

PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES  
COMMITTEE ON INTER-AMERICAN SUMMITS MANAGEMENT  
AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN  
OAS ACTIVITIES

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APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 6 OF THE  
GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION BY CIVIL SOCIETY  
ORGANIZATIONS IN OAS ACTIVITIES [CP/RES. 759 (1217/99)]

*[Assembly of First Nations / National Indian Brotherhood (AFN/NIB)]*



## ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTS RELATED TO THE PARTICIPATION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS / NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD (AFN/NIB) IN THE REGISTRATION PROCESS OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN OAS ACTIVITIES

This document was prepared by the Summits of the Americas Secretariat to provide Member States with information on *Assembly of First Nations / National Indian Brotherhood (AFN/NIB)* pursuant to resolution CP/RES. 759 (1217/99), "Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities". The document contains the basic data and a list of supporting documentation presented by the *Assembly of First Nations / National Indian Brotherhood (AFN/NIB)*, in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines.

### 1. Background

The *Assembly of First Nations / National Indian Brotherhood (AFN/NIB)* is a not-profit organization established in Canada in 1969 as a national representative organization for all aboriginal citizens in Canada. *AFN/NIB* is a national indigenous organization with its head office located in the Territory of Akwesasne, Canada. The *National Indian Brotherhood (NIB)* functions as the Secretariat of the *Assembly of First Nations (AFN)*.

The principal organs of the Assembly of First Nations are: the First Nations-in-Assembly; the Confederacy of Nations; the Executive Committee; the Secretariat (*AFN/NIB*); and the Council of Elders. The Executive Committee is made up of the Regional Vice-Chiefs, the National Chief, and the Chairperson of the Council of Elders. Chiefs of their respective regions select the Vice-Chiefs and the Chiefs in Assembly elect the National Chief every three years. The Chiefs meet annually to set national policy and direction through resolution. The membership of the Confederacy consists of Chiefs and other Regional Leaders chosen according to the population each region.

The *AFN/NIB* undertakes activities in the following areas: aboriginal youth and women; aboriginal and treaty rights; education; environment; finance; access to resources; health and social services; housing; justice; international cooperation; Indian residential schools; languages and literacy; economic development; recognition and implementation of First Nation governments; and land claims.

The *AFN/NIB* pursues its objectives through organizing national and international conferences and forums, conducting meetings with different levels of government, carrying out campaigns, coordinating think tanks and working groups, and producing, publishing and disseminating policy papers, reviews, work plans and other forms of analyses in advocacy and education efforts.

The *AFN/NIB* receives the majority of its funding from various Canadian Governmental Agencies, particularly the Department of Indian Affairs.

The *AFN/NIB* applied for registration with the OAS on March 30, 2005.

2. Name, address, and date of establishment

Name: *Assembly of First Nations / National Indian Brotherhood (AFN/NIB)*

Address: Trebla Building  
473 Albert Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 5B4  
Canada

Telephone: 613-241-6789

Fax: 613-241-5808

E-mail: pfontaine@afn.ca

Website: www.afn.ca

National Chief: Mr. Phil Fontaine

Date established: 1970

3. Primary areas of activity of the CSO and their relationship to OAS activities

The primary role and function of the *AFN/NIB* is to be a national representative forum of First Nations for determining and harmonising effective collective and cooperative measures on issues subject for review, study, response or action for the purpose of advancing the aspirations of indigenous communities. *AFN/NIB* seeks to find, utilize and distribute resources for the greater benefit of all First Nations in endeavours that are national or international in nature and in scope. The activities that it undertakes and that are related to the activities of the OAS include the following:

- Directing attention toward and disseminating information on the rights of indigenous peoples, with special attention paid to indigenous women and youth;
- Developing and implementing policies that address and improve the full participation of indigenous populations in society and recognize and strengthen the capacity for self-governance within indigenous communities;
- Contributing to hemispheric and international discussions and negotiations on the rights of indigenous peoples and on issues that impact indigenous peoples;
- Developing public policy on issues of concern to indigenous peoples and promoting these policies at various levels of Government;
- Fostering dialogue among indigenous peoples, the international indigenous community, civil society organizations, and the Government;

- Promoting awareness and prioritizing indigenous peoples' issues in the Hemisphere and international community; and
- Facilitating and promoting the participation of indigenous peoples in international forums.

4. CSO contributions that could be of interest to the OAS

The *AFN/NIB* promotes the needs and concerns of indigenous populations regionally, nationally, and internationally. Activities carried out by this organization that can contribute to the OAS include the following:

- Developing reports and policies on indigenous use of , access, and rights to natural resources in Canada, with particular emphasis on fisheries, environmental health, sustainable development, forestry, and mining;
- Disseminating educational campaigns to develop awareness of the status of indigenous peoples' rights at both national and international levels;
- Observing and participating in international proceedings regarding indigenous peoples' rights including the United Nations (UN) Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples, the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Committee for Juridical and Political Affairs of the Permanent Council of the OAS;
- Planning and implementing national and regional policies to improve aboriginal people's access to health, justice, economic, education, and social services;
- Cooperating internationally to coordinate and host hemispheric gatherings of indigenous peoples, including co-hosting the Second Indigenous Peoples Summit of the Americas in October, 2005 in Argentina and hosting the First Indigenous Peoples Summit of the Americas in 2001 in Ottawa, Canada; and
- Collaborating with Government agencies in the development of regional, national and international policies that promote the interests of aboriginal people in Canada.

5. OAS work areas to which the CSO can provide support

The *AFN/NIB* works to promote the needs, interests, and concerns of indigenous communities at domestic and international levels and contributes to the development of international and domestic policy. The following areas have been identified as those in which this organization can cooperate with the OAS:

- Contribute to the efforts of the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP)

- of the Permanent Council of the OAS and promote the participation of indigenous peoples in future Meetings of Negotiations in Quest of Points of Consensus of this Working Group;
- Support the work of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples;
  - Provide information in support of the education campaign on Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, and Migrants of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR);
  - Promote, through the AFN Women's Council and the AFN Youth Council, the work of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIM) in contributing to programs and activities that address the needs of indigenous women and youth;
  - Cooperate with the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) and with regional, international, and non-governmental organizations to promote and develop policies and programs that seek to improve indigenous peoples' living standards in the areas of health, education, culture, justice, and labor;
  - Contribute knowledge on the maintenance, promotion and protection of indigenous languages and cultures to the Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC);
  - Contribute policy recommendations and observations regarding indigenous culture to the Inter-American Cultural Policy Observatory (ICPO) of the Unit for Social Development (USDE);
  - Participate in the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision Making for Sustainable Development (ISP) established by the Office for Sustainable Development and Environment (OSDE) in fostering the participation of indigenous peoples in planning and implementing environmental policies and programs;
  - Contribute expertise to the activities of the Inter-American Indian Institute (III) including participating in Inter-American Indigenous Congresses;
  - Participate in the Virtual Dialogue with civil society organizations of the Office of Education, Science and Technology (OEST) in the planning of educational policies and strategies of concern to indigenous peoples, and the observation, follow-up and assessment of derived initiatives;
  - Cooperate in following up on the mandates of the Summits of the Americas concerning the rights of indigenous peoples; and
  - Support the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in the development of health policies for indigenous peoples.
6. Documents submitted by the CSO
- Letter addressed to the Secretary General dated March 30, 2005
  - *AFN/NIB* Charter

- Statutes
- Financial statements for 2004 (audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP)
- Annual reports for 2002; 2003; 2003/2004
- Resolutions from 2003-2004
- The names of directors and legal representatives
- List of sources of funding