

Highlights

- **Ancient Taino Settlement in Puerto Rico**
- **Carib and Taino Nations Unite with Treaty**
- **Italians Against Columbus**

Also Inside

- 1 UNCIEF and Latin American and Caribbean Indigenous Leaders**
- 2 Cheyenne Fox-Tree: Arawak Jingle Dress Dancer**
- 3 Announcements and Calendar of Events**

The Voice of the Taíno People®

*The Voice of the Taíno People is the Official News Journal of the United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP) and is distributed by the UCTP Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination
Volume 10, Issue 4, Oct. – Dec. 2007 © All Rights Reserved • ISSN 1553-9350*

Indigenous Peoples Concerned over New Archeological Find in Puerto Rico



Ponce, Puerto Rico (UCTP Taíno News) – On October 29, 2007 the President of the **Consejo General de Tainos Borincanos, Elba Anaca Lugo** issued a public statement concerning a recent archeological “discovery” in Ponce, Puerto Rico via **University of Puerto Rico Radio (WRTC 89.7 FM)**.

Lugo’s statement highlighted the declaration issued by the Consejo General and the **Caney Quinto Mundo** in response to this major archeological find said to date back from 600 A.D. to 1500 A.D. Lugo will also note violations observed by the local indigenous Taíno community in relation to this already controversial case.

The Taíno archeological site was uncovered recently while land was being cleared for construction of a dam to control flooding in the area.

At the site a number of unique archeological finds have already been documented including monolithic stones displaying petroglyphs (carvings) that are surrounding ceremonial plazas as well as burial grounds. At least one of the stone monoliths depicted a human figure with frog legs similar to one found at another site – **Caguana** - in the island’s mountainous interior.

Although local archeologists have been aware of the historic importance of the area since at least 1985, the **Institute of Puerto Rican Culture** has called for the construction to stop as heavy machinery has already destroyed important artifacts.

The investigation and the “discovery” is one that is sure to bring the subject of ancient indigenous culture back into to the spotlight on the island.

The case however is already amidst controversy regarding the construction permits, their relation to the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**, and the island’s Institute of Culture.

Same Old Story

Local Taíno leaders and activists are all too familiar with the scenario unfolding in Ponce. In July 2005, a group of indigenous community leaders entered the **Caguana Ceremonial Center** in Utuado to mount a peaceful protest to not only bring attention to condition of that “park” but the ongoing destruction of sacred sites around the island. This historic action, which ended in the arrests of several Taíno leaders, is known locally and internationally as “**El Grito Indígena Taíno de Caguana.**”

Reports indicate that at this new archeological discovery in Ponce, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers gave permission for the construction to begin with evidence that there was the potential for a major find in the area. As in other similar cases, the U.S. Army Corps is said to have already removed major artifacts to undisclosed locations in the U.S. One question locals have concerns the Puerto Rican Institute of Cultural and if it was aware of and allowed the U.S. Army Corps to engage in this practice without challenge.

Story continues on pg. 2

Ancient Taino Site in Puerto Rico Unearthed
(Continued from pg.1)

At least a year before “El Grito de Caguna”, local Taíno leaders raised the alarm about another major archeological site that was being destroyed to make way for construction.

This case occurred in Arecibo at “Ojo del Agua.” The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Institute of Culture were also involved in this case and again, many unique artifacts have left Puerto Rico without public knowledge or consultation.

The Consejo General de Tainos Borincanos and the Caney Mundo brought the destruction at Arecibo to the attention of both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Institute. The local Taíno called for a halt to the construction and for consultative meetings to discuss their concerns but their requests were ignored. The construction continued and the destruction to that site remains an inconceivable loss barely mentioned by local media.

“The lack of respect for the local community and the continuous destruction and looting of our national patrimony were among the major reasons why we chose to enter Caguana and symbolically reclaim the site through our protest.” stated Elba Anaca Lugo.

“These corrupt practices have been going on in Boriken (Puerto Rico) for many years and we, the Taíno People have continuously attempted to bring these cases to the attention of the government authorities who in turn continue to ignore our concerns.” continued Lugo. “This is a violation of our basic human rights.”

Speaking on behalf of the **United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP)**, **Roberto Mukaro Borrero** stated “The UCTP is in full support of the Consejo General de Tainos Borincanos and the Caney Quinto Mundo with relation to their declaration concerning the ancient Taíno site recently found in Ponce, Puerto Rico.”

“As they represent the concerns of the local indigenous community, the UCTP looks toward the Consejo General and the Caney Quinto Mundo for guidance in this situation and will do all that it can to highlight their exclusion from the consultation process” noted Borrero.

Representatives of the Consejo General visited the site on Saturday, October 27, 2007 to survey the situation first-hand as well as to perform traditional ceremony on behalf of their ancestors.

Lugo’s statement and commentary on UPR radio is the first in a series that the Consejo Taíno will dedicate to this issue. ●

Carib and Taino Nations Sign Historic Treaty



Chief Charles Williams and Roberto Mukaro Borrero unite the Carib and Taino Nations in Trinidad. (UCTP Photo)

Arima, Trinidad (UCTP Taino News) – The **Kallinago Carib Nation of Waitikabuli (Dominica)** and the **United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP)** ratified an historic

“**Declaration of Unity**” on October 16, 2007.

Kallinago Chief Charles Williams and **Roberto Mucaro Borrero**, the President and Chairman of the UCTP’s Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination signed the declaration on behalf of their respective communities during the celebration of Amerindian Heritage Week in Arima, Trinidad.

“Indigenous Peoples need to support each other as there is strength in unity” declared Chief Williams. The declaration promotes solidarity between the Kallinago and the Taino at the local, national, and international levels.

“Treaties between Indigenous Nations are tangible demonstrations of our sovereignty and our internationally recognized right to self-determination” noted President Borrero. “This declaration makes it clear to all that the Kallinago and the Taino recognize each other as Indigenous Peoples of the region”.

The Kallinago Carib Nation is the only indigenous community in the Caribbean islands who maintain an officially recognized territory via a treaty with the government of Dominica. The UCTP represents Taino People throughout the region and the Diaspora.

The “Declaration of Unity” with the Kallinago Nation follows a series of similarly historic treaty ratifications by the United Confederation of Taino People. Currently, the UCTP maintains treaty relationships with the **Santa Rosa Carib Community** of Trinidad, the **Joboshirima Arawak Community** of Venezuela, the **Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP)**, and the **Eagle Clan Arawaks** of Barbados and Guyana. ●

Italians Against Columbus Day

UCTP Taino News – In solidarity with American Indian nations, a group of Italian citizens have decided to actively support protests against the celebration of Columbus Day by establishing a petition against it the controversial holiday.

The petition, which was written in Cannara (Perugia) - Italy on October 9, 2007, will be presented to Italian municipalities, presidents of Italian regions, and to Italian American associations.

Mike Graham (Cherokee) of United Native America, Oglala Lakota Patriot **Russell Means**, and UCTP President **Roberto Mukaro Borrero** (Taino) have endorsed the effort.

The Italian petition against the celebration of Columbus Day can be found online at <http://www.petitiononline.com/cd1p/toit/petition.html>. •

Latin American and Caribbean Advisory Group of Indigenous Leaders meet with the UN System

Quito, Ecuador (UCTP Taino News) - The **Regional Meeting of the Advisory Group of Indigenous Leaders with the UN System in Latin America and the Caribbean** held from 5 to 6 November in Quito, Ecuador, was jointly organized by UNICEF-LAC, OHCHR and SPFII.

The meeting was attended by more than 60 focal points of United Nations regional offices, indigenous members of the Advisory Group of UNICEF, Ms. Otilia Lux de Coti of the PFII, and indigenous authorities from Quito.

Representing the **United Confederation of Taino People**,

Roberto Mukaro Borrero was appointed to the group and participated actively in all discussions. Borrero also had the opportunity to meet with local indigenous leaders of the regional informal gatherings organized in recognition of the meeting.

During two days UN agencies, funds and programmes dialogued with indigenous representatives on the strategies to implement recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

As an outcome, recommendations were prepared to Resident Coordinators within the context of the Declaration, the UNDG draft guidelines on indigenous peoples' issues and the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in order to integrate indigenous issues in the work of its agencies. •

Cheyenne Fox-Tree McGrath: Arawak Jingle Dancer



UCTP Taino News - **Cheyenne Fox-Tree McGrath**, an Arawak Jingle

dress dancer of Bedford, Massachusetts dances during 25th annual GLICA Powwow at the Bedford VA Hospital in September 2007. The Pow Wow was sponsored by the Greater Lowell Indian Cultural Association. The photo was on the front page of the Bedford Minuteman, a local publication. •

Photo credit: John Walker

The Voice of the Taino People®

ISSN 1553-9350

Vol. 10, Issue 4 ♦ Oct. – Dec. 2007 ©

All Rights Reserved

United Confederation of Taino People, Inc.

PO Box 4515, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

Email: Mukaro@uctp.org

Layout Design & Publisher:

Roberto Mukaro Agueibana Borrero

Email: Mukaro@uctp.org

Chief Editor & Boriken

Correspondent:

Roger Atibnibancex Hernandez

Email: Boriken@uctp.org

UCTP Web Portal:

<http://www.uctp.org/>

Webmaster:

Eric Asubonex Diaz

Webmaster@uctp.org

Contributors:

The Voice of the Taino People Online

The Voice of the Taino People is a quarterly publication of the United Confederation of Taino People and is distributed by the UCTP Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination.

All articles within The Voice of the Taino People can be partially or totally reprinted, with permission, and as long as long as credit is given to the author (s) and the publication. When reprinting material found in this publication, a courtesy copy must be sent to our U.S. address.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CALENDER OF EVENTS

• Amerindian Heritage Week

Date: October 14-19, 2007 • Place: Trinidad and Tobago

Amerindian Heritage Day will be commemorated this year in Trinidad and Tobago with a week long commemoration from October 14-19, 2007. Taking place in the town of Arima, the program will include ceremonies, lectures, and special cultural presentations hosted by the Santa Rosa Carib Community. Indigenous delegations from around the Caribbean region are set to attend the events, which will include a meeting of the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (COIP). For info see: <http://www.coipsnews.blogspot.com>

• Pa'l Pueblo Charity Drive

Date: December 14, 2007 • Place: Notice Lounge, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, NY

*Taino artists **Reina Miranda** and **Aguilar Marrero** of Taino Spirit will be among a group of esteemed supporters of the "Pa'l Pueblo" charity drive for the United Head-Start program of Bushwick, New York on December 14, 2007. The call for support is being promoted by the Radio Capicu program aired in New York. For info contact AGUILARWHYTWOLF@aol.com*

• Yauco's First International Arts Festival

Date: December 8-9, 2007 * Place: Yauco, Puerto Rico

*In recognition of cultural arts from throughout the world, the municipality of **Yauco** will celebrate its first annual International Arts Festival at the town's central plaza December 8-9. The festival will also highlight Taino culture with its presentation of prominent Boriken Taino artisans as well as several Taino cultural performers.*

Public Notice: The Voice of the Taíno People reserves the right to reprint in full or in part, any and all correspondence sent to the editors, the United Confederation of Taino People, Inc., and or its officers.

THE VOICE OF THE TAÍNO PEOPLE

**c/o United Confederation of Taino People
Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination
PO Box 4515, New York, NY 10163**