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The Voice of the **Taino People**®

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Census 2010 Celebrates Taino Heritage in Borikén



UCTP Photo: Some of the participants of the 2010 Census Taino heritage celebration at the Tibes Ceremonial Center in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

Ponce, Borikén (UCTP Taino News) – The **2010 Census Road Tour** celebrated **Taino** heritage at the **Tibes Ceremonial Center** in **Ponce**, Borikén (Puerto Rico) on March 4, 2010. The event included participation from local elected officials, Census Bureau representatives, Taino community members, and the general public. The program was an official collaboration between the **U.S. Census Bureau**, the honorable **Dr. María Meléndez Altieri**, Mayor of Ponce, and the Borikén Liaison Office of the **United Confederation of Taino People**.

The event opened with a prayer in the Taino language presented by **Lizzy Sarobey**, Director of the

cultural group **Wakia Arawaka Taína**. Opening remarks were presented by representatives of the Mayor’s Office, the Census Bureau, and UCTP representative **Roger Guayacan Hernandez**.

“The indigenous category was taken off the census in Borikén (Puerto Rico) in the year 1800” stated Roger Guayacan. “We now have the opportunity to write ourselves back into history.”

The UCTP Liaison Office also distributed specific information on how local Taino community members could identify themselves in the census questionnaire. The Confederation is urging local Taino to fill out the census questionnaire by choosing *American Indian* for Race at question 9 and writing in *Taino* as ‘principle tribe’. Individuals can also choose ‘Puerto Rican’ as Ethnicity at question 8.

“Some people have been confused by the questionnaire” said Roger Guayacan. “They think that the American Indian identification only applies to U.S. mainland tribes but that is not the case.” He continued stating “The Census Bureau defines American Indian as individuals of

indigenous origin from throughout the Americas.” •

Taino Prepare for Sacred Run

Borikén (UCTP Taino News) - For many ancient Indigenous cultures runners were an important way to send messages between communities. **Taino** People soon plan to highlight this tradition by organizing a “four directions” run this July on the island of Borikén (Puerto Rico).

The **Borikén 2010 Peace and Dignity Run** is linked to the “**Peace and Dignity Journeys**”, spiritual runs that embody the indigenous prophecy of the **Eagle and the Condor**. This prophecy mandates the reunification of Indigenous Peoples throughout the Americas.

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UCTP - U.S. CENSUS PARTNERSHIP 2010



If we don't say it, who will?

Taino Prepare for Sacred Run



In a meeting hosted by the Consejo General de Tainos Borincanos, Taino Community leaders and youth meet in Trujillo Alto, Borikén to discuss plans for the Borikén 2010 Peace and Dignity Run. (Photo: Courtesy of Bohio Attabei)

Vanessa Inarunikia Pastrana, one of the organizers of the Borikén Run sees the inclusion of Caribbean Indigenous Peoples as an essential but often overlooked element of the Eagle and Condor prophecy.

“Our people need to be a part of this healing process” states Pastrana. “The Caribbean is a part of the sacred hoop of Indigenous Nations.”

Since 1992, **Peace and Dignity Journeys** are undertaken every four years with runners starting out from Alaska and South America. Carrying sacred staffs, the participants run over six months stopping to visit various Native communities along the way. The runners finally meet in ceremony somewhere in the “center” of the continent. In 2008 the runners met in Panama City.

“The next Peace and Dignity Journey will take place in 2012 and the run in Borikén will connect Taino and other relatives to this important moment in our collective history” continued Pastrana. “This is not about politics but it is rather a spiritual way to raise awareness about our ancestral traditions and to remind ourselves of who we are as Indigenous People.”

Updates and information on the Borikén 2010 Peace and Dignity Run can now be found at the website, <http://boriken2010peaceanddignityjourney.blogspot.com/>. Volunteers and donations are requested. ●

***Editor’s Note:** Are you interested in supporting the Borikén 2010 Peace and Dignity Run? Contact oirrc@uctp.org for details.

Caribbean Indigenous Peoples Speak Out At UN Forum

United Nations, NY (UCTP Taino News) - The 9th Session of the **United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII)** took place from 19-30 April at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The **PFII** is mandated to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights ended its first week of work today. Government representatives, UN agencies, and indigenous representatives from around the world presented reports and statements on key areas of concern.

At the opening of the session **UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon** called on Member States to promote development while respecting the values and traditions of Indigenous Peoples.

Approximately 2000 participants were registered to take part in the Forum including indigenous representatives, Member States, UN agencies, academic institutions, and civil society groups. Among the indigenous delegates attending the two-week session were **Mildred Karaira Gandia** a representative for the **United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP)** and **Damon Gerard Corrie** of the UCTP and the

Eagle Clan Arawaks of Barbados and Guyana.



Damon Gerard Corrie, Mildred Karaira Gandia and Pamela Kraft of the Tribal Link Foundation at the United Nations in New York (Tribal Link Photo)

“We are here to advocate for **Caribbean Indigenous Peoples**” stated Gandia. “Our communities are often ignored in the larger discussions”.

Both Gandia and Corrie took part in a special training program organized by the **Tribal Link Foundation** and the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. These delegates contributed to joint presentations along with other indigenous representatives participating in the **Tribal Link Foundation** sponsored *Project Access Training and Capacity Building Project*.

At the Forum **United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP)** presented a plenary statement on the issue of **Human Rights** and **Caribbean Indigenous Peoples**. The Confederation recommended that the Forum facilitate a Special Regional Consultative Session to focus on the unique situation of Caribbean Indigenous Peoples.

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COMMUNITY NEWS FLASH: Congratulations to **Miguel Sobaoko Koromo Sague** who will be featured in an upcoming episode of *American Ghost Hunters*. The “Urraca Mesa” program will investigate claims of paranormal activity in New Mexico.

Caribbean Indigenous Peoples Speak Out At UN Forum

The UCTP presentation also noted that because of Borikén's (Puerto Rico) colonial status, indigenous representatives from the island are continuously discriminated against and or denied funding opportunities to participate in meetings, conferences, regional specific consultations, and capacity building sessions.

The UCTP also engaged the **Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD) with a call to increase Caribbean indigenous participation in related initiatives. The UCTP called on the Convention's Secretariat to organize a Caribbean sub-regional capacity building session in collaboration with local and regional indigenous organizations.

During the session the Government of **New Zealand** issued a surprise proclamation stating its support of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. **U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice** also surprised those in attendance by stating the **Obama** Administration would formally review its position on the Declaration.

In 2007, the governments of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States opposed the adoption of the landmark human rights legislation. Australia was the first of the four countries to reverse its position now leaving the U.S. and Canada as the only UN member States still opposed to the Declaration.

The Declaration outlines the rights of the world's estimated 370 million indigenous people and outlaws discrimination against them. ●

Thousands call for Nuclear Disarmament in New York

New York, NY (UCTP Taino News) – About 10,000 activists from around the world mobilized in New York City on Sunday, May 2nd 2010 to call for “real progress” toward global nuclear disarmament.



Taino and Mohawk representatives among the thousands at nuclear disarmament rally in New York City (UCTP Photo)

During a rally held in Times Square and a march to the United Nations participants called for an end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as a nuclear free future. The lead contingent of the march included survivors of the bombings of **Hiroshima and Nagasaki**, government officials, and representatives of the indigenous **Mohawk, Navajo, Aymara, Cherokee, Tlingit, and Taino** Nations.

The day of action culminated with a **International Peace and Music Festival** held at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza across from United Nations headquarters. Over 50 organizations displayed their literature and networked with the thousands of people who attended. There was a tent where people had the opportunity to talk with survivors of the bombings of **Hiroshima and Nagasaki**. In addition, **Sakue Shimora**, a survivor of the bombing of Nagasaki, spoke from the main festival stage.

Among the diverse musicians and storytellers performing at the festival were members of the **Cacibajagua Taino Cultural Society** and **Taino Iukaieke Guainia**. In addition to presenting Taino songs honoring the Earth, the group linked the struggle in **Vieques** to the global disarmament agenda. The Taino also urged those in attendance to support the upcoming **Spiritual Run for Peace and Dignity** to be held in Puerto Rico, July 2010.

The rally, march, and festival coincided with the start of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)** being held at UN Headquarters this month. The NPT is a

landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. ●

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Are you an enrolled member of the Taino Tribal Nation? Get more information on the UCTP Taino Population Census and Inter-Tribal Registry at the UCTP Web Portal www.uctp.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

- **Summer Solstice Areito Ceremony**

Date: Saturday, 19 June 2010 • Time: 2pm – 8pm • Place: O.C.C.H.A. Hispanic Social Service Agency, 3660 Shirley Rd & Midlothian Blvd., Youngstown, Ohio 44502-2934

Organized By the United Confederation of Taino People's Ohio Liaison Office and the Caney Indigenous Spiritual Circle. For more information about the days activities contact rquino5614@aol.com

- **Summer Solstice Areito Ceremony**

Date: Sunday, 20 June 2010 • Time: 12 noon – 7pm • Place: Brook Park, South Bronx, NY

A community ceremony honoring the change in season, World Peace and Prayer Day, and the Borikén 2010 Peace and Dignity Run. Bring maracas, and healthy food to share. For more information contact mukaro@uctp.org

- **Peace and Dignity Run - Borikén 2010 on the Road to 2012**

Date: 17-25 July 2010 • Place: Borikén (Puerto Rico)

Borikén 2010 is an action of love and respect; it is a spiritual journey that will bring our Caribbean Indigenous nations into the fold of the Indigenous Nations of Abya Yala already part of the Peace and Dignity Journey. Opening ceremony 17 July in el Yunke, Rain Forest. Community ceremony days 22-25 July in Jayuya. For more information see <http://boriken2010peaceanddignityjourney.blogspot.com/>

- **UCTP Online Store**

Available at <http://www.cafepress.com/tainoshop>

This is the official UCTP online merchandise store where you can purchase a number of high-quality products with unique United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP) graphics on them. You can now show your support of a Unified Taino Nation as well as contribute to the precedent-setting work of the UCTP. Proceeds from sales go directly to the Confederation and help to increase the visibility of our great Nation throughout the Caribbean and the Diaspora.

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