

Indian Federation of Eastern Bolivia (CIDOB)

José Uranavi

SAIIC: How many Indian groups are there in eastern Bolivia and how was CIDOB started?

José: In the Bolivian Amazon there are 40 Indian groups who speak different languages and have different cultures. Before 1982 there were regional ancestral organizations like the *caciques* and the *capitanias*. On the initiative of our brothers from the south, the Guarani, we held a meeting in 1982 attended by 65 delegates and formed CIDOB. That was the first time that all the Indians of eastern Bolivia, especially those from the state of Santa Cruz, got together and got to know each other.

In the past, our ancestors had rivalries, but now the moment has come to shake hands and to look at our situation together. The problems that are being imposed on us include land, education, health, and economic matters. The most pressing problem is land. In our first meeting we came to the conclusion that we should have a strategy or a path to defend ourselves and search for solutions together. The organization does not have a political color. It exists to defend our rights as Indians.



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Inter-Ethnic Development Association of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDSESEP)

Evaristo Nugkuag

SAIIC: What are the objectives of AIDSESEP?

There are 300,000 Indians in the Peruvian Amazon, 200,000 of whom are part of AIDSESEP. As a federation, our objectives are to strengthen the regional organizations and to defend land and natural resources. Also to confront educational and health issues.

In Amazonia today land titles are an extremely urgent matter. The Peruvian government has said that in 1987 it will grant legal recognition to land titles of Indian communities. AIDSESEP has worked with other regional Indian organizations towards that goal, beginning by pressuring the regional government offices and then going to Lima and pressuring the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform.

How can people in other countries help you?

I think that through our contacts here in the United States with organizations like Survival International, Cultural Survival, and SAIIC, people can get in touch with us. Sometimes the authorities in our countries think that we are all alone, that we don't have connections with other organizations. So I think that international solidarity is extremely important.



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