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The Voice of the **Taino People**®

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Sub-regional Indigenous Peoples Meeting Includes Caribbean Representatives



Damon Corrie, Roberto Borrero, Ovide Mercredi, and Leilani Stewart meet in Ottawa, Canada to follow-up on the OAS Summit of the Americas process.

Ottawa, Canada (UCTP Taino News) - The **Organization of American States (OAS) Summits of the Americas Secretariat**, in collaboration with the **Assembly of First Nations (AFN)**, the **Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)**, and the **Inuit Circumpolar Council [Canada] (ICC)**, hosted a Sub-regional Meeting with Indigenous Peoples' representatives **North America** and the **Caribbean** in Ottawa, Canada, on Monday, December 13, 2010.

The main purpose of the Sub-Regional Meeting was to provide an opportunity to follow-up on the

implementation of the **April 2009 Declaration and Plan of Action of the III Indigenous Leaders Summit of the Americas (III ILSA)** "Implementing the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas for Present and Future Generations". Additionally, the meeting provided an opportunity for indigenous peoples to begin preparations for the IV ILSA.

Representatives of the **United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP)** participated at the meeting to provide a briefing on Caribbean regional follow-up to the III ILSA.

This event marks the first of a proposed series of such meetings to allow Indigenous Peoples from various sub-regions the opportunity to dialogue and coordinate their participation in the Summits process. ●

U.S. Endorses Indigenous Declaration

Washington, D. C. (UCTP Taino News) - President Barack Obama announced that the United States will endorse the **United Nations Declaration on the**

Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Obama announced the decision during the second White House Tribal Nations Conference on December 16, 2010.

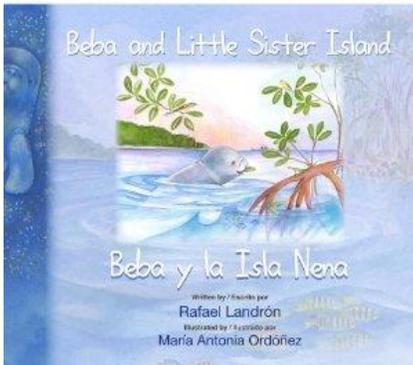
The United States is the last country to endorse the U.N. Declaration, which was ratified by 143 countries in 2007. Only four countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, voted against it.

President Obama stated that "The aspirations [the Declaration] affirms – including the respect for the institutions and rich cultures of Native peoples - are one we must always seek to fulfill."

The news of the U.S. position on the Declaration is being commended by Indigenous leaders in the United States and beyond.

The United Confederation of Taino People's Office of International Relations and Regional Coordination issued a brief statement welcoming the decision as it 'potentially benefits not only U.S. federally recognized Tribal Nations' but others like the **Taino** who reside in U.S. Territorial possessions. ●

Taíno Author Releases New Children's Book



New York (UCTP Taíno News) - Inspired by the true story of how the people of Borikén (Puerto Rico) saved Bieke (Vieques) from environmental destruction, author **Rafael Landrón** has written a bilingual children's book entitled "Beba and Little Sister Island" published by *Campanita Books*.

The story focuses on a young manatee named Beba who is summoned by her animal friends to travel and discover the origin of the thunderous noise they keep hearing from other side of their beautiful island home. Illustrated by award-winning artist María Antonia Ordóñez, the story is a timeless tale of courage, solidarity, love, and justice set in the beautiful waters of the Caribbean.

In *Beba and Little Sister Island*, the animals play the role of the real-life heroes whose courageous acts tipped the scale and literally saved the island. Much of Bieke (affectionately called la Isla Nena - translated in the book as Little Sister Island) had been turned into a radioactive, polluted, devastated landscape. With the departure of the U.S. Armed Forces the island is on its way to recovery, but it will be decades before the damage is reversed.

"The story never makes direct reference to where the big ships come from, or what they are doing there",

explained Landrón. "I wanted the message to be universal".

A Borikén Taíno, Rafael Landrón is a Professor at Boricua College in New York, as well as an emerging poet, performer, and writer. *Beba and Little Sister Island* is his first children's book and is available at Amazon.com. •

A Message from Borikua Taíno Youth: No Al Gasoducto! No to the Pipeline!

To: Hon. Daniel J. Galán, Secretario del Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales, Hon. Luis G. Fortuño, Gobernador, Hon. Thomas Rivera Schatz, Presidente del Senado, y Hon. Jennifer A. González Colon, Presidente de la Camara de Representantes, y Hon. Luis M. Santiago González, Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales del Senado y Hon. Eric Correa Rivera, Presidente de la Comisión de Recursos Naturales, Ambientales y Energía de la Cámara de Representantes del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico

¡NO AL GASODUCTO! NO TO THE PIPELINE!

We as young **Taíno Guaribo Gua Coku Gua Borikén** (Puerto Rico), oppose the "Green Route" project proposed by the current government as an energy reform solution to reduce the cost energy.

The so-called "Green Route" is nothing but a mechanism of mass destruction to Mother Earth, Atabey, that will negatively impact wildlife and their habitats, presents a threat to Sacred Sites, the life, well being and property of the People. We have already suffered the loss of life, and damage to our environment, wildlife, habitat and homes from explosions. On November 21, 1996 there was a huge explosion caused by a gas leak

in the town of town of Rio Piedras that injured over 100 people and took the lives of 34 people. The latest "accident" occurred on October 23, 2009 in the town of Cataño when a fuel leak caused an explosion in the oil refinery "CAPECO (Caribbean Petroleum Company, (owners of the Gulf gas stations in Puerto Rico). Today we still have not received a report on the environmental and wild life impact of said explosion.

It is outrageous to witness this act of crass violation of fundamental basic human and constitutional rights of our Nation and Peoples. Everyone has the Sacred and undeniable human right to enjoy the benefits of development without the destruction of their natural resources, wildlife, habitats or threat to their sustenance, Sacred Sites, life, culture and property of the People.

This deplorable plan means that power plants would go from dependency on foreign oil to dependency on foreign natural gas; making us totally dependent on the Fenosa Company (a Spain based company), a leading multi-national corporation in the gas and power sectors, creating yet another dependency on a monopoly.

It operates in 23 countries and has more than 20 million customers worldwide. We have already experienced the devastating consequences to Atabey, Mother Earth caused when they began to lay the infrastructure for this project in the south of the Island, "Gasoducto del Sur".

Message continued on pg. 3



Taino Youth: No to the Pipeline
(cont. from pg. 2)

They now pretend to revive this disastrous project with a very misleading name change from the Southern Pipeline to the “Green Route” implying that it is renewable green energy, and changing the route to the central mountain range all the way to the metropolitan area. According to the AEE plans, the pipeline route is 146 km long with a potential impact to over 100 meters wide and, would severely impact around 400 agricultural acres.

It will severely affect the conservation of the of the Rio Grande de Arecibo and Rio Portuguese Watersheds and impact many rivers including, Rio de la Plata, Río Bayamón, Quebrada Diego, Rio Cibuco, Cano Matos, Perdomo Canal, Rio Grande de Arecibo, Caguana River, River Caguana, Pellejas River, Rio Corcho, Quebrada Arenas, Río Tallaboa, Tanamá River, Indian River, Rio Grande de Manati and Rio Yunes.

The pipeline route is comprised of 106 km of the karst area which supplies more than 25% of the total water demand of the country and directly impacts 223 acres of Special Conservation Zones. Furthermore, the presence of sinkholes and unstable terrain located within the pipeline route would cause more landslides than usual. Unstable terrain in south-central mountain range have some of the highest slopes ranging from sea level on the coast to 3,000 feet above sea level in town of Adjuntas, it crosses two seismic fault lines and then continue to San Juan affecting 13 municipalities.

It will impact some 51 communities, and passes through the lands of the University of Puerto Rico in the Town of Utuado, with potential risks to 22,854 families and students. Although the government says "there is a prudent separation of the pipeline from the communities"; the pipeline will pass along the side of the road that runs in front of the Levittown community in Toa Baja which is home to about 30,071 people; and the pipeline will be exposed along sections of the Arecibo Utuado PR10 where some 13,104 vehicles transit every day.

To see the full report by Casa Pueblo go to:
www.redbetances.com/component/content/article/51-en-portada/390-casa-pueblo-html

Although, the preamble to the constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico says that “a democratic system is fundamental to the life of the community... and ...that a democratic system is one where the will of the people is the source of public power, where public policy is subordinate to the rights of man, and ensures the free participation of its citizens in collective decisions”.

This multinational project again ignores and tramples on the right of the People to participation in decision-making.

Where is the democracy in our country when the government feels free to ignore the will of the people? Therefore, we reach out to your conscience and heart to oppose the “Green Route” pipeline of death.

Your voice and action together with those of others will help to preserve what is ours. We already face enough risks to our environment,

lives and property. Let us explore new sources of renewable and sustainable energy alternatives!

Enough! ●

Editor's Note: You can support the Borikén Taino by signing the petition calling for an end to the pipeline project at:
<http://www.petitiononline.com/ViaVerde/petition.html>



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When reprinting material found in this publication, a courtesy copy must be sent to our U.S. address.

Okama (Attention) Taino! Are you registered with your community? Get more information at <http://www.uctp.org>

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

- **OAS – Meeting on draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

Date: 18 – 20 January, 2011 • Place: OAS Headquarters, Washington, DC

The Organization of American States will convene the Thirteenth Meeting of Negotiations in the Quest for Points of Consensus, pursuant to operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 2565 (XL-O/10). For info on the UCTP Delegation to the meeting contact oirra@uctp.org

- **Eighth Round Capacity Building Workshop for Indigenous and Local Communities, Caribbean region**

Date: 16-18 March 2011 • Place: Georgetown, Guyana

Interested indigenous and local community organizations from the countries of the Caribbean region can nominate representatives by sending to the Secretariat an expression of interest or nomination by means of an official letter of designation addressed to the attention of the Executive Secretary (fax: +1 514 288 6588 or to email: secretariat@cbd.int with a recent curriculum vitae of the nominee by 15 January 2011, for consideration in the selection process.

- **10th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

Date: 16-27 May, 2011 • Place: United Nations Headquarters, NY

For registration and other information about the PFII, please visit www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session_ninth.html

- **UCTP Online Store**

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

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.

Editor's Note: *The staff at 'the Voice' looks forward to hearing from all of you, and we thank you for your comments, suggestions, and inquires. To submit items to the **Community Bulletin Board**, please email your request to tainonews@uctp.org. For more events and news visit <http://www.uctp.org>*

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