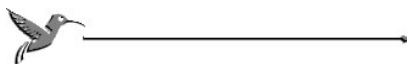


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# The Voice of the Taíno People®

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## Arawak, Carib, and Taíno Nations Reaffirm Ties at the United Nations



**Kalinago Carib Chief Charles Williams and Ericc Ausubonex Diaz of the UCTP display the Proclamation from the New York City Council designating April 25 as United Confederation of Taíno People Day in New York City.**

*New York, NY (UCTP Taíno News)* – Lokono Arawak, Kalinago Carib, and Taíno leaders renewed their solidarity at a special ceremonial gathering hosted by Ambassador **Crispin S. Gregoire of Dominica** and the **United Confederation of Taíno People** on Friday, April 25th, 2008.

The event took place at the Permanent Mission of Dominica to the United Nations and was held in honor of Kalinago **Chief Charles Williams** and the signing of the Declaration of Unity between the **Kalinago Carib Nation** of Dominica and the **United Confederation of Taíno People**. The celebration also recognized the 10

year anniversary of the establishment of the Confederation.



**Ambassador Crispin S. Gregoire of Dominica conversing with Milo Yellow Hair (Lakota) at the UCTP gathering.**

The gathering opened with a welcome by Ambassador Gregoire and a prayer by **Milo Yellow Hair** of the *Oglala Lakota Nation*. A Wounded Knee Veteran and AIM member, Mr. Yellow Hair also noted that the gathering put to rest the “myth of extinction” of Caribbean Indigenous Peoples.

An opening address was given by **Chief Charles Williams** who spoke on the history of the **Kalinago People** and of the importance of unity among Caribbean Indigenous Peoples. Chief Williams also thanked the Permanent Mission of Dominica for their support and expressed that he was

“very proud of the Declaration of Unity signed between the Kalinago and Taíno Peoples”.

Statements were also presented by **Hereditary Lokono Arawak Chief Damon Corrie** of the **Eagle Clan Arawaks** and **Kasike Roberto Mukaro Ageuibana Borrero** representing the UCTP and *Inkateke Guainia*. Chief Corrie pledged to continue to work toward strengthening the solidarity among Indigenous Peoples of the region.

In an example of his commitment he presented a letter of congratulations to the UCTP from **Pakuri Lokono Arawak Chief Pierre Andrews** from the Upper Mahaica River in Guyana, South America Guyana. On behalf of the Eagle Clan Arawaks, Corrie also presented a ceremonial chief’s staff to Borrero in recognition of his work to unify Caribbean Indigenous Peoples throughout the islands and beyond.

Borrero gave a brief history of the UCTP and introduced the various UCTP representatives and community members in attendance.

*Story continues on pg. 2*

**Arawak, Carib, and Taíno at the UN (Continued from pg. 1)**

Borrero also reaffirmed the important work that has been accomplished at the United Nations, which continues to increase the visibility of the Indigenous Peoples of the Caribbean.

The Taíno leader then recognized the contributions and support of Ambassador Gregoire, **Ali El Issa** of the Flying Eagle Woman Fund, and **Pamela Kraft** of the **Tribal Link Foundation**. On behalf the UCTP, Ambassador Gregoire, El Issa, and Kraft were all presented artworks by artists John Aguilar Marrero and **Reina Miranda** of Taíno Spirit and the Cacibajagua Taíno Cultural Society.



**Vanessa Inarunikia, Angie Kolibri Ramos, Danny Nieves and Mildred Karaira Gandia attend the celebration at the UN Mission of Dominica.**

A special presentation was also made by UCTP representative and Iukaiyeke Guania member, Grandmother **Mildred Karaira Gandia** who presented three blue macaw feathers in recognition of outstanding community leadership to Chief Williams, Chief Corrie, and Kasike Borrero.

Among the other distinguished guests present during the celebration were **Andrea Carmen** and **Ron Lehman** of the International Indian Treaty Council. Ms. Carmen commented on the important contribution of the Government of Dominica towards

the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the recent affiliation of the UCTP with the Treaty Council.



The special presentation segment ended with the reading of the Proclamation issued by New York City Council member **Melissa Mark Viverito**, which recognized “10 years of distinguished service to Taíno, Carib, and Arawak Peoples of the Caribbean and the U.S.” In an historic moment for the Taíno community, the Proclamation also designated April 25, 2008 and “hereafter” as **United Confederation of Taíno People Day** in the City of New York.



**Cheyenne Fox Tree, Claudia Fox Tree, and Maria Diaz at the gathering.**

Following the presentations all the attendees were treated to an incredible luncheon prepared by community members **Angie Nanichi Kolibri Ramos, Vanessa Inarunikia, Jackie “la Jibarita”, Tommy Pastrano, and Maria Diaz.**

Closing the historic celebration was a song to honor Mother Earth presented by members of the

Cacibajagua Taíno Cultural Society. ●

**Taíno and Arawak Works on Display at UN Headquarters**



**United Nations (UCTP Taino News)** – Contemporary Taíno artists **Reina Miranda, Mildred Mukara Torres Speeg and John Aguilar Marrero** were among the indigenous artists whose selected works were featured at the opening of the United Nations Art exhibition entitled “**Spirit of Our Ancestors**”.

The exhibition was launched in conjunction with the 7th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the opening took place on Tuesday, April 22nd 2008 at UN headquarters in New York.

Marrero and Miranda are members of the Cacibajagua Taíno cultural Society. Torres-Speeg is a UCTP representative in the state of Georgia. Also on display are three wood sculptures by **Foster Simon**, an acclaimed Lokono Arawak from Guyana. Mr. Simon’s works are also featured in the Presidential collections of Guyana, Venezuela, and Bolivia. This special exhibition is free and open to the public during weekdays for a limited engagement closing on May 18, 2008. ●

*Photo: Taino women at the opening of the “Spirit of Our Ancestors” exhibition at the United Nations. From left: Leenda Bonilla; Mildred Karaira Gandia, Maria Diaz, and Reina Sipainaru Miranda.*

### Borikén Taíno Stand Strong with the UCTP



**Elder Valeriana Shashira Rodriguez Valentin, Kasike Elba Anaka Lugo, and Kasike Roberto Mukaro Aguibana Borrero celebrate 10 years of solidarity.**

*UCTP Taino News* – Representatives of the **Consejo General de Tainos Borincanos** renewed their sacred ties with the **United Confederation of Taino People** in a special unification ceremony on Saturday, April 26, 2008. Borikén Council leader **Kasike Elba Anaka Lugo Perez** and elder **Valeriana Shashira Rodriguez Valentin** made the trip from Puerto Rico to meet with UCTP representatives as well as participate in the Seventh Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

“This trip is about unification because we are one Taino family on or off the island” declared elder Shashira. She also affirmed before all those gathered that “the Consejo is with the UCTP as the UCTP is with the Consejo.”

The historic solidarity ceremony took place at the home of UCTP Liaison, **Evelyn Koai’cu Cruz-Lear** in New Jersey.

A number of UCTP representatives and community members attended gathering that was not only a celebration but a chance to receive firsthand updates on the island’s current situation.



**Karaira Gandia was invited by Elder Shashira into the Borikén Taino Grandmothers Circle at the gathering.**

The Borikén leaders shared their experiences at the Jacancas site in Ponce as well as information on some of their projects throughout Puerto Rico. Another important moment in the meeting was the official welcoming of **Mildred Karaira Gandia** into the “Circle of Borikén Taino Grandmothers” by elder Shashira. The Borikén Council elder urged those gathered to continue to look toward Karaira for council and leadership now and in the future.

After the discussions and the “Guaitiao ceremonies” led by elder Shashira, the Borikén leaders were surprised with a birthday cake as they both celebrated birthdays in April.



Of the gathering **Elba Anaka Lugo** - a pioneer of the Taino resurgence movement - stated that to “connect through ceremony” was for her one of the most important moments of this recent trip to the States.

Kasike Lugo also looked forward to receiving all her relatives in the ancestral homeland of Borikén sooner

than later as there was “much work to be done.”

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**Are you a registered and enrolled member of the Taino Tribal Nation? Get more information on the UCTP Taino Population Census and Inter-Tribal Registration Project at the UCTP Web Portal [www.uctp.org](http://www.uctp.org)**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CALENDER OF EVENTS

### • Taíno to Present Cultural Program at Pequot Museum

**Date: July 23, 2008 • Place: Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, Ledyard, CT**

*The program takes place from 1-3pm and is open to the public. The group will present Taíno music and dance as well as discuss the meaning of the various songs and how the Taíno instruments are played and made. Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the Mashantucket Pequot Museum offers engaging experiences for all ages, from life-size walk-through dioramas that transport visitors into the past, to changing exhibits and live performances of contemporary arts and cultures. For more information on the Taíno presentation check out the Museum's website at <http://www.pequotmuseum.org/>.*

### • Gateway to the Nations Pow Wow to feature Taíno Culture

**Date: July 6-8, 2008 • Place: Floyd Bennett Field, Gateway National Recreation Area, Brooklyn, NY**

*The Gateway to Nations Pow Wow is a celebration of Native American culture that will take place at Brooklyn's in Floyd Bennett Field, Gateway National Recreation Area from June 6-8, 2008. Along with Native American dancers, singers, Native American arts and jewelry, food vendors this year's Pow Wow will feature select cultural presentations from members of the Cacibajagua Taíno Cultural Society. The group will share Taíno music, song, and dance as well as offer general information on Taíno culture. More information on the event can be found at their website at <http://www.redhawkcouncil.org/calendar/june19.htm>*

### • Taíno Summer Solstice Ceremony

**Date: June 21<sup>st</sup> 2008 • Place: Brook Park, 141 St. & Brook Ave., Bronx, NY**

*In recognition of World Peace and Prayer Day and the summer solstice, the Cacibajagua Taíno Cultural Society and Iukaieke Guainia will host a ceremonial gathering and purification ceremony at Brook Park in the Bronx, New York on Saturday, June 21, 2008. A special focus of this event will be to offer prayers of unity for the participants of the Peace and Dignity Journeys Spiritual Run and the Longest Walk II. A naming ceremony for several community members will also take place. The gathering will begin at 12noon sharp and the event is free. The organizers have requested that attendees please bring food to share and consider monetary donations to the Friends of Brook Park. The park is located at 141st Street and Brook Ave in the South Bronx. For more information on the gathering contact [uctp\\_ny@yahoo.com](mailto:uctp_ny@yahoo.com) or call 1(212)604-4186.*

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