



# SOUTH AND MESO AMERICAN INDIAN INFORMATION CENTER

Linking  
Indian People  
of the  
Americas

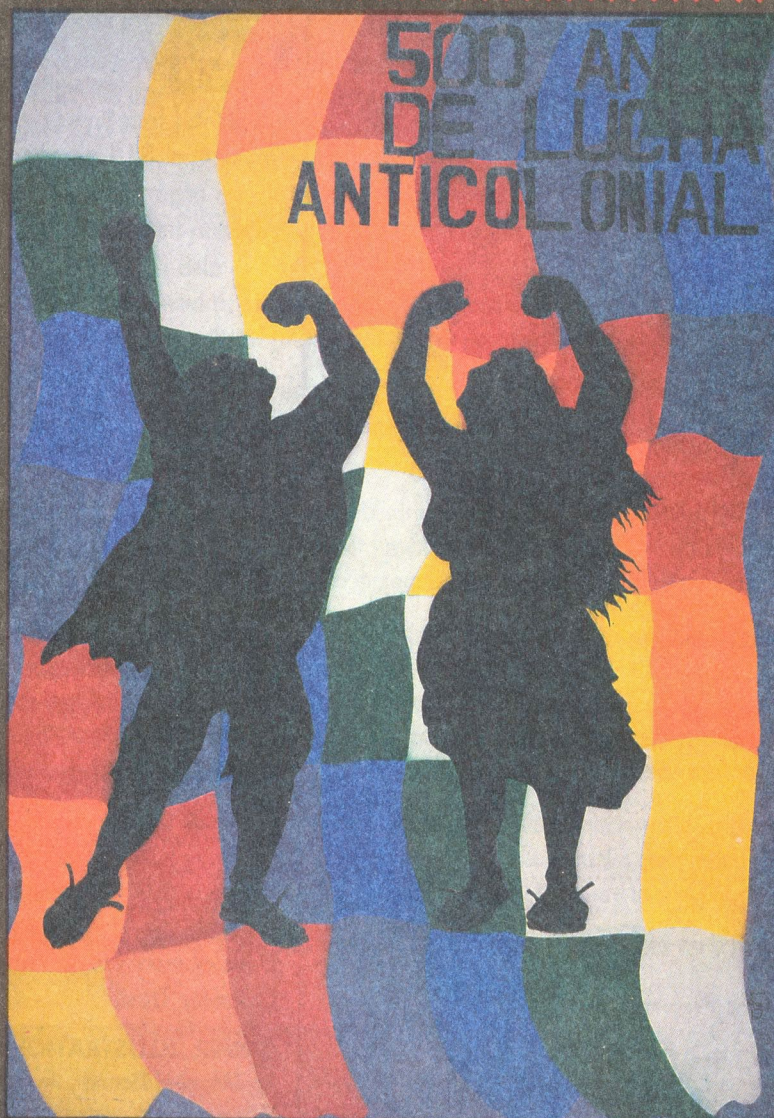


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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS WITH FOUR INDIAN LEADERS

## A NEW BEGINNING



AFTER 500 YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR LIFE  
AND SELF-DETERMINATION



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### COVER ILLUSTRATION

José Manuel Ticona, Aymara  
Winner of the poster contest  
500 Años de Lucha Anticolonial  
MRTKL, Bolivia 1992

Available as a poster for \$11.75 from SAIIC



# EDITORIAL

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**N**EW HISTORICAL TRENDS that recognize cultural diversity, and the legal and human rights of Indigenous peoples should continue to be implemented. Indigenous peoples have expressed their will to carry on their long term struggle for the full recognition of their rights.

In recent continental gatherings we, as rearticulated Indigenous peoples have broadened our perspectives and our demands at a continental level. Indigenous people are no longer isolated entities, we have overcome the colonial boundaries imposed on us for 500 years.

This 1992, the 500 year's commemoration and events, have triggered a continental reorganizing and gathering of all Indigenous nations. Internationally, and since the late 60's, representatives of the Indigenous peoples have been meeting in South America, Central America, Mexico, and North America with the purpose of reconstructing their communication network and sharing their concerns for the legal and human rights of Indigenous nations.

Indigenous encounters have served to enhance cultural pride, self-determination, autonomy, and territoriality, and to demand equality within current nation-states.

Nation-state policies of "integration" and "assimilation" of Indigenous nations have been enforced in both violent and seemingly passive ways, undermining thus, policies of cultural plurality that have denigrated Indigenous nations, languages and cultures.

Indigenous peoples, an active part of the world community today, and the United Nations have declared 1993 The Year of Indigenous Peoples. This however, does not mean that the conditions under which we interact in relation to nation-states are those which promote equality and harmony.

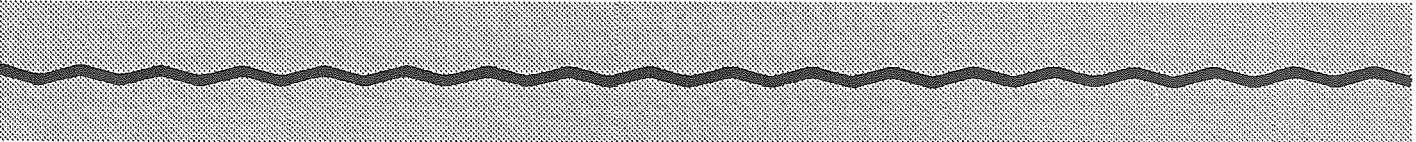

1992 can be seen as the end of this century. We are now beginning a new cycle Indigenous peoples look at it with hope. At no other time have we felt responsible for the land, the means of our existence, so that we would like to warn the world community of the urgent need to rethink our human existence on this planet to guarantee that natural resources are not exhausted.

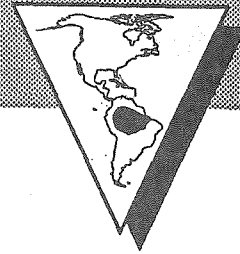
Having established communication links, Indigenous peoples will, from their traditional ecological beliefs, continue to denounce the abuse of our planet. These recent years have witnessed militant Indigenous marches that remind governments and nation-states of the urgent need to implement the rights Indigenous peoples have been denied for centuries. Recent land grants, governments' recognition of the Right of Indigenous peoples to their confiscated lands are examples of compromise, dialogue, understanding, but there is still much resistance to recognizing Indigenous rights.

Nevertheless, current economic trends are working against the will to build a better world, and specifically in Latin America these realities are causing the impoverishment of people who increasingly are unable to make ends meet. Clearly, Indigenous peoples have repeatedly pointed out the structures based on inequality that must be changed if we are to survive.

In this issue, we are presenting our recent thoughts, experiences, frustrations and hopes for a better world as we dialogue with the Indigenous people of the continent.

Let Indigenous people speak for themselves on these issues.





## BRAZIL

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*Indian delegates meet with Al Gore. Photo SAIIC*

# ***Eco '92: Indigenous peoples Fight for a Space at the Earth Summit***

From a traditional Indian village constructed in the Tijuca national forest to a sweltering tent in the Global Forum on Flamengo Beach, environmentalists participating in Rio de Janeiro's Eco '92 encountered hundreds of Indigenous peoples from around the world who participated in two major Indian conferences. However despite the substantial Indigenous presence in Rio, the participation of Indian people in the Earth Summit—where world leaders were gathered to sign treaties on fundamental environmental issues—was limited to a symbolic five minute statement by Marcos Terena, of the Terena Nation of Brazil.

The first indigenous conference was the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Territory, Environment and Development, organized by the InterTribal Committee-500 Years of Resistance (Brazil), COICA

(Amazonia), and Centro Mocovi (Argentina). About 1000 indigenous people from five continents gathered in a series of long houses built by seven Amazonian tribes in a village dubbed "Kari-Oca". Shamans blessed the land, and the village became the scene of a week-long meeting, which brought busloads of Xavante and Kayapo Indians from Brazil together with much smaller delegations from Samiland, the Philippines, Australia, and Africa.

Also featuring the participation of many indigenous peoples, primarily from Brazil, was the Earth Parliament, whose goal was to allow Indians a greater voice at the U.N.C.E.D. meeting. The Earth Parliament culminated with a rally at which Congressmen and Senators from the United States expressed their support for the goals of Indigenous peoples.

# BRAZIL

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*Indians in the First Conference of the People of the Forest, Rio Blanco, Brazil. Photo Kit Miller*

Despite the apparent use of Indian people at times as “window dressing” at the ecological conference, some Indian leaders, reflecting on the meeting, saw a brighter side in the events. Atencio Lopez, Kuna from Panama represented the Kuna Association United for Nabguana (Mother Earth).

According to Lopez, “Never before at a world conference had so much attention been placed on Indigenous peoples and their natural surroundings as at the U.N.C.E.D. conference... Our principal task was to avoid the altering of parts of the principal documents of the Conference dealing with Indigenous peoples after years of negotiations in the Prep Coms, which were held prior to Rio. The little bit that had remained affirmed in Agenda 21, the Declaration on Forests and others, had required a great effort on the part of our delegates. But, sadly, indifference toward the problems of Indian peoples by countries like the United States, Canada, England and France, among others, put our efforts at diplomacy in jeopardy.

“Forexample, in Agenda 21, only 3 million dollars of the 600 billion to be set aside annually (for environ-

mental protection) under Agenda 21 was earmarked for Indigenous peoples. This shows that for the world governments, our people are not a priority. As for the Forest Declaration, the active participation and defense by Indigenous peoples of our territories is left up to the judgment of governments. The same goes for biological resources and genetic material, which only takes into account the sovereign rights of the countries, ignoring the existence of our peoples, which for years have conserved and preserved the forests and the genetic material that is found there.

“In the end, the participation of Indigenous representatives was a success, because at these moments we have no intermediaries, rather we ourselves struggle with our own voices in international forums which, despite wanting to keep us quiet, cannot. We also want to praise the work realized by Evaristo Nugkuag of COICA, as coordinator of the Indigenous delegation of U.N.C.E.D..

“We, the Indigenous peoples, are walking toward the future in the footsteps of our ancestors.”

# BRAZIL

## DECLARATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

The following is Declaration #141 of the '92 Global Forum in Rio de Janeiro. The Indians present at the Earth Summit were forced to express their views in this alternative Global Forum, as they were not allowed to completely participate in the official conference.

### #141 Declaration of Indigenous Peoples of the World (June 7, 1992)

We the Indigenous Peoples of the world, manifest our concern at this moment, when people from the whole planet are gathered here in Rio to discuss the direction of our lives, our planet Mother Earth and the future of our children and grandchildren. We manifest our concern because our voices, the voices of traditional peoples, are not being heard.

At this moment, the governments of the rich nations are discussing how to exert even more control over the less favored nations. The global community of colonial states has been meeting with each other as First, Second and Third World powers. All are recognized members of the United Nations. The Indigenous Nations are primarily considered Fourth World and are excluded. The intent of the Earth Summit is to address the necessity of developing intergovernmental agreements and policies that shall move the global community of states into a sustainable-yield relationship with the natural earth's resources and biospheres. All states should bind themselves to these agreements to protect the natural environment.

However, throughout this process, the Indigenous Nations have been totally excluded from the formal proceedings, except in very narrow occasions in which the appearances have been more window dressing than respect for the sovereignty of Indigenous Nations.

Indigenous Nations are in agreement. Our exclusion is colonial racism in all its institutional forms. The "State" governments that are significant participants in the Earth Summit process are the most powerful colonial governments in possession of Indigenous Lands, natural resources, territories and populations. To exclude Indigenous Nations helps assure those States' control of what they mutually classify as "domestic affairs." Their domestic policies, programs and governmental relationships with Indigenous Peoples result in our destruction. Statistics of the highest infant mortality, shortest life-expectancy, poorest health, highest poverty and so on, are reflections of the injustices against Indigenous Peoples by State governments and societies enriched by the illegal takings and thievery.

### Indigenous Peoples demand:

- \* our territory and lands be protected from external invasion and exploitation;
- \* our air, water and lands must remain free from pollution, poison and other contaminants.
- \* our individual human rights and freedoms are protected;
- \* our rights to self-governance is guaranteed;
- \* our rights to self-determination protected;
- \* our traditional, ceremonial and spiritual sovereignty;
- \* our right to control and govern over all foreign persons that shall enter our territory;
- \* our sovereignty over our language and culture;
- \* our sovereign control over all economic development of our land, resources, territory and peoples;
- \* our protection of all our sacred sites and objects;
- \* the freedom from being downwind of environmentally damaging, or poisoning activities of foreign individuals or corporations that impact the quality of air, water and lands;
- \* our forests be protected as we Indigenous Peoples have always protected our forests, the animals we hunt, our fish, our mountains and our PAJES (spiritual leaders) who live in the sacred places amidst our forests.
- \* that treaties, paid for by our people in land and blood, be honored by those nations which have prospered by these agreements.

HOWEVER, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, Indigenous Nations want the integrity of our sovereignty respected. The Great Spirit has endowed the Indigenous Nations with the same rights as other member societies of the global community. The world must hear us. Not only have Indigenous Peoples been treated in token ways, but deliberate external influences have operated to divide us from one another. This "divide and conquer" ploy has come from many United Nations leaders.

We should like to tell you this moment that our Indigenous spiritual leaders are watching over and observing how your spirit moves. We ask respect for the depths of the earth, home of the fierce spirits which guarantee the protection of all the people and life forms of the planet.

We know this Earth Summit will sign the Fundamental Principles governing the destiny for the future (Agenda 21). We, Indigenous Peoples of the world, desire that this document be decisive in respecting the life of all the forest and Indigenous Peoples of the world.



## *Italian Oil Company Occupies Area Belonging to Xavante Indians*

Brazil, July 17, 1992. The recovery of part of the territory traditionally occupied by Xavante Indians depends on a concrete action of an Italian corporation, *Agip Petroli*, the holding company of the Italian state-owned *Enter Nazionali Idrocarbure (ENI)*. The area in question, which is located in the state of Mato Grosso, is presently known as Suia-Missu farm and was bought by ENI in 1981. Although the chairman of the company, Gabriele Cagliari, announced on June 10 at the Earth Summit that the area would be re-turned to the Xavante Indians, he has not made good on his promise so far. Cagliari had said that the area would be returned to the Indians on the 8th of July 1992.

According to FUNAI (National Indian Foundation), ENI's representatives in Brazil oppose the idea of returning the area to the Xavante Indians, defying the decision made by the board of the company in Italy. These representatives have been demanding a statement from FUNAI on the rights of the Xavante Indians over the area.

The delay to give the area back to the Indians is making it even more difficult for them to recover their territory. Two thousand families of squatters invaded the Suia-Missu farm on June 15, a few days after the announcement made by ENI's chairman. The squatters were encouraged to invade the area by mayors, politicians and farmers of the region, who oppose the idea of returning it to the Xavante Indians. They even prepared a map to show to the families the places they should invade and they are threatening to react with violence if the Indians do return. There have been accusations that they are occupying parts of the farm. These politicians claim that they rely on the support of the governor of the state of Mato Grosso, Julio Campos, and perhaps this is true, considering that he has not taken any measure to prevent the invasion. *Agip Petroli*, on its turn, hasn't voiced a word about the invasion of the farm, which is regarded as an area belonging to the company.

The Suia-Missu farm occupies most of the 200 thousand hectares of the Maraiwatsede Indian Area.

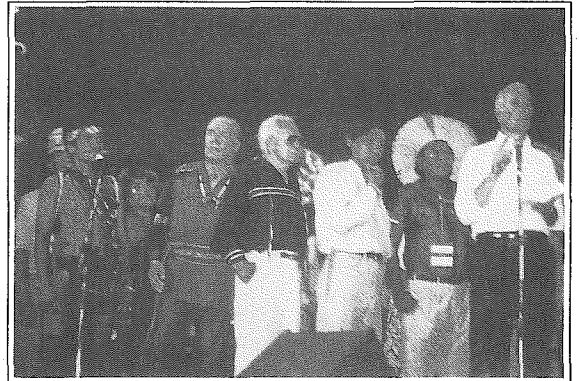
FUNAI initiated the demarcation of the area, but its immediate continuity depends on *Agip's* consent to the return of the Xavante Indians.

*Agip Petroli* bought the Suia-Missu farm in 1981. In the 50's, small squatter families began to invade Maraiwatsede. The area was bought by farmer Ariosto da Riva, who began to refer to the Indian territory as Suia-Missu farm. In 1962, the farmer associated with the Ometto entrepreneurial group in business undertakings. Ariosto da Riva and the Ometto family are of Italian origin.

Conflicts between the Xavante Indians and the invaders began to grow until in 1966 the federal administration transferred some of the Indians to the Sao Marcos Salesian Mission, 300 km away from the area. Not long after that, a measles outbreak hit the mission and over 100 Indians died, many of whom had come from Maraiwatsede. The Indians who had stayed in Suia-Missu were taken to another Xavante area. The Ometto group sold the farm to the Liguigas do Brasil company in 1972, which on its turn sold it to *Agip Petroli* in 1981.

The Xavante Indians never gave up the idea of returning to Maraiwatsede. Every year groups of Indians have been returning to the traditional territory to visit their old cemeteries and villages there. But only in 1984 did the Xavante Indians of Suia-Missu manage to get together once again in a single village, making it possible for them to claim their traditional territory in an organized way.

Source: Indianist Missionary Council (CIMI) newsletter



*Representative Porter (US Congress) meets Chief Oren Lyon and other delegates. Photo SAHC*

# BRAZIL

## Woodcutter is Killed and Indians are Abducted in the Wake of Invasion of Indian Land



*Kuna Indian delegate at Kari-oca village, Rio. Photo SAIIC*

(Brazil), Conflicts have been exploding in several parts of Brazil in recent weeks as a result of the noncompliance, by the Brazilian government, of constitutional obligations to Indian peoples. These conflicts could be avoided if measures such as the removal of invaders from Indian lands were taken.

A woodcutter was arrow-shot to death on July 3rd by Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau Indians in the Amazonian state of Rondonia. The Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau are one of the last free peoples of the Amazon. Two brothers of that woodcutter, who were also arrow-shot, narrowly escaped from being killed also. The three men had been removing hardwood from the lands of those Indians for several months.

Invasions of the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau area became more intense as of the 80's. Through INCRA (Colonization and Land Reform Institute), the government itself issued several title deeds for lands included in the Indian territory, in addition to settling families of tenant farmers there. Although the demarcation of this territory was finalized in October of last year, the invasions were not halted, particularly those of woodcutters. The killing of the woodcutter on Friday was a new warning that the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau Indians, who live in virtual isolation, will not accept further invasions of their lands.

In the state of Maranhao, in the so-called Brazilian pre-Amazonian region, the fight between the Guajajara Indians and invaders of the Caña Brava Indian Area was resumed. In the first week of July, inhabitants of the village of Sao Pedro dos Cacetes, which is located in the heart of the Indian territory, invaded the Crioli village and abducted seven Guajajara Indians, making them hostages. The invaders wanted to make sure that in case they are indeed forced to leave that village they will be resettled and indemnified for all improvements they introduced in the area. The Indians ended up being released on July 3rd, but almost three thousand invaders remained in the Indian area.

On May 14th, nine Federal Police officers invaded the Sabonete village and tortured several Guajajara Indians, including women and children, allegedly to carry out "an operation against the traffic of marijuana and hashish." The shots fired by these officers were heard in the distance by other Indians, who gathered around them and seized their weapons in the ensuing fight.

The first tenant farmers of Sao Pedro dos Cacetes settled in Canabrava at least 30 years ago, against the will of the Guajajara Indians. After nine pregnant Indian women were killed by the invaders, FUNAI (National Indian Foundation) provided the government of the state of Maranhao, in 1979, with federal funds to remove and resettle those families, which totaled 1247 in that year. Nobody knows what that government did with those funds, as the invaders were not removed from the area in question.

Right now, the Guajajara Indians are being pressured to accept the existence of the village in their lands. In exchange for this, they would be provided with another area. But even if the Indians accept this arrangement, conflicts are not likely to end and the Guajajara people might reclaim the area occupied by the village at any moment; according to the Constitution, the rights of the Indians over their lands are imprescriptible.

Source: Indianist Missionary Council (CIMI) newsletter

For further information SAIIC recommends the book by David Price, Before the Bulldozer, MD: Seven Locks Press, 1989



## ***Patent Bill Threatens Indians and the National Sovereignty in Brazil***



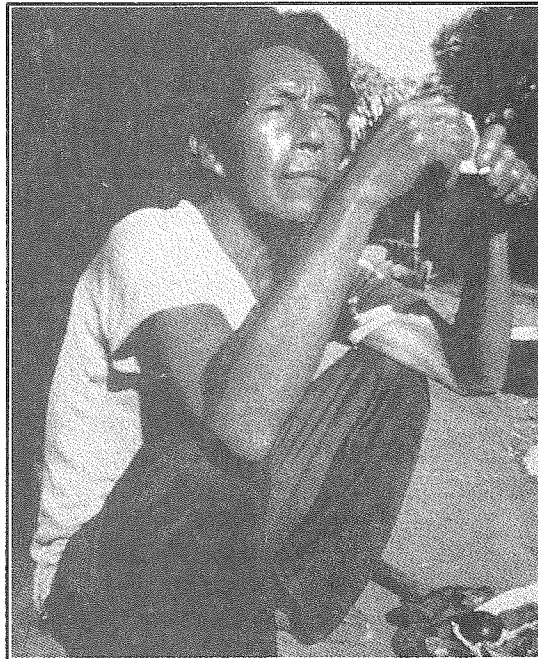
*Mario Juruna defends his right to sell a jaguar skin, Rio. Photo SAIIC*

Brazil, June 22, 1992. Brazil may lose control over the genetic basis of its ecosystems. A bill on industrial property rights proposed by the federal administration and referred to the National Congress on an urgent basis provides for the possibility of patents being issued to cover forms of life. If the Bill is approved, Brazil may have to pay royalties on the use of resources that are typical of its territory and can only be found in it, as multinational companies would have the legal right to establish monopolies over the benefits derived from biodiversity.

The Bill is a result of pressures from the American government and the cartel of multinational drug companies is particularly interested in its approval. The Bill will provide these companies with the right to patent a certain form of life that can only be found in Amazonia and to have full control over its use. Moreover, according to article 53 of the Bill, only the holders of such patents would be entitled to import these products, without any obligation to manufacture them in Brazil. Article 51 provides that "the patent shall remain in force for a period of 20 years", and not 15 years anymore, as has been the case so far.

"In all the history of mankind, we had never witnessed such an absurd reinforcement of monopolies", says Rogerio Cezar de Cerqueira Leite, one of the most renowned Brazilian physicists. "Through

*Continued on page 10*



*Wanaro Indian healer, Brazil border. Photo SAIIC*

-from page 9

this provision, a foreign company files a patent application and takes hold of the Brazilian market for the benefit of its headquarters abroad, doing away with competition." In practice, it means the end of all development possibilities available to the domestic drug industry. What the Brazilian government is trying to do is precisely the opposite of what countries of the first world do, as they only recognize patents after qualifying their industries technologically and after providing them with adequate means of protection.

The Indian peoples are surely being affected by this fight of giants, as the genetic bases located in their lands— particularly the ones located in Amazonia—are of fundamental importance to transnational drug

companies. To these peoples, the approval of the bill proposed by the Executive branch would mean the handing over of their knowledge on biodiversity to large cartels, which would save years of research and investment in the process. This is something that is already happening in other countries and represents one of the main goals of today's international economic policy. Countries such as the United States do not spare any efforts to make Third World countries adjust their patent laws to the needs of emerging transnational monopolies.

For centuries Indian peoples have developed and preserved the knowledge they have on their natural resources, which are to be protected instead of becoming objects of patent protection or private appropriation. These peoples must be supported if they are to continue to preserve their knowledge and biodiversity, so that they may develop sustainable projects that can bring improvements to the quality of life of their communities without forcing them to destroy natural resources in order to survive.

There are also peoples whose territories have been degraded as a result of the economic expropriation process. These areas must be recovered so that the quality of life of the communities which occupy them may be improved. This is a reality affecting Indian lands located in the Northeast, South, East and Center-West regions of Brazil.

Together with steps aimed at protecting their biodiversity and knowledge, measures must be taken to ensure respect for the ethnic diversity of Indian peoples. Governments and the non-Indian society have traditionally despised the Indian logic in their handling of ecosystems. And this was the logic that ensured the self-sustainable nature of these societies and the preservation of the environment.

The private appropriation of these resources and knowledge, as provided for in the Bill on Industrial property, represents a blow against the interests of Indian peoples.

Source: Indianist Missionary Council (CIMI) newsletter

## DEMINI HEALTH PROJECT SEES INCREASE IN MALARIA

The Demini region, served by a CCPY health team, has been one of the two least affected by the departure of the FNS health workers, the other being Catrimani. Still, Dr. Deise Francisco, coordinator of the health team, reported that there are 12 new cases of malaria out of a population of 90 Yanomami at the Demini Indian post, after months with no new cases. Mosquito breeding grounds in the area were identified by FNS entomologists but were not eradicated because of the shortage of equipment and personnel.

Source: Commission for the Care of the Yanomami Park

# BRAZIL

## CRISIS IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AFFECTS THE YONOMAMI

(Brazil) September 10, 1992. The current crisis in the Brazilian federal government has had strong repercussions on the Yanomami. As all attention and activity is centered on the corruption scandal in Brasilia, government agency budgets are not being disbursed as planned.

In a letter dated August 31 health workers employed by the National Health Foundation (FNS) in the state of Roraima to work in the Yanomami Health District notified Waldir Joao Ferreira da Silva, the then FNS coordinator in Roraima who was just dismissed, of

their withdrawal from the 17 health posts in the Yanomami area. In the letter, they cited dwindling resources to fly to areas affected by malaria (the team had 20 hours of flight time available as of September 1) and lack of essential medicines, espe-

Vista, about half the 120 patients are Yanomami, mostly malaria victims. At the beginning of September, there was only two weeks' supply of food left, provided by the Dutch branch of Medecins sans Frontieres. The Casa do Indio would be swamped with new patients if flights continued to bring in emergency cases from the Yanomami area. News reports noted that the Yanomami were increasingly resistant to medical treatment which has been irregular, inadequate and therefore ineffective.

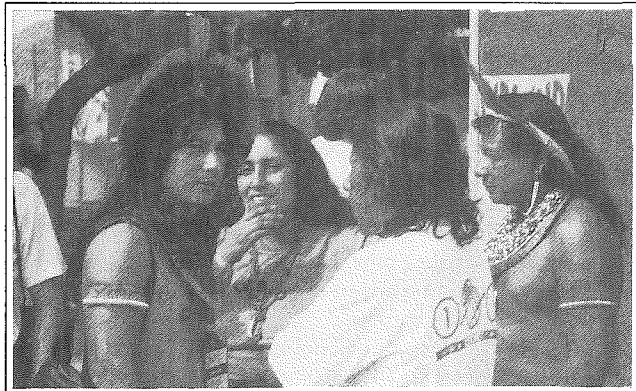
The garimpeiros (miners) have not missed their chance, inciting the Yanomami to react against FUNAI and FNS staff. Some Yanomami invaded a post in Baixo Mucajal, taking food and gasoline. The garimpeiros have supplied the Yanomami with food and guns as they invade the reserve once again. They now number about 2,000.

Sydney Possuelo, the President of FUNAI, met with FUNAI regional administrators last month to ask for their support to work out a strategy to rescue the agency's work. Possuelo would like FUNAI to take back responsibility for Indian health care - given to the FNS two years ago when FUNAI's work was decentralized. At stake is the disbursement over the Cr\$90 billion allocated to the Ministry of Health for health work among the indigenous population.

FUNAI, with a budget of Cr\$870 million, is as strapped for funds as the National Health Foundation (FNS) whose funds are embargoed because of government expenditure cuts. After meeting regional administrators Possuelo visited Clio Borja, the Minister of Justice, requesting that military helicopters be used to visit the most critical Yanomami areas. These visits will be carried out over a period of four days to remove emergency cases, investigate invasions by garimpeiros, and will probably lead to an evaluation that will provide the basis for further FUNAI lobbying to reassume responsibility for the health work.

Dinarte Nobre de Madeiro, the former coordinator of the successful operation to remove garimpeiros prior

*Continued on page 12*



*Brazilian delegates at the Rio conference. Photo SAIIC*

cially Mefloquina used to combat malaria - entirely unavailable in the Yanomami Health District (DSY) since the middle of August.

Equipment requested to spray the breeding grounds of malaria-bearing mosquitoes had not been provided and the incidence of malaria is increasing. There were more than 4,000 cases recorded in the last six months. In some places, more than half the population has died of the disease. Health workers and the Indians affected by diseases did not have adequate food supplies. Furthermore, large proportion of the Indians are too ill to plant their fields, affecting next year's food supply.

The letter, signed by 13 of the DSY health workers, accuses the FNS of being slow and unwilling to meet health needs in the area. In the Casa do Indio in Boa



—from page 11

to demarcation of Yanomami land, visited the Commander of the Armed Forces in the Amazon on September 3 to ask for the helicopters to be released. Meanwhile, Possuelo is calling in FUNAI employees with health care training to work on an emergency basis in the Yanomami area. The aim of the DSY health workers in Roraima, all of them committed to Yanomami rights, is to force the government to take responsibility for the work.

There was some friction between the group and Waldir Joao Ferreira da Silva, who has since been asked to leave his post after being appointed temporarily by the FNS in Brasilia as part of a team that is investigating administrative irregularities of his predecessor. The DSY workers allege that he and the FNS in Brasilia were to blame for the situation because they did not provide necessary support for Yanomami health work, which continues to be critically important.

Waldir's reputation among DSY health workers worsened when, at a meeting held in Manaus in July, he untactfully declared that any permanent appointee to his post would have to be approved by Roraima politicians. If this is so, the next appointment could be tragic for the Yanomami. The FNS in Brasilia is under constant pressure by congressmen from Roraima to accept their nominees to state-level posts, including the one which was occupied by Waldir. Sydney Possuelo of FUNAI is against intervention by local governments in the appointment of officials who work with indigenous peoples.

The President of FNS, in a meeting with CCPY on August 25, gave assurances that until the investigation ends the administrator will be a career civil servant in the FNS. After the investigation, it will be necessary to make a permanent appointment of someone who understands the importance of the work done in the DSY and is at the same time capable of overseeing all FNS work in Roraima. The same Roraima political group has continued to be active in the Yanomami issue; the Di rio de Roraima reported that Chico Rodrigues, a federal deputy, had been told by President Collor that he would review the demarcation of the Yanomami area. Although this would be very difficult, the statement reflects the unwillingness of this political force to recognize Yanomami land rights.

## YANOMAMI INDIANS ARE DYING IN BRAZIL FOR LACK OF HEALTH WORKERS AND MEDICINE

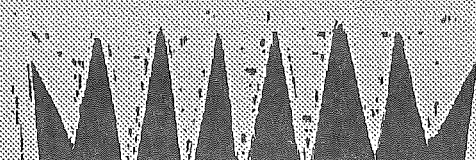
The Yesinabetheri is a 13-member Yanomami group structured around three brothers and a sister. They live in the state of Roraima, in Amazonia and just a few days ago they were fourteen in number. The middle brother, known as Fraquinho ("weakie") died, probably from malaria. He was the only member of the group whose wife was at a child-bearing age. The elder brother, Chiquinho, is raising an orphan to become his wife. The younger brother, Kobaxi, works with a family of another group in order to have permission to marry one of its daughters. Chiquinho's and Kobaxi's wives died. Kobaxi was left alone with a 10-day old infant who is being taken care of by officials of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI).

The sister of the three Yanomami Indians is married and has a daughter aged five. Chiquinho has a son aged twenty who is single, and a 10-year old daughter, who is married. A woman who is the younger sister of their late mother also lives with them. Old Arabitheriyoma (which means "woman from a place full of macaws") relates that, in addition to Kobaxi's and Chiquinho's wives, their sons, the elder brother and all other members of the family died after the arrival of gold prospectors in their region. Hundreds of Yanomami Indians have died mainly because of the presence of gold prospectors in their traditional territory.

In July, only three members of the Yesinabetheri group did not catch malaria. 39 cases of malaria were reported this year; some of the Yanomami caught the disease more than once. Their house was abandoned. The crops they tried to grow between malaria crises are still unproductive. They all spend most of their time in the surrounding of a small station that was set up to provide assistance to Yanomami Indians living in a region known as Parafuri.

The deceased brother was nicknamed Fraquinho ("weakie") when he first met the gold prospectors. After his first contacts with the invaders, he became ill and got thinner and thinner. He died anemia and showing signs of hepatitis. He needed a blood transfusion but none of the other local Yanomai Indians could be the donor, since all of them either had malaria or were undernourished.

Source: CIMI-Indianist Missionary Council



# PERU

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## AIDASEP: 500 YEARS OF STRUGGLE FOR LIFE AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

*Miqueas Millares is the president of the Inter-Ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDASEP). He is a member of the Aguarana people of the Peruvian Amazon. AIDASEP is an association composed of 32 organizations or regional federations from all of Amazonia. Indigenous regional organizations began forming in the Amazon in the 1970's. In 1980, these groups decided to create a national coordinating body, and thus AIDASEP was born. AIDASEP defends the rights and promotes the welfare of over 500,000 indigenous inhabitants of the Peruvian rainforest..*

*This interview took place at a meeting of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which works with the United Nations Human Rights Commission.*

SAIIC: What does it mean to be president of AIDASEP?

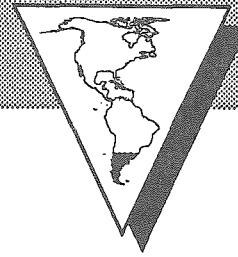
MM: Well, according to our charter, we consider ourselves a completely indigenous organization, with a president, secretary, and treasurer. We are not a NGO, or non-governmental organization, but often anthropologists and other intellectuals get confused around this issue and mistake us for a NGO. Instead, the reality is that we have gotten to the point where we as indigenous peoples are managing our own resources directly, without intermediaries. Many NGO's in the past have spoken in the name of indigenous people, and raised funds in our name, but for the most part these funds have not reached our people and remained

with the organizations instead. Thus we have seen that this pattern needed to be broken, and that we needed to channel funds directly into our communities. This we have managed to do, and we are demonstrating our ability, our responsibility, and our honesty.

SAICC: How does the Peruvian government react to the empowerment of the indigenous people and to AIDASEP?

MM: Well, the government and its representatives — the local, provincial, and national authorities — in the beginning slandered us as agitators. But we have shown them that it is not "agitation" when one is demanding one's rights. We are demanding what belongs to us, and we have been doing so for centuries — not just recently. For example, if we talk about land, we have been on this land for long before so-called "civilization" arrived and destroyed our culture, our traditional medicine, our languages. Now we have reached 500 years of colonization, which AIDASEP in an assembly decided to name "500 Years of Struggle for Life and Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples". Yet from here on we do not want to lament what has passed. We will remember it for the sake of our ancestors, but we are looking towards the future, to what we need to do to ensure the survival of our peoples. We have lived as exploited, marginalized, forgotten people, who have been much discriminated against. But the government is not going to solve our problems if we do not organize ourselves.

*Continued on page 37*



## ARGENTINA

# Reunion of the Mapuche Nation in Neuquen Argentina

Argentina - After more than one hundred years without any official gatherings, the Mapuche nation held its First Re-encounter from May 3-7, 1992, in Neuquen, Argentina. More than a hundred *Lonko* and *Mahi Werken* (traditional leaders) from Nagmapu (Chile) met with more than two hundred *Lonko-Pinllancuse* from different communities of the provinces of Neuquen, Rio Negro, Zapala, Buenos Aires, Junin de los Andes and Bariloche, Argentina.

The delegates spent four days analyzing the current state of marginalization and oppression in which the Mapuche people find themselves as a result of neglect by the nation states of Chile and Argentina, and the integrationist policies of these two states.

The re-encounter began with a solemn one hour *Weupin* (traditional discussion in Mapudungu) according to the customs of the Mapuche nation, and was led by the *Lonko* Oscar Cayuqueo of Nagmapu (Chile) and *Lonko* Antonio Salazar of Puelmapu (Argentina).

The topics dealt with at the meeting were the following:

Integration and the Nation-state, Land and Territory, Mapuche Law and the Written Law, Education and Identity, Mapuche Nation Flag Design, Historical Significance of the Mapuche Court, and 500 Years of Oppression.

The following general resolutions were adopted at the re-encounter:

1. Whereas the Mapuche Nation exists in Nagmapu, Chile as well as in Puelmapu, Argentina, and that we have been neglected and our existence denied by both states, and given the current situation in which we find ourselves, it is imperative that we expand our historical struggle, creating various initiatives. One of these will be a flag, which will revive our history and philosophy, with the purpose of showing the world our reality in the perspective of a new relationship with the peoples of the world. We agreed to promote and publicize the Flag Design, to be approved in October, 1992, in all the communities

2. Whereas the Mapuche are the original inhabitants of this territory that is currently claimed by nation states, and this territory is the place where we find our origin, being, philosophy, science and the roots of our language, Mapudungun, we agreed to claim a territory for our Mapuche Nation.

3. Whereas the historical Mapuche organizational structure of the communities are vital to our identity as a people, we agreed to reconstruct these, with the purpose of strengthening the power of the traditional authorities.



# ARGENTINA

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*Mapuche woman. Photo SAIIC*

4. Whereas our people have a system of political, religious, moral and philosophical norms by which our communal development and living are governed, constituting the source and practice of Mapuche law, we agreed to work toward reestablishing Mapuche law in the communities.

5. Whereas language is the soul of the people and a fundamental means of maintaining Mapuche unity, we agreed to put our Mapudungun language into practice.

6. Recognize the Mapuche court as the first recourse for maintaining internal relations and solving problems within the community and between the community and society in general.

7. We express our complete support of the recently constructed community of Ragilko, and we encourage all the communities to start exercising the fundamental

right to construct communities.

The re-encounter ended with a traditional Nguillatun ceremony in the recently constructed community. Over 1,000 people participated. The Machi and Pillancuse women directed the ceremony, installing a *rehue* (altar), and the participants committed themselves to continue developing and strengthening their own culture and continue the struggle for the rights of the Mapuche Nation.

On May 4, 1992, a march took place through the main streets of the city of Neuquen. The resolutions were publicly announced in a rally in the main square of the town. This had a great effect on public opinion; for over a century, the Mapuche nation had not carried out this type of action due to the oppression by the Argentine state.

# ARGENTINA

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## *Jujuymata Language Institute Works to Revive Indigenous "Thought Forms"*



*Kollas Indian weavers in Tilcara. Photo SAIIC*

mandatory elementary education throughout the land. The dominant ideology of the times, similar to the dominant ideology today, reflected the desire of the Argentinian elite to join the ranks of the more "developed" nations of the planet. Europe, the great cities, and the industrialized world symbolized civilization, while the Indians represented backwardness, ignorance, and savagery. Thus, the Argentinian "procer" Domingo Faustino Sarmiento led the above-mentioned schooling campaign with the motto "civilization or barbarism".

In order to become a modernized country, it was necessary for all of the inhabitants to receive a westernized education. Once the military campaigns of extermination were concluded (the Desert Campaign and the Chaco Campaign), the indigenous people who still lived in Argentina had to be civilized. A system of rural boarding schools was created, where Indigenous children were taught foreign values. In this process of enforced acculturation, a principal objective was the elimination of the indigenous languages. In the Andean region of Argentina, it was forbidden to speak the Queshwa language. Children were punished in the schools for speaking their native language in an attempt to impose the exclusive use of Spanish. Yet the Queshwa language had been so pervasive that the Argentinian Declaration of Independence from

(Argentina) At the end of the 19th century, in what is now the Republic of Argentina, the government began a wide-spread "schooling" campaign. This campaign imposed

Spain, signed in the city of Tucuman in 1816, was written in a bilingual format, in both Queshwa and Spanish.

To a certain extent, the objective of stamping out Queshwa was reached. By the beginning of the 20th century, Queshwa was spoken only in the province of Santiago del Estero. However, as documented extensively by the researcher and linguist Rumi Nahui, founder of the Institute Qeshwa Jujuymanta, the qeshwa "thought forms" persist among the inhabitants of northeastern Argentina. The distinct Spanish dialect that is spoken there, and that is often sneered at by academics, is actually the result of the incorporation of Queshwa words, Queshwa accentuation patterns, and Queshwa grammatical structures into the Spanish language.

These indigenous Andean "thought forms" are being rescued and developed presently through the work of the Jujuymata Institute. We are relearning to speak the language of our ancestors. Our friends at the Institute hope to establish contact with those people interested in learning or helping to disseminate the indigenous languages of Abya Yala (America).

The Jujuymata institute also offers correspondence courses in Queshwa. It is currently soliciting funds for the publication of stories, poetry, and teaching aids for Queshwa and Guaraní language instruction.



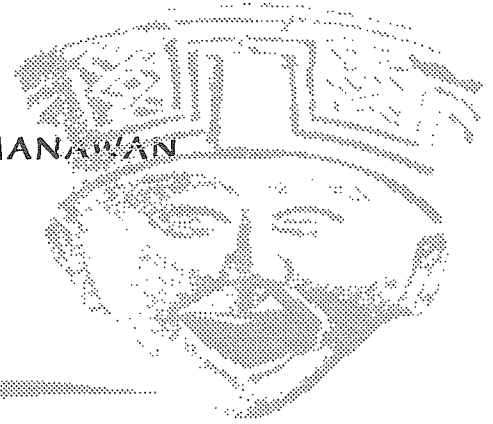
For more information, please contact:

Instituto Jujuymanta  
Galería Alvear  
4600 S. S. Jujuy  
Argentina

# NATIONAL SHORT STORY AND POETRY CONTEST ICTHIOS GROUP



## ATIPANAKUY JATUN SUYUPI JARAWIKUWAN RIMANAWAN ICTHIOS TANTASQUKUNA.



### Awya Yalla Wawgeykuna

Awya yalla apachi q'osni patapi  
Tawa K'uchu tawantinsuyumanta  
Yawar qhochá kutipun  
Llajsakun sirch'i nina urqota.

Awya yalla llanp'a ch'ujrikusqa  
Kallpa makanakuyta mana atisqarkuchu  
Jatun rupyay ukhu urqopi  
Sach'a ukjupi panpakuna  
Sallqa ch'inllan....

Unay ayllu yachaykunapi  
Atimullpusqa chay jina llajtakunamanta  
Chinkasqa nay uray janaj pachapi  
Winaypaj arpa atisqa simir nisqa.

Mast'aspa makikunanchejta  
Tawa nujunakuymanta  
Kay pp'unchayman chhayamunchej  
Awya Yalla wawgeykuna

Kay yuyayniyki llanthupi  
Ancha sinch'i Pirqapi juqarina  
Llakijmanta mujujjima  
Tukuy kayta yuaytawan  
Qhatusuchej chakisarukunanta  
Ripusqankunawan.

1) Awya Yalla = Abya Yala = Sutijta "Panamaj Kunan"  
qosqanku kay Jatun LLegtamas kunaman.

2) Nuqa jap'ikuni qellqanata Runa Tantanakuj Uajtapi,  
Yachachikunaku-sqankumanto Paz-tapi 1954.

### Brothers and Sisters of Abya Yala

Abya Yala over the smoking reaches of the sacred  
land  
The four cardinal directions  
Become as bloody hells  
Incandescent lava melts down their potency.

Abya Yala complete dislocation  
Battle of impossible efforts  
Land of majestic and ardent tropics  
Deep rainforests, plains,  
And silent plateaus...

Ancestral races, deferential cultures,  
Ghostly peoples,  
Lost to the Infinite  
Always the victims of vain promises.

Reaching out our hands  
From the four points of tenderness  
We arrive at this day  
My American brothers and sisters.

In the shadow of this memory  
Let us raise a firm pillar  
As a foundation for our heart's sorrow and desire  
Remembering all this  
We will follow the footsteps  
Of those who went before us.

1) Abya Yala = Awya Yalla = Name for the American  
continent in the language of the Kuna people of Panama.

2) For the written Qheshwa the conventions adopted in  
1954 by the Indigenous Congress of La Paz were used

Author: Tupturka  
This poem was  
recited by the  
author on the day of  
the Winter Solstice,  
1990 in Huacalera,  
Pcia. de Jujuy,  
Argentina



## Mapuche Take Land Recovery Actions

### "THERE WILL NOT BE ENOUGH JAILS TO HOLD ALL OF THE MAPUCHE"

Aucan Huilcaman Paillama was provisionally released on August 10, 1992 after spending 53 days in jail for leading a campaign of Mapuche land recovery. Aucan Huilcaman, a Mapuche *Werken* (messenger) of the organization *Aukin Wallmapu Ngulam*, or Council of All Lands, based in Temuco, was one of 116 Mapuche who were arrested between June 17 and 26, 1992 in a wave of government repression which involved beatings and several serious injuries.

Most of the Mapuche were released soon after the arrests, but Aucan Huilcaman was held for nearly two months, at times incommunicado, because he was a vocal spokesman for Mapuche land rights. The government plans to prosecute members of the Council of all Lands and has issued arrest warrants for several Mapuche leaders.

"If the government attempts to prosecute all of the Mapuche from the Council of All Lands who participated in the land-recovery actions, it will need to begin by building larger jails," said Pablo Hentileo, the *werken* (spokesperson) of the Huenteche (plains people) community of Quilaco, near Nueva Imperial, 55 km west of Temuco in southern Chile.

Huentileo said that about 300 Mapuche communities of the Ninth and Tenth regions belong to the Council of All Lands, and participated in the process of land recovery which took place in June in eight locations within Araucania and in Choshuenco, the Lake Region.

For the Council of All Lands, the actions of land-recovery in the Andean foothills has meant over 100 police arrests during the land occupations, and about thirty charges of "illegal entry onto private property".

The visiting Minister, Antonio Castro Gutierrez, who was designated by the Chilean government to

"investigate and create sanctions against the activities of the Council", has advised that charges be pressed for "usurpation of property" and "illicit association".

The actions of Minister Antonio Castro are certain to please the Minister of the Interior, Enrique Krauss, who as soon as the land-recoveries began hastened to insult not only the members of the Council of All Lands, but all Mapuche people, by stating: "We will not appeal to the Law of Internal Security of the State, but instead to the Penal Code, because that is what befits common delinquents."

The Council of All Lands is in danger of being dissolved if it is designated as "illicit". The break-in and burglarizing of its offices, on the 27th of June, was only the last of a long list of hostile measures it has met with. "They took away a large number of documents, but fortunately we had taken some precautions with the photographs and had previously taken them to a safe place," stated Elisa Loncon, a leader of the Council.

When the conflict began, Minister Krauss advised the landowners to take part in the case against the Council for "usurpation of lands", and suggested that they bring lawsuits as well. In turn, the visiting Minister decreed, as one of the first measures taken, a blanket of secrecy on the judicial progress of the case.

The suggestion made by Krauss was not taken up, for example, by Carlos Hettich Arriagada, a landowner and candidate for councilman in Cunco, 60 kilometers from Temuco. Arriagada was one of the few landowners willing to return some land to its original owners. He ceded, with no major objections, some hectares to the Mapuche community of Quinchique. However, two weeks later, he presented the visiting Minister with a complaint of "usurpation of property". Minister

# CHILE

Castro did not delay in ordering the arrest of three Mapuche women who had participated in the occupation of Hettich's claim.

The Mapuche who are charged with "usurpation of property" face monetary fines. And if they are unable to pay them, they also face jail terms. "We don't know what the Minister will decide," explained Fernando Perez, of the Nagche (lowlands people) community of Aguas Buenas, near Galvarino, 50 kilometers northwest of Temuco. Perez spent five days in the Lautaro jail for participating in the occupation of the predio of landowner Emilio Reidel in the end of June.

Perez tells that in his area there are 15 Mapuche communities with about 2,100 families. "The people do not have lands to cultivate. Each family has about half a hectare, at most 4 or 5 hectares. We live in great poverty, and if the judicial system condemns us to paying fines, we will simply not be able to pay them. We will have to go to jail, because we have no funds," he stated. However, he added, "We have been very clear and responsible about what we are doing. As Mapuche, we will have to rise to the accusations that have been made against us, and the sentences that they impose. Our people will only experience democracy when we have recovered our lands. As it stands, we have only made use of our rights as a people, which the Chilean state has never wanted to nor wants to recognize."

Meanwhile, the administrator of the Ninth Region, Fernando Chuecas Munoz, a Christian Democrat, threatened anyone who supports the Council of All Lands in Temuco. "I am going to create my own tribunal to judge Aucan Huilcaman," he announced. Chuecas' threat had a double effect. It further worsened the negative perception of him held by Mapuche organizations, and it caused them to close ranks and rally behind the demands of the Council. "We do not share in the actions of the Council of All Lands, because we consider the means of land recovery inadequate, and in the present time, inopportune," stated leaders of some Mapuche organizations which collaborate with the government-led Special Commission on Indigenous Peoples (CEPI). But they emphasize that "the government has handled the indigenous problem very badly."

Elisa Lancon, speaking for the Council, gave an evaluation of the land reclamation actions and the judicial process: "The land-recovery actions were largely symbolic, in order to again bring the land problem to the

forefront. But they were also intended to insist once again on the need to recover our rights as a people. If no headway is made on these two issues, the government is failing to keep its own commitment to respect and promote the rights of the native peoples. The government has so far ignored the fundamental issue: our demand for our lands. It has minimized the conflict and has reduced it to a mere problem of illegality and even of delinquency, which is unacceptable to us. It is another sign of the culture of domination which pervades Chile."

The leader of the "Pascual Colicheo" community in Carahue, 50 kilometers from Temuco towards the coast, was detained on the day of municipal elections, hours after having participated in a land-recovery action. His vision follows: "We need greater understanding on the part of Chilean society, and we need land in order to ensure the historical continuity of our people. All of our culture, our language, and our identity is directly linked with the Earth. Our love for the Earth comes from the fact that we descend from Her. If we lose the land, we lose our language, and we shall slowly disappear as well."



*Mapuche Indian. Photo SAIIC*

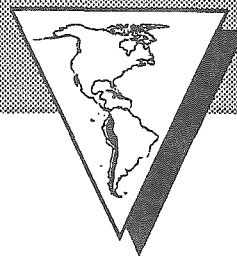
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Please send letters of protest to:

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

Sr. Fernando Chuecas, Intendente de Temuco, Temuco, Chile; Fax (56) (45) 21 30 64

For more information contact SAIIC or Aukin Wallmapu Ngulam, Casilla 448, Temuco, Chile; Phone (56) (45) 23 45 42, Fax (56) (45) 21 30 64

Source: SAIIC and Seminario Aqui, Bolivia



## BOLIVIA

### THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE An Interview With Guarani Representatives

The following is an interview with Mateo Chumira and Enrique Camargo, Guarani from Bolivia, at a meeting in Genoa, Italy to raise European conscience about what the arrival of Columbus in the Americas means to Native Peoples.

Mateo Chumira: My name is Mateo Chumira. I am the representative of the Guarani People. There they call me captain, traditional chief of the Guarani people. We, the Guarani people, after four hundred years of struggle, had our last battle at *Kuruyuqui* where the Bolivian army mutilated us — massacred us, and from then on we have lived crippled, in silence until six years ago. And now we have once again reorganized ourselves as a people - all the people (because there are many of us in the Santa Cruz mountain range of Bolivia). So, during the commemoration that was held on the 28th of January, making the hundredth anniversary of that massacre, we decided to undertake a new plan of action. We invited the president of Bolivia to our village, to defy the belief that we do not exist as a people, to prove we live, have our own language, culture, way of life — everything. So, we are organized as a people, we have representatives at the national level and community level, we have begun a work plan which included production, health and education. And we are beginning to fight for the future of the Guarani people.

SAIIC: How many Guarani people are there today?

MC: We believe that there are about 70 or 80 thousand Guarani in the province of the Cordillera de Santa Cruz. There are more in other provinces like Luis Calvo de Chuquisaca and Gran Chaco, which belongs to Tarija and Argentina. They too have organized themselves as Assembly of the Guarani People (Argentinean

side). So, more or less, I don't have exact figures, but there are seventy or eighty thousand in Bolivia, excluding those in Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay.

SAIIC: What does it mean to be captain of the Guarani nation?

Well, that title was conceived by government officials, but in our language it would be the principal chief who has last say in the peoples behalf, for the people are the ones who decide, and the chief has to accept what they say.

SAIIC: How do you say "Captain" in Guarani?

MC: Uruwichawazu. And also Tentaruwichwazu.

SAIIC: What do you think about traveling with a young leader like Enrique?

MC: Well, we feel very happy because the young and the old now have a way to communicate and trust one another.

SAIIC: I understand that there is great respect for the elderly in Indian cultures. Please explain this.

MC: Yes. This is also true of the Guarani culture.

SAIIC: Speaking of older people, do you remember your father and your mother?

(Here Mateo Chumira pauses. It is obvious he gets a knot in his throat. The question is very intimate, and the memory gets the better of him. We look at each other, and while this happens, some tears roll down his cheeks. The recorder captures the silence, which is his answer. After a few moments, Mateo Chumira regains composure and speaks).

MC: Of course. My father died when I was thirteen or fourteen. My mother died when I was really young. My father was the only one who helped me. I was also the youngest. I thought a lot when I became an orphan, but in the Guarani community, there is always room for



# BOLIVIA

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an orphan. So I became attached to one family until I was sixteen, at which time I was able to become independent and work.

SAIIC: How do you remember your family?

MC: My father's name was Benedicto Chumira, and my grandfather's name was Francisco Chumira, but I don't remember much about my mother. Her name was Evarista Amungui. Her family is still alive. They lived in the town where the massacre took place. I believe that my grandfather and grandmother died in that massacre.

(Mateo Chumira looks at the Genoa bay and through his silence he communicates that the memory is far too vivid and causes infinite pain. The direction of the interview changed towards Enrique, who is the young Guarani.)

SAIIC: How do you feel, Enrique Camargo, to hear the words of the great captain Mateo Chumira,?

Enrique Camargo: The Guarani people have a legendary custom, as do some other Indian peoples of Latin America, of listening to the leaders, because being the great captain signifies that he is a great leader. He is the one that gives advice, he is the advisor of the people, The young people cannot decide for themselves. They need the approval of an authority. So the times that I must give my opinion it has to do with obtaining the consent of our authority. Now when I sometimes speak, and I know that everything is O.K., I feel confident that I am not contradicting the principles of the Guarani people, and much less contradicting an authority that has a lot of respect in the Guarani society.

SAIIC: What is the future plan for the Guarani people?

EC: Six years ago the Guarani people organized themselves out of necessity. As our captain said, we have been silent for nearly one hundred years. But we have remained silent not because we were defeated, although it is true that in the last battle (1892) five thousand young Guarani died. We call them Kerembas, Warriors, like the Mapuches, the Indians of North America, that is our history. We have been the most

resilient in Latin America. So five thousand Kerembas died. We have kept silent because we were divided, because our society has been de-structured. But six years ago, we have reorganized ourselves, and that organization we call the Assembly of the Guarani people.

In addition to political strategies, we are seeing a strategy to develop the standard of living of our people, because in the end, that is what we are interested in. All societies which have delineated political strategies, have them because they want the betterment of their people. And we, as Guarani, that is what we want. That is why we have proposed a farming and animal husbandry plan, an education plan, a plan to build schools, housing, and a cohesive plan for better health. And also a strategy to reconquer our territory. So we have five strategies of development. But we don't call it a plan of capitalist development, but one of ethnic development, a Guarani development. Which means without destroying our identity, without forgetting our culture, in keeping with our won way of being. It is a development that will permit the resurgence of the Guarani people, on the political level as well as the educational, economic and social realms.

SAIIC: As a young Guarani, Enrique Camargo, what are the teachings that the great captain Mateo Chumira leaves you with?

EC: Well, as I have delineated our strategy, I am responsible for education, we are sure about what we are doing. For example, some are critical and we too criticize some extremely anthropological tendencies, who say we must hold our line. We have to maintain the

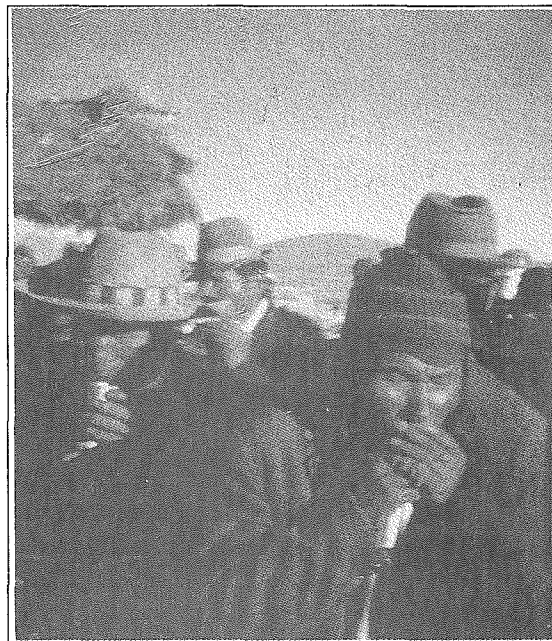


Photo SAIIC

# BOLIVIA

status quo; to maintain our belief system, this would mean to remain marginalized. So, we want to advance a little more while keeping our culture and way of life intact.

This is our goal. We have intercultural bi-lingual education programs for elementary school aged children. We are now developing a program to the third grade. We want to expand to include up to the fifth grade and after that a middle school. In the middle school there will be more linguistic and cultural courses for the recapturing of our own identity and the strengthening of our unity. Another aspect of the program is the literacy campaign. We started on the 28th of January, precisely on the 100th anniversary of the last defeat we suffered. We forced the government to make official intercultural bi-lingual education. We have contributed to the country the officialization of the inter-cultural bi-lingual education. Not only for the Guarani, but also for the Quechua and the Aymara. So since the president, Jaime Paz, has visited us, this is not to sell out because he wanted to ascertain whether or not we exist as a people. So his visit was an opportunity for him to ascertain that we do exist. Well, that was when we launched the literacy campaign. The function of the literacy campaign is not just to solve the problem of knowing how

to read and write but to keep the oppressive system from taking advantage of our ignorance. So we, as of the 28th of January, commemorate the last battle and beginning the commemoration of the 500th anniversary to make this period between the 28th of January and the 12th of October the great literacy campaign and eradicate illiteracy. This is our goal. So we plan on making 20,000 Guarani literate in two different ways. Those who don't know how to read and write will learn to read and write in Guarani. Those who are literate in Spanish will learn how to read and write in Guarani. This is what we call the Guaraniization mode. But the goal isn't only reading and writing but the awakening of our people.

So we think that it is very important because ignorance is not only measured in the ability to read and write, but also in the extent to which one has been assimilated and alienated. So, we want an educational system that awakens self-reflection, that is

a liberating education. That is our goal.

SAIIC: What do you think, Mateo Chumira, when the young people organize themselves for their own struggle?

MC: As a veteran I have fought for those goals. I am happy that the young people have taken up the struggle for education. So I see with my own eyes that we are gaining ground even though we are new at this.

SAIIC: From your vantage point, how do you view your people?

MC: I would like to say that I in my advanced years I have been able to see what I desired when I was young: liberation, liberty. Since I was eight I have noticed that my father and others were enlisted by the police to perform forced labor. So, my beliefs came from seeing the Guarani people organize themselves. What's more, I don't have much of an education, I know how to read and write, nothing more. With my authority which comes from the people I have set the goal that the young people be able to move forward. As Guarani we have been forgotten.

SAIIC: Do you think that the so called Bolivians know about the Guarani?

MC: One time, in front of the Bolivian Congress a senator said that where we live "there aren't any people." So I started thinking that they haven't counted us as peoples but as animals. This is because there weren't very many capitalists in our region but those capitalists were "people." That has given me the strength, a kind of Guarani pride that the Guarani are undertaking education. Because in the past, we have not had technicians, agronomers, or engineers, not to mention lawyers. But in the future we will be able to accomplish more with the help of our friends in solidarity. That's why we are here.

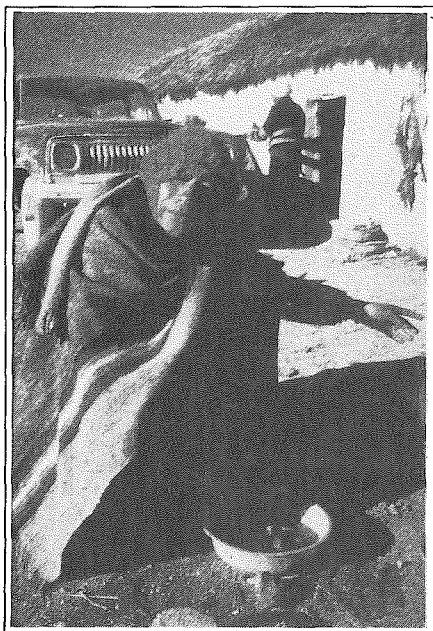
SAIIC: Are there any last remarks?

MC: Yavetun pandiveno opati payrupibareta Italia, po pate Europa.

SAIIC: Enrique?

EC: Tunpandiveno, opaetepekare ocuatentanareta ieyku, ubujipulpi bae, ipotameteyarami ieyku iporebareyret.

This means that we are calling upon the unity of all the indigenous people of the new continent, which is really an old continent, wrongly called America. In the end, its not names that are important. What's important to us is the unity that we need to have to be able to overcome the frequent obstacles that are imposed upon us.



Bolivian. Photo SAIIC

# BOLIVIA

## ***Indigenous People of Beni ask for the expulsion of DEA agents from Bolivia***

Bolivia - The indigenous communities of the Isiburo-Securé National Park, south of Beni, ratified a document denouncing the agents of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as a threat to the Bolivian people and made a public demand for the expulsion of DEA agents from Bolivia. The demand was announced on July 7, 1992, in San Lorenzo de Mojos, and broadcast at noon of the same day by a local radio station.

This indigenous position is in response to the detention of two indigenous leaders within a four-day period, and to the seizure of their radio equipment, which was part of a network installed with international aid. Furthermore, indigenous people testified that the anti-drug agents are constantly entering their homes without permission, and destroying everything in their path. Also condemned were the abuses which have taken place in Trinidad, the regional capital, where the home of a university professor was "erroneously" broken into by agents.

The indigenous statement declares that the presence of armed agents from the United States is "not only for the purpose of fighting drug trafficking, but also for the purpose of taking over our country, step by step." It asks the Bolivian government to "not allow yourselves to be manipulated by the Gringos".

Meanwhile, the Bolivian national government has given assurances that there will be no further instances of the assaults and abuses for which the DEA has been denounced. Carlos Saavedra, Minister of the Interior, promised the Central Office of Indigenous Peoples of Beni (CPIB) that there would be no further assaults on the communities under the pretext of the "war on drugs".

News of these events was taken to La Paz, the capital of Bolivia, by the leader Marcial Fabricano, president of the Sub Central de Cabildos of the Isiboro-Securé National Park, who met with Minister Saavedra. As Fabricano pointed out, the indigenous radio network, consisting of approximately 30 stations and dedicated to the purpose of helping the indigenous movement unify, promote, and defend itself, has been fully authorized by Carlos Aponte, the governmental head of Transport and Communications.

source: Presencia, Bolivia

## **ACADEMY FOUNDED IN BOLIVIA FOR THE STUDY OF AYMARA, QUECHUA, AND INDIGENOUS CULTURE**

In the southern part of the city of Oruro, on the 21st of June of 1992, the Academy of Native Languages "Tawantisuyo" was inaugurated, along with an attendant radio station and printing press. As part of the inauguration, and to ensure the success of the project, a "Wilancha", or ritual sacrifice of a white llama, was offered to the Samaris, Pukaras, and the Pachamama (Andean Gods and Earth Goddess). The mayor and the military commander of the province were not present, although they had been invited to attend.

The fundamental objective of the academy - as stated by its director, professor Domingo Choque - is that students be able to speak and write their native languages, and thus shed their Westernized acculturation. For the students to obtain the title of Technician in Native Languages, they have to complete three years of study.

At the present time, the center consists of 16 students and four instructors who give classes in Aymara, Quechua, anthropology, Andean music, and Andean technology. (The last three are supplementary subjects.) The monthly fee for attending the academy is 35 Bolivares, ( US \$15) but since the students have limited financial resources, the faculty council is studying the possibility of lowering the fees.

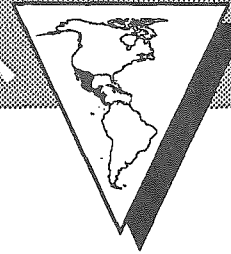
"Many people speak of the need to reclaim our cultures, but in practice, they lower their heads. Is that because of shame, an inferiority complex, or a superiority complex? This sad reality has obliged me to create this academy," said professor Choque.

As part of the academy, a radio station called "Pusisuyo" was created. "Pusisuyo" means the "four suyus", or four areas which formed the Tawantinsuyo, or ancient Incan empire.

The radio station transmits at 1590 KHz AM, and has a range of approximately seventy kilometers. "From this moment on, this radio station will serve as an official voice of the giant which is awakening," said professor Choque, in reference to the Aymara, Quechua, Guarani, and other indigenous peoples.

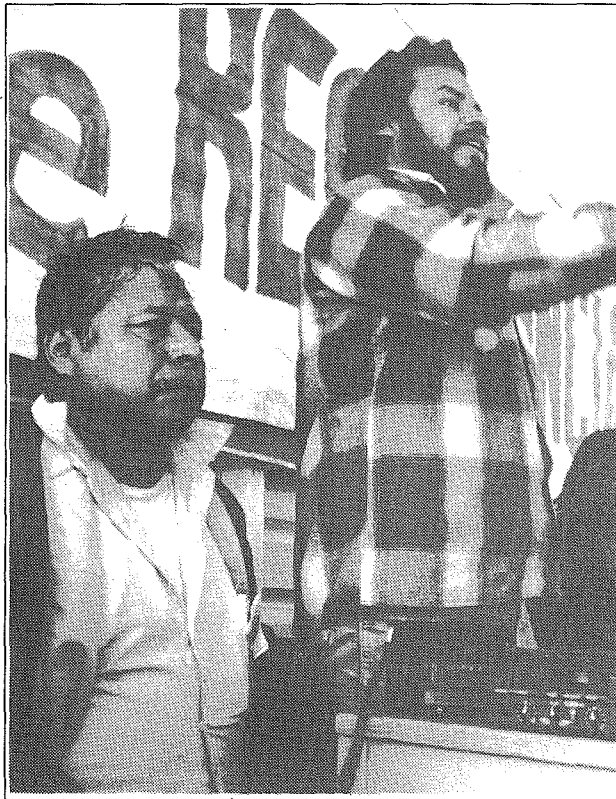
According to him, about \$8,000 was invested in the creation of the station, and another \$2,500 for the press, which utilizes a manually-operated printing press. "Many people have thought that the creation of the radio station depended upon some foreign-based project, but no one has given me a cent. It has all been the result of my own efforts, of more than eight years of work teaching, and of the efforts of my family. I feel I have set forth an example for them, and for my larger Aymara family," said the professor.

source: Seminario AQUI, Bolivia



## MEXICO

### MEXICO TODAY: TIME TO TAKE CONTROL OF OUR LAND



Margarito Ruiz. Photo SAIIC

AN INTERVIEW  
WITH  
MARGARITO  
RUIZ, GENERAL  
COORDINATOR OF  
THE INDEPENDENT  
INDIAN PEOPLES'  
FRONT.

Margarito Ruiz is a Tojolobal Maya from the state of Chiapas in Mexico. He is the General Coordinator of the Independent Indian Peoples' Front (FIPI) which was founded in 1988 as an umbrella organization for the different indigenous people of Mexico. According to Margarito, there are 15 to 18 million Indians in Mexico, belonging to 56 different Peoples. The

Mayans in Mexico number about 400,000.

SAIIC: What are the main problems facing Indigenous people in Mexico today?

Margarito Ruiz: Land tenancy remains a very large problem. There are about 6,000 Indians in jail in Mexico today, and most of them are there for trying to organize their people to recover their land.

SAIIC: We understand that the Mexican government is proposing to change the *ejido* land tenancy system. Can you explain a little about that?

MR: Following the Mexican Revolution and the Constitution of 1917, the government began to distribute land. Three kinds of land tenancy were established: communal land, which belonged to Indigenous communities, private land, and the *ejido* system. *Ejidots* were small parcels of land which, by law, could not be sold. In the 1940's and 50's, credit programs for

agriculture were developed, but along with these programs came the pressure to increase production and to use technologies which were not part of our traditions, such as the use of chemical fertilizers. At the same time, corruption began. The Rural Bank and the Agricultural Security Bank, which were the government banks that gave credit to Indigenous people in the *ejidos* or communal land, sent out inspectors. The inspectors offered to report back that the crops had failed completely, and thus that the loans could not be repaid, if the Indians gave them a percentage. So after a while the Indians stopped paying back the loans completely and got used to crop failures. Thus today there is no real production in the rural sector. About three or four years ago, these banks began to fail and last year they collapsed completely, with losses of billions of pesos. The government concluded that the *ejido* system had never worked, *ejidos* were not productive, and they should therefore be returned to private property. In order to do this, they changed article 27 of the Constitution, thus allowing all lands to be sold. The logical conclusion of this change is a return to private property and large haciendas, this time owned not only by national capital, but also by transnational capital. This means that there will be foreign *patrones* and the Indians will once again end up in slavery.

SAIIC: Have they begun to sell the land?

MR: Something very important is happening. On the one hand, many communities are still being manipulated by the government, and thus in many places the land is being sold. But most of the communities are reacting instead in a way that is very natural for Indigenous Peoples: they are organizing independently to defend their lands. Some communities in remote regions have never even heard of Article 27, yet they have already have their own declarations. They just heard that their lands are in danger. They have held general assemblies, passed motions, and said that whoever wants to sell his land can leave. So a few people



# MEXICO

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leave, and the land stays in the community. So, in many areas, this law just will not work.

Some areas are very well organized, whether affiliated with us or not. Whole regions have organized and held meetings of twenty or thirty communities and said that nothing will be sold here, on the contrary; we want to reclaim the private property which exists in this area and restore it as indigenous communal property.

SAIIC: It seems then that there is a strong movement where the people want to stay in their communities and live on the land of their ancestors, live in the way that their ancestors did.

MR: In the work that we do, in coordination with other organizations, we always seek to educate people about the importance of the land rights for indigenous peoples. Why must we talk about territory? For us, our territory has always existed. It's just that the governments, the national states, began to divide the territory. They gave us little pieces of land, little ejidos, and often rigged land titles do that we would end up fighting amongst ourselves. They also separated us. Often an indigenous region falls within several different municipalities, and at times within several different states. In our workshops — when we begin speaking about our history and how we have always lived here, how we did not arrive 500 years ago but that they began invading us 500 years ago — the people feel profoundly moved, feel moved with great love for taking care of the Earth and protecting it, regaining the land we have lost, reviving the forests which have been destroyed. For this reason we are sure that the project of the indigenous movement — indigenous unity, indigenous liberation, the regaining of indigenous territory, self-government and self-determination, indigenous administration of natural resources — all this will come to pass.

SAIIC: Do you also foresee a strengthening of the indigenous culture, traditions, and knowledge?

MR: In this respect we speak of our elders. The elders are the best teachers, who know the history of each of the communities. What is happening today? Our elders are speaking of our medicine, and now indigenous medicine, natural medicine is experiencing a very powerful and very interesting resurgence in all indigenous regions. This is so despite the difficulties, for instance the churches, both Catholic and Protestant. Alongside our medicine, our music, our dance, our way of thinking - indigenous philosophy which emphasizes the relation-

ship between human beings and the natural world and a sense of community — all of these are growing. In many cases, if there are difficulties within an indigenous community for whatever reason, when one begins to speak about indigenous history, indigenous wisdom, a new feeling of solidarity begins to grow, which carries a more communitarian, collective approach with it. It is very impressive to see this happening. For this reason we feel that we are not inventing this project, but rather that we are taking part in a larger project which already exists, ancient so that everyone, especially young people, can begin to get to know one another.

SAIIC: How do the Indigenous people of Mexico see this anniversary of the 500 Years in October, and what do you have planned?

MR: We have always been against the idea of the so-called meeting of two cultures. There was never such a meeting; it was instead a clash. We see that 500 years ago a war for survival began when we were invaded, and that war has not ended. The struggle has not yet ended. Thus, for the last four or five years, we have had a mobilization on the 12th of October, and a march to the main square in Mexico City. But this year there will be a national march led by the indigenous movement, and in coordination with the student, labor, campesino, and other movements. There will be two marches, one coming from the north and one from the south. Indian groups from all over Mexico will join in along the way, and the two marches will meet on October 11 in La Villa, in the State of Mexico, not so much because of Guadalupe as in honor of Tonantzin.

SAIIC: What is the purpose of the march? What message do you want to carry?

This march will be very different from other political marches in that it will be a Sacred March of the Peoples, with indigenous music and ceremonies along the way, with flowers and candles and dances. The march will bring the message of the existence and  
*Continued on page 26*



*Chinanteca woman. Photo Liz Reid*

—from page 25

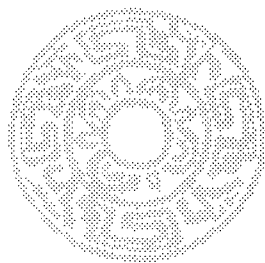
presence of indigenous people today, and of our present indigenous project. It will not just be a rejection of the quinqucentenary, but rather a march where we seek to negotiate with the government regarding the concrete demands of the indigenous communities. That is why we are working on obtaining an audience with the President of Mexico for the 12th of October.

SAIIC: How do the Native people in Mexico see the project of continent-wide networking, for example the Indigenous Continental Coordinating Committee which met in Panama and in New York — how do you see the future of this re-encounter?

I believe that it is something which has emerged from the needs of the indigenous communities themselves. That is to say, it did not arise from a group of indigenous people having an interest which lies outside of historical reality. It has emerged because it had to emerge; and if this is so, then we believe that it will have a great future. A true indigenous unity, with a political and philosophical understanding, an understanding of the current situation of the continent and of the world, of the danger facing humanity in the form of the destruction of Nature, of our environment, and of the danger arising from the wars that Western culture continues to create.

Indigenous people feel that we have a great responsibility to share the wisdom that has been down-trodden for 500 years. This wisdom is now emerging. We, as responsible human beings whose fate it was to live in this era, are privileged to be able to reclaim this knowledge in order to disseminate it among our indigenous communities, but also among the dominant and racist society, in order to carry a message of humanity that will allow dehumanized humans to become human once more.

The great work of the indigenous peoples is to reach the racist, destructive society in order to show them that we are human, that they are human, and that therefore we all deserve respect and mutual help as human beings in this world.



## CONGRESS OF INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

The Second National Congress and Continental Encounter of Indigenous Traditional Medicine People took place in Mexico City, at the Palace of Medicine, from August 11 - 15, 1992. There were more than 400 participants, including representatives from the 52 organizations of indigenous traditional medicine people of Mexico, delegates from indigenous organizations of most Latin-American countries and also from the State of Arizona, USA; as well as specialists and academics working in the area of traditional medicine.

The meeting had three sessions: Speeches by Traditional Medicine People Session; the Academic Session and the Plenary Session of Conclusions and Proposals. The concurrent workshops included themes such as "Traditional Medicine and Systems of Health Care", "Organizing Strategies for Indigenous Medicine People", "Traditional Medicine and the Legal System", "Honoring and Defending Indigenous Medicine and Medicine People", "Long and Short term Programs within each Country," and

"Cooperation between Doctors and Indigenous Medicine".

At the site of the conference were exhibitions of medicinal herbs and pharmaceuticals prepared by traditional medicine men of the different delegations. There was also an exposition of Mexican traditional medicine entitled "Past, Present, and Future of Traditional Medicine", where ritual objects and video-tapes of ceremonies were displayed. Through the use of computers, visitors could access information about the main illnesses affecting indigenous populations.

The Congress arrived at many important conclusions and recommendations aimed at governments, international organizations, universities and the indigenous organizations. A book is forthcoming which will contain the bulk of the proceedings and outcomes of this Encounter.

For more information, please contact:

Lic. Carlos Zolla Luque o Biol. Arturo Argueta Villamar

Instituto Nacional Indigenista, Subdireccion de Salud y Bienestar Social

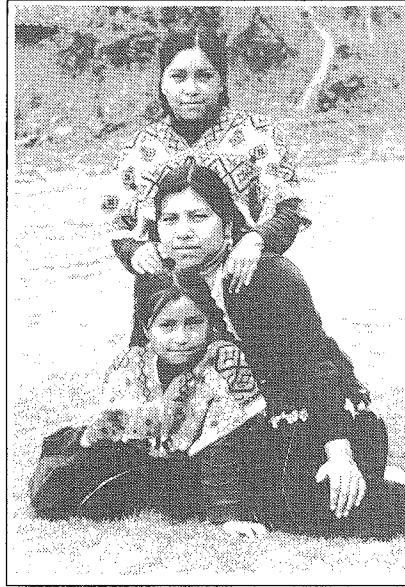
AV. Revolucion 1279, Col. Tlacopac

01040 MEXICO, DF

Tel: 651-4908 Fax: 593-2875

# MEXICO

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*Three Maya women from Chiapas, Mexico. Photo Liz Reid*

## *The First International Meeting of the Indian Press*

Thirty three representatives of all the countries of the Americas, with the exception of Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay, Honduras, and Nicaragua, attended a three-day First International Meeting of the Indian Press in Mexico City from April 28-30, 1992 with the purpose of evaluating the situation of autonomous Indigenous presses and their current networking. Carlos Briceño, of "Desenmascaremos el 92" (Let's unmask 1992) from Madrid, Spain, and Pierre Marande of Sami Radio, Sweden participated in the three day event as well. Messages of support were received by the organizers, Genaro Bautista, Natividad Gutierrez, Zobeyda Quinones and Otilio Atanasio, board members of ETNIAS, an Indian publication based in Mexico City.

The main resolutions emphasize the need to constitute an active networking amongst indigenous peoples of the Americas, the Sami people, and all indigenous communication organizations who respect and promote the autonomy and self-determination of Indigenous peoples of the Abya Yala Continent.

In an interview with SAIIC, Genaro Bautista, said: "The meeting was a success. Although some delegates could not arrive on time, most of them let us know they were supportive of the Indigenous information networking. They saw it as a reality which will be maintained alive because of the interest of the Indigenous peoples". Natividad Gutierrez, a very active member of the ETNIAS team shared her opinion with SAIIC stressing that: "The Continental communication of Indigenous

peoples is a need that can no longer wait, Indigenous peoples have to share experiences, and be supportive of our presses in order to disseminate important information".

After the three days of discussions it was agreed that the members would maintain contact and work together with CONIC, the Continental Indigenous Coordinating Commission, of which the general assembly was informed in detail. All delegates, as potential journalists, will act as responsible correspondents in their own countries, and will distribute the information to all participating members and other Indigenous journalists interested in becoming part of this Continental network.

In the U.S., SAIIC will continue to play a communicator role, and will channel membership to this Continental indigenous press organization.

The presence of major Indigenous newspapers, magazines and journals was missed, and delegates wished to have had the chance to meet representatives of la Taller de Historia Oral Andina (Aymara, Bolivia), The Lakota Times (USA), Yuwitaya Lakota, The Tonantzin Land Institute (New Mexico, USA), Gary S. Trujillo, of the NativeNet email system, and other established Indigenous press and journalists.

For further information contact: ETNIAS, Madero 67-611, Centro, Mexico, DF. 06000.

*See declaration on the following page.*

# MEXICO

## THE MEXICO DECLARATION

Indigenous journalists and communicators of the Americas (ABYA YALA) and Sami Land (Sweden, Norway, Finland and ex-USSR), attending the FIRST INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER OF THE INDIAN PRESS, in Mexico City from April 28 to the 30th, 1992, declare the following:

After having evaluated the role of the press, in general, and in regard to our problems as Indigenous peoples; after analyzing, commenting and proposing informative criteria of our news and information broadcasting, and transmission among indigenous journalists and communicators; after critically analyzing the effects the European invasion caused on the Indigenous peoples of the Continent, and what the "Celebration" of the Quincentennial means to the Indigenous peoples', and considering the rise and development of our own means of Indigenous communication as the

first step to recuperate and strengthen our identities so weakened by nation-states policies of integration and or extermination, and because of the consumer ideology of the cultural monopolies

### WE DECLARE:

1. That we do not agree with the image of Indigenous peoples presented by non-Indigenous means of communication. Usually, this image does not correspond to Indigenous daily life because, such images, are produced by non-Indigenous communicators who ignore specific problems that our peoples face, as well as distort our own image due to ethnocentrist visions which misinterpret the way different Indigenous communities of the Continent think and behave. These centralist attitudes and the lack of adequate information reinforce the stereotyping which the media present to the society in general, in relation to the life and history of our Indigenous peoples.

2. That the Indigenous press is the legitimate instrument of our peoples and that it will transform the distorted images of contemporary indigenous cultures.

3. That the Indigenous press will be the means by which to openly inform, without commitment to governmental and private interests, about the plunder, injustices, and trampling experienced by the Indigenous peoples of the Continent. Also, through this Indigenous press, Indigenous voices can alert the concerned international community about the irreversible damage caused by transnational companies on current ecosystems within our territories; as well as individual and collective human rights violations of Indigenous peoples.

4. That we reject the festive nature of the so-called Celebration of the Discovery of America, or "Encounter of Two Worlds", because, other than remembering the massacres of our ancestors, it presupposes the reaffirmation of economic, political, social and cultural dependent links of Indigenous peoples to national societies in general, and in relation to the hegemony of economically and militarily powerful countries.

5. Also, we reject the use of funds allocated for these kind of festivities because it only serves to justify indigenist and neocolonial policies of governments throughout the Americas, and it does not help to concretely solve the structural problems which the Indigenous peoples and other impoverished sectors of these societies in this Continent live under.

6. We manifest our strong protest to the Mexican Government for presenting obstacles in the issuing of visas in favor of Indigenous press delegates attending this First Continental Meeting of the Indigenous Press. This problem was carried on by Mexican consulates and embassies in the American Continent, particularly consulates in Central and South America; as well as by the lack of confidence of immigration officials in Mexico City in accepting the legitimate origin of legal identity of Indigenous delegates.

Because of all these,

### WE DEMAND

1. That all means of communication provide space to the free expression of the Indian press, because it is the legitimate voice of the Indigenous peoples. These spaces will be coordinated by

Indigenous journalists and Indigenous communicators who belong to indigenous journals.

2. Equal treatment to Indigenous and non-Indigenous journalists during the development of their professional tasks.

3. Freedom of movement of Indigenous journalists and communicators throughout the countries of the Americas and the World during the development of their informative tasks.

4. Respect for the physical integrity of Indigenous journalists and communicators throughout the different countries of the Continent.

Mexico City, April 30, 1992

Among the participants were publication coordinators of the following newspapers, journals:

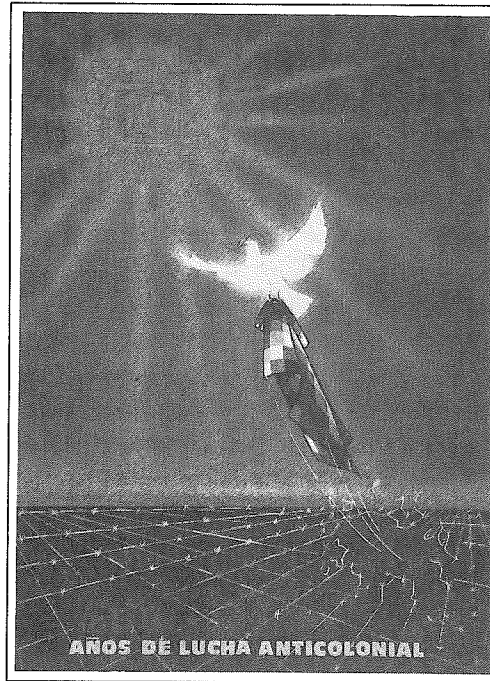
AIDSESP (Peru)  
COOPA (Costa Rica)  
CHIRAPAQ (Peru)  
SANS RESERVE, Communications Autochtones (Montreal, Canada)  
GRUMIN-Grupo-Mulher (Brazil)  
SAIIC (Oakland, California, USA)  
OYENDU-CIDOB (Bolivia)  
Nuestra Palabra, Instituto Nacional Indigenista (non-Indian), (Iztapalapa, Mx)  
SIGU (Kuna, Panama)  
Unidad Indigena, ONIC (Colombia)  
El Tequio - Mixteco (Fresno, California, USA)  
COTLA (Canoga Park, CA, USA)  
TV-Canal "6 de Julio" (Mexico)  
BINIGULAZAA (Oaxaca, Mex)  
ETNIAS (Mexico)  
SEJECTO, La Voz del Indio (Costa Rica)  
AUKIN VOZ MAPUCHE (CHILE)  
M.A.Y.A.S. (Guatemala)  
Cultura Huichol (Mexico)  
El Financiero, Sistema Nacional de Informacion Indigena (Mexico)  
Consejo Nacional de la Cultura Maya (Mexico)  
Sami Radio (Sweden)  
Casa de la Unidad del Pueblo (Mexico)  
Rutjzil (Guatemala)  
INFORCOOPA (COSTA RICA)  
Visitor: Elisa Avendano, AD-MAPU (Chile)



# COSTA RICA

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## Costa Rican Indians March to Commemorate Day of the Native American



*Ruben Darío Peñaranda – Quechua,  
second prize, poster contest, "500 Años  
de Lucha Anticolonial". MRTKL,  
Bolivia, 1992*

The national Hamorogo Council, comprised of grassroots organizations representing all of Costa Rica's indigenous communities, organized a great march on April 19, 1992 with the participation of 17 (of a total of 21) "Indian Reservations." The marchers who represented 6 Indian Nations from throughout Costa Rica, walked to the city of Buenos Aires de Puntarenas — some walked for more than ten hours. In the Buenos Aires de Puntarenas district, four of the country's eight Indian Nations live in six "Indian Reservations."

Approximately 1000 children, women, elderly, sutias & traditional leaders participated in the march. The marchers represented the Guaymí, Bribri, Cabecar, Maliku, Brukaj and Teribes Nations.

The marchers called on the government, public and private institutions, and the general public to respect their historical rights to land and culture. Using banners & posters, each community identified its principal concerns, from which we have extracted the following:

1) Solution the land problem, by granting commu-

nal property titles and the means to produce them.

2) Constitutional recognition of the historic rights of the indigenous populations in the framework of a multicultural as well as a multinational state.

3) That the legislative assembly ratify the 169 Treaty of the International Labor Organization (ILO), which recognizes the rights of the indigenous population.

4) Stop permitting the exploitation of the natural resources in territories that belong to indigenous people.

5) No to the construction of the inter-oceanic highway on indigenous territory, which we consider an aggression against nature and culture.

6) No to the construction of the Hydroelectric power plant in Boruca, which would displace more than 40 indigenous and *campesino* communities.

7) Opposition to the negative and disrespectful politics of the National Commission of Indigenous Affairs, which is declared to be displeasing to all indigenous communities all over the country.



## THIRD CONTINENTAL MEETING

The Third Meeting of the Continental Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Nations and Organizations took place in Panama from September 24 to 27, 1992. The Meeting was originally planned for Chile, but lack of resources forced the Commission to hold the Meeting in Panama. This was the third meeting following the meetings in Panama in December 1991 and in New York in March 1992.

Delegates from fourteen different Indian nations of South and Central America and Mexico, attended the meeting. Indigenous people of North America were represented by the Indigenous Peoples Alliance (IPA).

The Continental Commission reaffirmed the objectives and principles established in the previous meetings, which include the following:

1. To seek Indigenous unity on a continental level, recognizing that we have a common past and present, and that we have decided to work together beyond the year 1992, respecting the situation and strategies which each Indigenous Nation may adopt to reach their liberation and self-determination.
2. To develop a continental communication network which would directly involve the grass-roots communities in order to strengthen our ties and make known the critical situation in which we the Native Peoples live, and seek solutions for our future.
3. To promote a process leading to dialogue and consensus based on our spiritual values, life styles and

millennial knowledge.

4. To form a common alliance to reconstruct our Nations which were dispersed by colonization and to fight to curb the destruction of our Mother Earth and her harmony.

The Commission will organize a Second Continental Indigenous Encounter in Mexico for July 1993. The meeting will be hosted by the Independent Indian People's Front and the Yalalteca People of Oaxaca. The Continental Indian Commission will meet on December 8 and 9 to plan the Continental Meeting in Mexico. The First Continental Indigenous Encounter was held in Quito, Ecuador in June 1990.

The opening of the United Nations Year of Indigenous People will be on December 10, 1992 in New York. Three Indian representatives from the Continental Commission have been designated to address the UN at the opening ceremony.

The Association of Kunas United for Nabguana of Panama will continue as the continental coordinating office in cooperation with the regions.

For copies of the resolutions of these meetings of for more information contact Asociacion Kunas Unidos por Nabguana, Apartado 536, Panama 1, Panama; Phone (507) 63 88 79; Fax (507) 69 35 14 or Indigenous Peoples Alliance, c/o Tonantzin Land Institute, P.O. Box 40182, Albuquerque, NM 87196; Phone 505 766 9930; Fax 505 766 9931. Copies of the resolutions are also available from SAIIC.

# GUATEMALA



Calixta Gabriel. Photo SAIIC

## THE MAYAN SPIRIT LIVES

AN INTERVIEW WITH CALIXTA GABRIEL

SAIIC: What is your perspective on Mayan women?

CG: We as Mayan women have an important role, not only today, but historically as well. Within the Mayan cosmovision, there has

always existed a great respect for women. The function of women is seen as an integral part of our society.

Within the Mayan world view, woman is not oppressed. However, throughout time, we can see a growing separation between man and woman. I believe that our spirituality has been kept alive in our Mayan communities, and there are many women working in that area, especially in the field of health. There are many midwives who fulfill the important roles of nurses and psychiatrists and whose main role is to care for the women and the children. I believe in that sense, we are the teachers, the guides of the new generations.

In the spiritual aspect of the Mayan culture, there does not exist discrimination against women. There are Mayan women who are priests as well as the men, and they conduct their own ceremonies. The Mayan women priests carry out the same purpose and function as the Mayan men priests in regards to their celebrations and activities.

SAIIC: Is this how it was in the old days? Because it is said that machismo was a Spanish imposition carried out through the Church. How did this come about in Guatemala?

CG: According to the Popul Vuh, the sacred book of the Mayas and the Quiches, when human beings were created, there were four men and four women created originally — two where the sun rises, two where the sun sets, two where the air spirits live and two where the water spirits live. Thus, at no point in our own history were we told that women were

lesser beings. Rather in the story of creation, both man and woman have important roles. When Ixmukanec took the corn, he formed humans and that is why we are children of the corn. What that means is that the corn is the spirit of life, and it represents the nine months of pregnancy. In no instance is there a reference to woman being created from man. On the contrary, women are an important part of our history, and that is manifested in our lives, in the relationship of women with nature, with animals life, with all of life; there is no separation.

According to the Mayan *Naguales*, there are dual forces. There is duality of man and woman, and of woman and man, and this is manifested in spirits. There are very powerful spirits that accompany us and orient us toward our destiny so that we can fulfill our destiny of what we are here to do. This is not only for man, but for women as well — and in that sense it is never said that man is stronger than woman.

When the white people or the Spaniards came to invade our lands, they also enslaved the woman so that she could be their servant, their slaves. So that when the invasion took place, it did not just affect the men but it affected our whole culture. That is when the role of Mayan women began to change, and she had to begin to submit herself to another person who is seen as more powerful in order to protect her economic and political interests.

Christianity and Catholicism in Central America took advantage of this; they also came side by side with the invasion; they played a large part in the exploitation and displacement of our grandmothers. Not only did they divest them of their hierarchical, spiritual, social and political roles, but also in many instances they killed them.

So in spite of all of the oppression of the women, we have maintained a very strong spiritual position, because if that didn't exist, all respect would have been lost. And with all of the western education we have received, we would all be dead.

*Continued on page 32*

The following is excerpted from an interview with Calixta Gabriel, a Caqchikel Maya, of the Traditional Council of Guatemala. This interview was conducted by SAIIC on September 3, 1992

# GUATEMALA

—from page 31

SAICC: We hear a lot about Mayan spirituality, how it has not disappeared, but how it has been impacted by colonization and the imposition of foreign religions such as Christianity. Today, after 500 years, what is the state of Mayan religion?

CG: Well, there have been different stages. The political violence in our country has really battered our communities, and the life of the peoples in general. There have been times that have felt very hopeless, but after those lows new forces have emerged. For instance, many movements had not realized previously that religion is like the umbilical cord of the people, that spirituality is a very potent weapon for the survival of any peoples, of any nation. Spirituality is the root and the essence of culture. Thus, in the case of Guatemala, we can see that there are many people, especially students, who are trying to regain their spirituality. They have felt alone and isolated within an alienating educational system, and thus they have felt the need to regain their spirituality. Today there is a very strong movement of people who are taking up their cultural identity, and this gives me much hope.

If one does not look for it, it may not be apparent, but when one becomes involved, one sees how much spiritual activity is taking place. In Guatemala today, there are more than 5,000 Mayan priests, men and women, each one with his or her own specialties and qualities. Some are specialists in taking care of bones, others are specialists in prognosis, others in medicinal plants or in ancestral medicine, and others specialize in healings. It gives us much hope that there are people who still practice our religion despite the persecution. Our religion was being practiced secretly, because Christianity had threatened us, killed us, and accused our religion of being witchcraft, and of being evil. Many times even some Indigenous people may think this way, but it is not their fault. It is a foreign system that we are all wrapped up in, that attempts to destroy our culture, or force the disappearance of the Mayas and other Indigenous people.

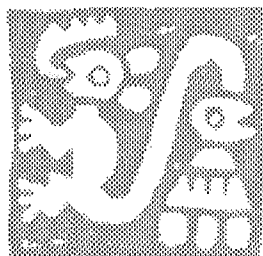
So right now there has been a reaction to all of the political violence; there are many more women and youth that have become involved, including Mayan priests, in various seminars, information exchanges, and workshops on the ethnic and national levels. For example, there have been some three-day gatherings, week-long gatherings, where for the first time Mayan

priests are showing themselves publicly and realizing that, "Yes, I am a Mayan priest. I can say, accept and be who I am." Before, it was something that people felt shy about, that was very hidden, but now everyone is rallying to the realization that this is their right. In Guatemala we have always had in our Constitution the right to freedom of religion, but before when it came to Mayan religion it was seen as a different matter altogether. Yet now we are reclaiming our spiritual place.

Presently, we are in the process of organizing a congress of Mayan priests and of the elders and spiritual leaders of other Indigenous people throughout the American continent, to be held around the time of the winter equinox—December 23, 1992. We hope to have the participation of Native elders from North America, South America and Mexico.

SAICC: As a spiritual woman and Mayan priest, do you have a message for your Indigenous sisters throughout the continent?

CG: My brothers and sisters of this continent, I believe there are no differences in the way we pray and think. I hope that even if we are told otherwise, we can truly feel our oneness. As the Popul Vuh says: "May no one go on ahead, may no one stay behind, may we all walk forth together;" this is the prophecy that we believe shall be fulfilled. It is also said that we will go and we will return. I believe that even in the case of indigenous groups where there are few survivors, we are not alone; the spirits of our ancestors, our grandparents live with us. I believe that their spirits have illuminated our wisdom so that we can continue to go forward, and so that there will be more of an encounter and spiritual exchange between ourselves as indigenous peoples, as well as cultural and maybe political exchange. I would like to say to our brothers and sisters that we acknowledge the existence of our relatives, and we ask to be included in your prayers for peace on this earth, our Mother Earth that embraces us in her arms, with her huipil. I would also like to say that may the heart of the sky and the earth give you many blessings and illuminate you. I hope that those of you who are able to can meet with us so that we can participate together, communicating and exchanging our experiences. May the heart of the sky, the spirit of the eagle, the spirit of the buffalo, of Quetzalcoatl and of the Condor illuminate all of my brothers and sisters. Thank you.





## *Violence against Mam Indians*

On July 21, 1992, a group of about 500 Maya Mam Indians from the town of Cajolá, Quezaltenango, was attacked by Guatemalan security forces while on a peaceful march to demand their right to the possession of their land. Several people, including children, were wounded. The protesters had just arrived in the capital, Guatemala City, and were gathered at the Plaza Mayor to demand a hearing and deliver their petitions to government officials. Moments after a delegation was received in City Hall, the riot police were given orders to remove the protesters from the Plaza by force. The Indians took refuge in the University of San Carlos, where they will remain until they get an answer from the government.

The Mam Indians have begun this mobilization because they have been removed from their own territory several times during the last four years. One of the region's landowners is claiming it as his own. However, according to a land title on file in the City of Quezaltenango, the Las Pampas del Horizonte ranch, which is in dispute, was granted to the inhabitants of Cajolá through an agreement signed in 1910 by then President of Guatemala Manuel Estrada Cabrera.

The land dispute of Las Pampas del Horizonte began on May 22, 1989, when the Mam Indians proceeded to take possession of their lands after obtaining the legal authorization from the National Institute of Agrarian Transformation (INTA). However, when the ranch's boundaries were marked off, it was found that Mariano Arévalo Bermujo, of Coatunco Ranch, had annexed the ranch as his own.

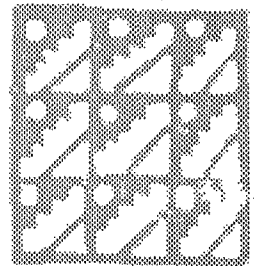
Since then, there has been a long process of tedious dealings with state entities. The Mam People have been subjected to violent attacks: ranches have been burned, crops have been destroyed, and they themselves have been physically seized and displaced. Having nowhere else to go, they set up camp in the road, hoping that the Serrano government would focus some attention on their situation. Eventually, they managed to

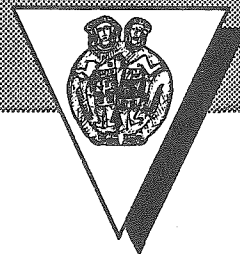
get a audience with the president. During this meeting, the president committed himself to solving the problem within 15 days by means of negotiation. This promise was not kept, forcing the Indigenous People to remain on the road. Exposed to bad weather, many of them became ill, and during this time about 20 children died of malnutrition.

In light of these abuses, the Mam organized a march to the Central Plaza to demand that the agreements made by the national government be kept. After three days, a few accomplishments were made, such as the formation of a tri-partite commission to look for a provisional ranch and to continue the legal process of re-surveying the Coatunco and Pampas del Horizonte ranches. Eventually it was decided that the government would proceed to hand over some of the territory to several families.

Preceding this, the Mam had waited over a year for the government to comply with the petitions they had presented. In view of this official negligence, they decided to occupy the ranch on May 1 with 500 families. They were legally represented by the mayor of the town of Cajolá. After a month of occupying the land, a court decision was made finding them guilty of usurpation; they were thrown off the land once again. In spite of this, within hours of their displacement, they went right back and retook possession of their lands. Another displacement took place May 19th, this time under the threat of forcible arrest.

At that time, the villagers returned to the road to set up camp. Faced with the harshness of elements, they decided to mobilize for their march on the capital. There they have received support from the inhabitants of the capital, from peasants and indigenous peoples, students, and union and church organizations, among others. At this moment, the president has decided to order the INTA to carry out an investigation of the case of Cajolá, and within a couple of weeks a decision is to be made in reference to the Mam demands.





## Indigenous Women's Gathering in Bolivia

THESE STATEMENTS  
WERE MADE BY  
WOMEN AT THE  
INDIGENOUS  
WOMEN'S SEMINAR,  
JUNE 28 - 30, 1992 IN  
SANTA CRUZ,  
BOLIVIA. THE  
GATHERING WAS  
SPONSORED BY THE  
WOMEN'S  
INTERNATIONAL  
LEAGUE FOR PEACE  
AND FREEDOM.

### INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND 500 YEARS OF RESISTANCE TESTIMONY BY LIDIA ANTTY — BOLIVIA

I would like to begin by saying that for us, as indigenous people, these 500 years have not been cause for a celebration. Instead, we are mourning the genocide and ethnocide that our indigenous nations of Abya Yala have suffered.

The violence carried out under the pretext of civilization has cost us the loss of our language. In our classrooms, we are prohibited from speaking our mother tongue, and wearing our own forms of dress. We are forced to change our eating habits, our health is endangered, and we are exposed to all that is harmful to us.

This is the way that many programs have been in Latin America, that is to say in our own nations. For example, OFASA arrives, telling us what we indigenous people should eat, and then the production of our own food diminishes. Along with that, they want to control our birth rates. As women, we ask ourselves, "Why do they want to exterminate us?"

Also in our towns and villages there is an exchange or barter economy. To them this seemed very dangerous, as it promotes much contact among ourselves. That is why they imposed the monetary system, so that what we create and produce

can turn into commerce.

A clear sign of this in Bolivia is the sale of land to foreign groups, because they say that foreigners generate income. As for us indigenous people, they say that we don't have the capacity to make a profit. That is what the capitalists say, and thus the government favors the

foreigners.

Before and after colonization, we women have had the power to make decisions. That is why when we exercise authority, we exercise it jointly as husband and wife. In fact, often the influence of the woman is greater, since she is the principal element within the home. Thus, we see that indigenous women are capable of deciding for themselves in their husband's absence.

Also in the name of civilization, religion personified in statues was introduced. How can a plaster God hear? However in our indigenous nation there exist our own gods. For example, for each activity a "Waji'a" or offering is made to the Earth Mother, thanking her for her gifts; and an offering is made to Tata Illimani thanking him for the rains, etc.

There exists much discrimination against our people and our communities, since we are seen as second- and third-class people, saying that we are like wild animals.

For us it is a humiliation, that investigations of our life-styles are carried out and published about us. Because we, as nations, can make known our own reality. We have the ability to write about our lives without putting Nature aside, without losing sight of all that surrounds us.

### INDIGENOUS SURVIVAL AND RESISTANCE

TESTIMONY BY GLORIDALIA GONZALES — PANAMA

After the conquest and colonization, those who remained on our Island devoted themselves to fishing and cultivating rice, corn, and coconuts. The women were the ones who took care of the seeds, watered, tended the plants, and harvested. At the same time, they were the ones who have maintained our culture, which they have transmitted to their children from generation to generation, thus preserving the wisdom and knowledge of the Kuna culture and people.



*Strong participation of women at the conference. Photo SAIIC*

Through the making of the MOLAS, and the CHAQUIRAS (beadwork) that we call WINI, we as Kuna women are the ones who provide a great part of the income of our communities and our families.

In sum, women have participated and continue to participate in production, women have been responsible for household income, for culture, handicrafts, plant knowledge, and family unity within the Kuna communities.

While recognizing women's participation in Resistance and in survival, we see that they still remain marginalized and discriminated against, both without and within their own culture.

While indigenous men are marginalized in relationship to non-indigenous men, in terms of education, health, work, and political life, that is to say in all spheres, it hurts us to see that indigenous women are marginalized and oppressed for their condition 1) as women, 2) as poor people, and 3) as indigenous people.

So we have the situation that regarding education, the majority of indigenous women are illiterate and as a result do not have jobs. If a Kuna woman and a Kuna man perform a job, the woman receives a lesser salary. The same thing happens in our political life. For example, in our community congress we do not have the right to vote nor to speak. This does not mean that we want our Kuna brothers to lose their rights, rather that we have the right to participate and exercise the same rights as them.

I want to emphasize that even if we obtain these same rights, that is not even a small portion of the rights of indigenous peoples, both men and women, that we are struggling for. As indigenous women we participate in and lay claim to the struggles of indigenous communities, and it is on their behalf that we ask that the struggle of indigenous women be a part of this great effort to reclaim our culture and our rights, which were taken from us 500 years ago.

Again I point out that through our participation, we maintain our own culture and identity. We have been protagonists in the history of the Resistance and survival of our communities. Today we demand that our rights be recognized, that the blood of our anonymous women who fought culture be recognized, for having allowed me, my daughter, my mother, and my people to be here today, 500 years later.

And in honor to her, to that original Kuna woman, our mola workshop bears her name, KIKADIRYAI. She was the first woman who taught us to sew and to design molas; who maintained the mola tradition throughout the years, which has been the economic base for many Kuna families over time.

The resistance and survival that the Kuna women had in face of the Spanish, is the same that we have today in face of the North American government.

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

TESTIMONY BY CARMEN GUALÁN — ECUADOR

We Indians have the right to life, not death; to land, not poverty; to education, not ignorance; and to create our own political strategies based on Indian thought. We have the right to our territories where we can develop our culture, because the Earth is Mother to the Indians. We have a right to our own medicine, our own diet, our own government, our own laws.

We have the right to our own original spirituality, to our own traditions. As women, we want our children to be respected, that they not be vaccinated with chemi-



*Delegates to the conference in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.*

Photo SAIIC

cal medicines. That our mothers not be controlled by contraceptives.

As women and as communities, we want to participate in the national parliament, where we can express and shape what we want and feel.

Enough of 500 years of exploitation and marginalization, where Indians have not been respected. We do not want any more machismo, but want for men and women together to have the same rights.

As women, we are the base of an organization, we are the ones who maintain our culture, identity, and traditions. We are the ones who truly cultivate the earth.

We also want for our Indian doctors to be respected, because we want the right to have our own hospitals. We want all of these to be respected — our hills and mountains, our sacred places, the lakes, the animals, our land, the sky —, because they are all sacred to our people; but to the capitalists these are only things to use for business. They believe that they own the whole world, they divide it up amongst themselves, only to make themselves richer and richer.

# 500 YEARS OF INDIAN RESISTANCE

## EVENTS

### ECUADOR OIL CAMPAIGN MEETING

The meeting entitled "Popular Strategy and Alliance for the Oil Exploitation in the Ecuadorian Amazon" will be held in Coca, Ecuador from September 26-28, 1992.

The Ecuadorian indigenous organizations: CONAIE, CONFENIAE, and FCUNAE; the Oil Workers Union (FETRAPEC); the environmental coalition "Campaña: Amazonia por la Vida", and Observatorio Socio-Ambiental de la Amazonia are organizing a working meeting to develop a unified strategy between indigenous people, workers, ecologists and international organizations to campaign against the oil exploitation in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This meeting is a unique occasion where all the parties affected by the oil industry will meet to develop a united platform.

For more information contact Observatorio Socio-Ambiental de la Amazonia, Tel: 593-2-506-617 or 593-2-550-658 or Accion Ecologica, Tel: 593-2-547-516. P.O. Box 17-15-246C, Quito, Ecuador.

### SECOND KUNA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The Second Kuna Women's Conference will be held in the Kuna community of Dad Nakue Dupbir in Kuna Yala, Panama from September 25 to 27.

For more information contact Fanny Avila Elea, Taller de Mujeres Kunas, Apartado Postal 536, Panama 1, Panama. Tel: (507) 63-40-27, Fax: (507) 69-35-14

### HONEY BEE

An informal quarterly newsletter to document innovations produced by farmers, artisans and farm workers; generate debate around sustainable alternatives based on people's knowledge systems among farmers, scientists, political leaders and social activists and lobby for protecting intellectual property rights of grassroots innovators.

*Honey Bee* asks farmers to contribute specific innovations in the field of sustainable technologies and institutions with the name and address of the innovating individuals and/or community.

You can receive a four issue subscription to *Honey Bee* by sending \$30 to *Honey Bee*, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, Vastrapura - 380 015, India

### INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNALS OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The International Tribunals of the World's Indigenous Peoples will be held from December 12-16, 1992 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Indigenous Peoples' Alliance and the Continental Indigenous Coordinating Committee (CONIC) endorsed the proposal to host regional tribunals on a continental level on issues of Indigenous sovereignty and rights, and to deliver a report of the findings to the United Nations in 1993.

A council of 12 Indigenous Listeners will be formed to hear the testimony of the Indian Nations and prepare the report.

Indigenous Nations, organizations and community groups who are interested in giving testimony should contact the Indigenous Peoples Alliance, P.O. Box 40192, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87196. The North American Tribunal of Indigenous Peoples and Oppressed Nations

### THE NORTH AMERICAN TRIBUNAL

Will be held from October 2 to 4, 1992 in San Francisco, CA, led by the American Indian Movement. This gathering will hear testimony and hold discussions about the massive, systematic violations of human rights and international law against people of color within the US and the right to self-determination for these peoples and the release of political prisoners and prisoners of war in the US.

For more information contact the American Indian Movement, 2940-16th Street, #104, San Francisco, CA 94103; Phone (415) 552-1992; Fax (415) 431-1492

### REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Program will be aired on Deep Dish Cable TV on December 15 and 17, 1992. Six indigenous leaders from Central and South American discuss the 500 Years Campaign, which began as an Indian response to the Quincentenary celebration and has developed as an ongoing dialogue among indigenous activists. Produced by the South and Meso American Indian Information Center.

For more information contact Deep dish TV Network, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012; Phone (212) 273-8933; Fax (212) 420-8223



CONFERENCES



# PERU, CON'T.

*-from page 13*

Thus we have seen a great need to organize ourselves, to gain strength through unity, to develop common understandings in order to be able to solve our problems.

We do not only want to make demands, but also to propose solutions to how we can solve the grave problems we face in the Amazon. We have developed strategies around how to safeguard our territories. We need large territories for our people, not just titles to small plots of land, because in that way we can defend the environment and the ecology of our planet.

We have made progress. In the last three years we have obtained land titles for 221 communities. This has been the result of AIDESEP's work in coordination with the government officials. Some of them, not all, but some, have developed an understanding that what we are demanding is justly ours. Before, they did not understand, and accused us of being troublemakers, terrorists, drug-traffickers, in order to demoralize us. But as we see that the indigenous cause we defend is a just one, we will not be frightened off by threats, imprisonment, or blackmail. We will always continue to struggle to regain our culture and our land.

SAICC: As president of AIDESEP, what are the problems you would like to solve during your term?

MM: Our primary project is the land issue. All of the communities of the Amazon have agreed that we want to obtain land titles for the communities which still lack them. This is the project we have agreed upon for 1992.

We also have a long-term reforestation program, to recover land which has been despoiled. Another project is a health project, involving the recovery and promotion of medicinal plants alongside western medicines. We have determined that medicinal plants are even better in many cases than Western medicine. As part of this project, we are training young people to be health promoters in each community throughout the Amazon. Also, we are working towards the creation of bilingual schools throughout Amazonia. Here we have another achievement, in that the Department of Education has publicly accepted our goals in a government decree.

SAICC: I understand that it is the first time you have

attended this meeting at the UN. What is your opinion on this working group?

MM: Well, on a personal level I have found that what we at AIDESEP are demanding is what all indigenous people of the world are seeking. We all share similar problems and needs. Here at the United Nations, I think that we, too, are nations. I believe that here we are pooling together our strength in order to be able to solve the problems that we face. If we unite our strength, make our demands and put some pressure on the governments of each country, I think that we can educate them, improve our economic and social situation, and change the racial discrimination we experience as indigenous people all over the world.

Indigenous organizations themselves need to be proactive, and present proposals to the government saying how they mean solve the problems we all face. Especially the environmental problems, which are being talked about all over the world. If we as indigenous people do not demand that the agreements made in Rio de Janeiro be respected, I think that the governments are going to forget, because of their desire to profit from the resources that exist in the rainforest.

SAICC: I understand that it is the first time you have attended this meeting at the UN. What is your opinion on this working group?

MM: Well, on a personal level I have found that what we at AIDESEP are demanding is what all indigenous people of the world are seeking. We all share similar problems and needs. Here at the United Nations, I think that we, too, are nations. I believe that here we are pooling together our strength in order to be able to solve the problems that we face. If we unite our strength, make our demands and put some pressure on the governments of each country, I think that we can educate them, improve our economic and social situation, and change the racial discrimination we experience as indigenous people all over the world.

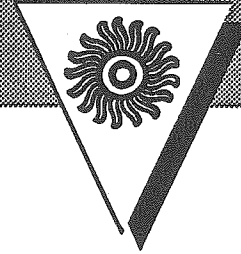


For more information, contact:

AIDESEP

Av. San Eugenio 981

Lima 13, Peru



## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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### ***TWO KILLED FOR PROTESTING QUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS***

On Sunday, September 20th, a human rights activist was killed in Santo Domingo during a peaceful march protesting the Quincentennial celebrations in honor of Christopher Columbus. Rafael Efrain Ortiz was shot in the forehead and two other people were wounded when plain clothed policemen opened fire on the 300 marchers. A lieutenant and two officers are being held under investigation. This was the first march in the Dominican Republic organized by groups protesting several different aspects of the celebration, the most tangible of which is the enormous lighthouse dedicated to Christopher Columbus. In a later protest, another man was killed.

The government has not disclosed any figures, but the most often quoted cost for the project is somewhere around \$250 million pesos or \$40 million dollars. Not only can the country not afford such an expense, but a major part of that cost revolves around the evacuation and demolition of the homes and land where the lighthouse now stands. Thousands of families were to be relocated in modern apartments, but reports say that has not happened. At most, some people have received \$50 dollars before watching their home be bulldozed.

It is ironic for a poor country like the Dominican Republic to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on this grandiose project and other beautification and renovation projects when the country's basic services are crumbling. Many areas of the city receive only 3-4 hours of electricity per day; streets have large potholes (making off-road vehicles the preferred mode of transportation for the wealthy); rubbish remains uncollected on the streets causing terrible rat problems.

The lighthouse itself is a grey, recumbent, parking garage looking structure, 800 feet long and 150 feet tall, in the form of a cross. It is located across from the colonial city on the other side of the Ozama River and will house museums from "all the countries of the world" as well as offices. "Beautification: or "hiding eyesore" projects include the 1-mile between the two tourist destinations so that tourists don't have to see poverty on their way to the lighthouse. The lighthouse is supposed to illuminate the sky in the shape of a cross, visible all over the Caribbean. Needless to say, there is a lot of skepticism about that claim. In response to criticism that the whole country would have to remain in the dark in order to provide the electricity for the lighthouse, the government claims that the lighthouse will be powered on solar energy. In addition, the money for the solar power plant is supposed to have been donated.

Many people think that president Balaguer has built this lighthouse as a monument to himself. After six terms as president he would no doubt like to leave his mark. Contrary to popular belief, the Pope will not inaugurate the monument although he will be in the country at the time for the Latin American Church Conference. He will be co-officiating a mass on the esplanade of the lighthouse, on October 11, just one day prior to the official celebrations on October 12. The Pope has been to Santo Domingo once before in 1978. He chose it as the first place to visit in America, as it was the first land in America that the church imposed Christianity on.

# Peace and Dignity Journeys 1992

The Peace and dignity Journeys, which began on May 2, 1992, in Alaska and South America, have become an interlacing of native runners from different nations throughout Canada, the United States, South and Central America and Mexico. The march has been going through small towns and urban capitals, and on August 29 the northern leg reached El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The people from different towns have welcomed the runners with public events, sacred ceremonies, planting of trees, medicinal offerings, official government proclamations, food and lodging, and more runners have joined all along the way. In Tortugas, New Mexico eighty runners representing over fifty nations met to continue the march south.

For us, seeking solidarity among ourselves, expanding communication, and sharing the work for the fulfillment of our prophecies, are priorities - especially now in the face of the so called celebrations of the five hundred years of the continental encounter, which goes against all the ideals of indigenous America. Out of the many events and actions taken by the global resistance movement, Peace and Dignity has emerged as an important group promoting a network of organizers throughout the American Continent.

These journeys were mobilized in the North and the South of the hemisphere under the advice of a great number of indigenous nations who seek unity throughout the continent with the support of all the races who respect our culture and our Mother Earth. Peace and Dignity Journeys was organized by Aurelio Dias Pekpankalli and Alfonso Perez Tenoch, Mexicans who are based in Chicago, Illinois. The March will end in Teotihuacán, Mexico on October 12 with a sacred ceremony. Our presence there will add to the whole of the strategy of the Indigenous Nations.

Source: Dorinda Moreno, US West Coast Coordinator of Peace and Dignity Journeys

# Amnesty International Indigenous Peoples' Campaign

Diego Domingo Martin, a Mam leader from Guatemala, was last seen being led away by five armed men on November 8, 1991. When family members denounced his "disappearance," they were told they should not care about a "guerilla". They were warned that they might suffer the same fate if they continued their denunciation. Unfortunately Diego is not alone.

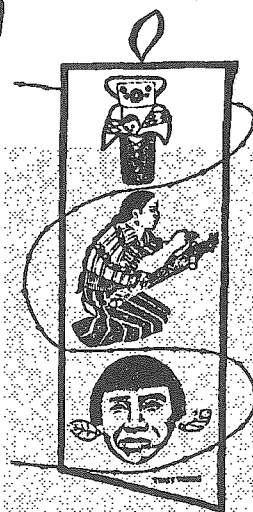
Diego is only one of countless indigenous persons in the Americas singled out for abuse. To mark the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Columbus, Amnesty International is highlighting and stepping up its work on behalf of indigenous peoples through a special campaign. In the U.S. alone, approximately three hundred local Amnesty groups are already generating appeals to governments to stop the continuing violations directed against indigenous peoples. Soon, their voices will be joined by thousands of Amnesty student groups.

On October 6, worldwide attention focuses on the release of Amnesty International's report entitled *Human rights violations against indigenous peoples of the Americas*. A "Day of Action" on October 12 by Amnesty groups across the U.S. commemorates the past and commits to the future.

And on International Human Rights Day, December 10, Amnesty groups again focus on ending violations against indigenous peoples. This anticipates further work during 1993, the U.N.'s year of the Indigenous People.

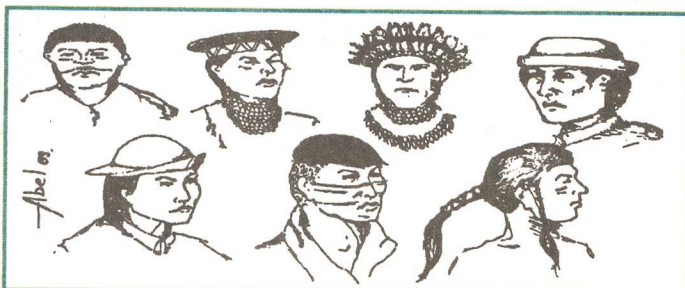
Amnesty International offers its report and its work through local and student groups, and thousands of individual members. The world must realize that the massacres, the "disappearances," the torture and other egregious human rights violations against indigenous people have not stopped: they continue and it is high time the governments of the world put an end to them.

For more information on Amnesty International's campaign work or to obtain the report, please contact the Campaign Office at 655 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94102 or (415)441-2114.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S LOGO FOR THE CAMPAIGN WAS DESIGNED BY MOHAWK ARTIST TRACY THOMAS. THE BABY IS TRACY'S DAUGHTER ON AN IROQUOIS CRADLE BOARD. THE WOMAN WEAVING IS A MAYA INDIAN FROM GUATEMALA. WEARING THE TRADITIONAL DRESS OF HER PEOPLE. THE MAN IS YANOMAMI FROM BRAZIL. THE THREE REPRESENT WOMAN, MAN, AND CHILD; NORTH, CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.





## ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM SAIIC

### SAIIC T-SHIRTS

T-shirts with the colorful SAIIC logo, available in: red, black & turquoise. "500 Years of Indian Resistance" printed above the logo. Please specify size (S,M,L,XL). \$12.00 + \$1.75 shipping & handling, (bulk discounts).

### A NEW VIDEO

#### COLUMBUS DIDN'T DISCOVER US/

#### CRISTOBAL COLON

Native people's perspectives on the Columbus Quincentennial. 24 minutes. In Spanish and English/VHS, color. A coproduction of SAIIC, CONAIE, ONIC and Turning Tide Productions. Video price \$39.95 + \$1.75 for shipping & handling.

### 1992 INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY & RESOURCE GUIDE FOR 500 YEARS OF RESISTANCE

A resource guide for community organizers, teachers and other interested people with a directory of international organizations working on quincentennial activities, testimonials from Indian people in South & Meso America, educational resources and other tools for action. \$10.00 + \$1.75 for shipping & handling.

## SAIIC WELCOMES YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

Please pass on to us any information you come across on indigenous peoples's struggles for self-determination. We are always in need of photos, publications, newspapers, and articles pertaining to these issues.

All of our projects and programs are financed by donations. We are in need of financial contributions, and volunteer workers. Please contact SAIIC to find out how you can best help. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### AMAZONIA: VOICES FROM THE RAINFOREST

A resource and action guide with a comprehensive listing of international rainforest and Amazonian Indian organizations. The guide is supplemented by an overview designed to give added force to grassroots groups in the Amazon fighting in defense of the rainforest and basic human rights of the indigenous people there. Co-authored by SAIIC with the Amazonia Film Project, International Rivers Network and published by the Rainforest Action Network. \$8.50 plus \$1.50 shipping (\$4.50 airmail). Also available in Spanish.

### NEW SAIIC VIDEO

#### REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES: A VISION OF THE FUTURE

Six indigenous leaders from Central and South America discuss the 500-years campaign, which began as an Indian response to the Quincentenary celebration and has developed as an ongoing dialogue among indigenous activists. Produced by SAIIC. \$19.00 + \$1.75 for shipping and handling.

### FORTHCOMING

#### DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAS (VOICES OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN

A book by & about Indian women. Interviews, testimonies, statements from Indigenous women leaders from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego. For more information contact SAIIC.

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