

# SAIIC ACTIVITIES

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## 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).



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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.