

Coalition in Support of Indigenous Peoples and Their Environment Founded

The Coalition in Support of Amazonian Peoples and Their Environment opened an office in Washington DC in Nov. 1994 to improve communication and coordination among US-based NGOs working with Amazonian peoples. The Coalition was born from an alliance between Indigenous peoples of the Amazon and groups and individuals concerned with the future of the Amazon and its peoples. Coalition Members support Indigenous territorial rights and sustainable development alternatives, and share the belief that people are an integral part of the ecosystem.

The Coalition will hold an annual Forum for NGOs to meet, receive guidance from Indigenous leaders of the Amazon, discuss current issues, and develop political action strategies. Topics at next year's forum (May 10-12 1995 in Washington, DC) will include: Free trade and Development, Intellectual Property Rights, the Timber Industry. At present the Coalition has three working groups: U.S. Policy and Human Rights, Defense of Territories, and Financial Resources. It is helping to coordinate a number of campaigns such as the Ecuador oil campaign. In an effort to promote communications among interested organizations, the Coalition distributes a monthly *Amazon Update* with news from Coalition members.

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Self-determination Seminar in Mexico

The Second Seminar on Self-determination in Mexico held on Jan. 20-21 was organized by the Colegio de Mexico under the direction of Rudolfo Stavenhagen and hosted by Oaxacan

Indigenous organizations. Participants discussed the struggle for autonomy and self-determination, how to create mechanisms to assure respect for Indigenous rights, and how to strengthen access to government decision-making on Indigenous rights. The intent of the conference was to develop clear definitions of autonomy and self-determination.

American Indian Satellite Network Makes History

For the first time, Native-owned and public radio stations across the country have access to regular programming for and about Native Americans, thanks to the new AIROS (American Indian Radio on Satellite) network. Since Oct. 31, this history-making service has offered a daily one-hour feed of dramas, documentaries, literature, self-help programs and heritage pieces, all related to Native Americans.

The AIROS network, initially funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, is developing and establishing what will eventually be a 24-hour distribution system of radio programming by, for and about Native Americans. The AIROS feed includes a storytelling series, interviews with various Native American personalities, historical specials and a multi-part series on breaking the cycle of child abuse, as well as a variety of other specials and series. *Native America Calling* will premiere at the end of February as a daily, hour-long, live call-in talk show focusing on current issues and topics affecting Native Americans.

AIROS links most of the 25 tribal stations located in Native communities in 10 states, many on reservations where radio is the sole telecommunications service. AIROS directors see the network as a first-step toward an ambitious goal: building and linking stations on the 250 Indian reservations in the United States. "Our greatest challenge is in obtaining Native content programs, particularly from the Native stations,

most of whom operate on inadequate funds," says Susan Braine, AIROS Manager. "We're working closely with the tribal stations to determine programming needs and to address those needs through the radio programs that AIROS is able to acquire. Our goal is to encourage and facilitate their own production of these programs. This is their network. It will be as successful and relevant as they, the stations, collectively make it," Braine said.

AIROS also has plans to acquire portable uplinks in order to broadcast conferences, powwows, and other cultural events from reservations. This would allow tribes to share limited resources while learning from each other. For more information on the AIROS schedule, contact your local public or Native-owned radio station. Stations interested in becoming affiliated with AIROS should contact Susan Braine at 402-472-0484.

Internet for Native Peoples Conference

Indigenous activists from throughout California gathered at U.C. Berkeley on Nov. 19 to learn new techniques and discuss the opportunities for networking and alliance building on the information highway. Marc Becker led a workshop using the *Mosaic* program to explore the Internet. This prompted both ideas and concerns about using the Internet as a tool for furthering the causes of Indigenous peoples world wide. Discussion that followed pointed to the demand for a larger and more in-depth conference in the future. Many who attended questioned the use of this technology for people living on reservations and other third-world conditions who might not have access to telephone lines or even electricity.

If you have access to a computer and modem, you might be interested in the following lists related to Indigenous issues: Indigenous Knowledge, Native Net — listserv@cornell.edu, Chicla, Mujer L -list-proc@lmrinet.gsc.ucsb.edu, Raza Net.