profit organizations, we are currently facing difficult economic circumstances. While we are looking forward to the prospects for change and improvement in the situation of Indigenous people world-wide, there is much work that needs to be done. (And all of our office staff mentioned earlier only adds up to the equivalent of 3 paid full-time positions.) As always, any contributions of time, expertise, materials, and/or money are gratefully appreciated, as are your feedback and responses to our work.

Letters From Our Readers

In future issues we would like to devote part of this section to printing some feedback from you, our readers. We are especially interested in any news of your own work on behalf of Indigenous peoples, and if you have found the information here useful for that end.

We are also open to any other feedback or information you would like to send us, and look forward to printing as much of the material that we receive as possible. So, thanks again for your support, and looking forward to hearing from you!



SAIIC's Statement of Purpose

SAIIC's aim is to promote peace, social justice and the full participation of Indian people in decision making processes affecting their lives. To this end SAIIC pursues the following goals:

- To provide information to the people in the U.S. and the international community about the struggles of South and Meso American Indian people for self-determination, human rights, and protection of the environment.
- To facilitate direct communication, cultural and spiritual exchange between Native American people of the continent;
- To facilitate access to international resources by providing information and technical assistance to South and Meso American Indian organizations and communities;
- To promote and develop the organization of Indian women at the local, national and international levels and to support their full participation in decision making processes that affect their lives and the well-being of their children;
- To communicate the Indigenous perspective to policy and funding institutions whose work affects Indigenous people.



ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM SAIIC

VIDEO: COLUMBUS DIDN'T DISCOVER US

Native people's perspectives on the Columbus Quincentennial based on footage of the 1990 Quito Conference. 24 minutes. A coproduction of SAIIC, CONAIE, ONIC and Turning Tide Productions. Available in Spanish or English for \$39.95 plus \$1.75 shipping.

RETHINKING COLUMBUS

A special issue of *Rethinking Schools* on teaching about the 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in America. \$4.00 plus \$1.00 shipping.

SAIIC LOGO T-SHIRTS

Three color T-shirts with the SAIIC logo on the front and the logo of the Condor and the Eagle from the Quito Conference on the back. \$12 + \$2 shipping, specify M, L, XL, XXL: White, Turquoise or Red.

VIDEO: REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES

Indigenous leaders from Central and South America discuss the 500 years campaign, which began as an Indian response to the Quincentenary celebrations and has developed as an ongoing dialogue among Indigenous activists. Produced by SAIIC. \$19 + \$1.75 shipping.

AMAZONIA: VOICES FROM THE RAINFOREST

A resource and action guide with a comprehensive listing of international rainforest and Amazonian Indian organizations sponsored by SAIIC and the International Rivers Network, and published by Rainforest Action Network and Amazonia Film Project, 1990. Available in Spanish or English for \$8.50 plus \$1.75 Shipping.

COLUMBUS: HIS ENTERPRISE

By Hans Koning, 1990. A beautifully written, and historically accurate portrayal of Columbus' life and voyages. \$8.95 + \$1.75 shipping.

1992 INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY AND RESOURCE GUIDE

An annotated directory of over 600 international organizations who participated in 500 Years of Resistance projects. Includes declarations from Indigenous conferences and organizations and information on curriculum resources, speakers bureaus, computer networks, audio-visual resources and print resources. \$10 + \$1.75 shipping.

DAUGHTERS OF ABYA YALA

Testimonies of Indian women organizing throughout the Continent. Statements from grass-roots Indian women leaders from South and Meso America. Includes resolutions from Indigenous women's meetings, a directory of Indian women's organizations and key contacts, information on Indian women's projects and poems by Indian women. Forty-eight pages with beautiful black and white photographs. Printed on recycled paper. \$8.00 + \$1.50 shipping.



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