

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

[First Nations Summit Society]

ANALYSIS OF ELEMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION BY FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT SOCIETY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF REGISTRATION BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN OAS ACTIVITIES

This document was prepared by the Department of International Affairs / Secretariat for External Relations to provide information to the Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) on the civil society organization (CSO) *First Nations Summit Society*.

The information contained in this report is in response to resolution CP/RES. 759 (1217/99) “Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities.” This document includes a summary and list of documentation presented by *First Nations Summit Society* in accordance with the aforementioned Guidelines.

1. **Background**

First Nations Summit Society is a non-profit organization established on March 29, 1996 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada with its current headquarters in West Vancouver, British Columbia. *First Nations Summit Society*’s mission is to serve as a channel for First Nations to participate in political discourse related to treaty negotiations and other common issues, collaborate with provincial and national governments in dialogues and influence policy to protect indigenous rights.

First Nations Summit Society facilitates assemblies and other fora with more than 150 First Nations groups representing a large portion of the almost 200,000 indigenous peoples from British Columbia in order to address and negotiate issues relating to treaties, capacity building and social and economic concerns. *First Nations Summit Society* works primarily in British Columbia but is also involved in promoting indigenous rights at the national and international levels. Main areas of activity include environmental issues such as sustainable development and use of natural resources, access to justice, education, health and economic services.

First Nations Summit Society presented an *amicus curiae* brief on the subject of the Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in 2009. Additionally, *First Nations Summit Society* participates in the United Nations (UN) Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and has submitted a report to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

First Nations Summit Society finances its activities with contributions from various Canadian governmental agencies, including Health Canada, Indian and North Affairs Canada, Natural Resources Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada; the province of British Columbia; the University of Northern British Columbia; and the Assembly of First Nations, among others.

First Nations Summit Society submitted its application to register in the OAS on June 3, 2010.

2. Name, address, and date of establishment of the CSO

Name: First Nations Summit Society

Address: Suite 1200 – 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2
Canada

Telephone: 604-926-9903

Fax: 604-926-9923

E-mail address: info@fns.bc.ca; mteneese@fns.bc.ca

Website: www.fns.bc.ca

Executive Director: Howard E. Grant

Executive Assistant: Marilyn Teneese

Date of foundation: March 29, 1996

3. Primary areas of activity and contributions that could be of interest to the OAS

First Nations Summit Society advocates for the indigenous groups in British Columbia, Canada through negotiations, research, public education initiatives and participation in government policymaking processes. The primary areas of activity of *First Nations Summit Society* and contributions that could be of interest to the OAS include:

- Promoting indigenous rights and facilitating the negotiations of agreements and partnerships between First Nations organizations and federal and provincial governments of Canada through the coordination of meetings, drafting letters and briefing notes, and issuing press releases to address issues such as capacity for democratic participation, land management disputes, child welfare, natural resources use, economic development and aboriginal rights; and
- Supporting the recognition and reconciliation of indigenous rights by developing and implementing multilevel awareness campaigns directed at industry, labor organizations, municipal governments, businesses, environmental and religious groups and international organizations, among others.

4. Identification of OAS work areas

First Nations Summit Society offers to collaborate with the OAS in the following areas:

- Support the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) of the Permanent Council through participation in the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

- Work with the Department of International Law of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs (SLA) to offer input and recommendations for improving training programs, information dissemination and mainstreaming the indigenous perspective into OAS projects;
- Provide technical assistance to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), with a specific focus in support of the efforts by the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- Prepare amicus curiae briefs and other legal advice as needed for the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on issues related to indigenous rights in Canada;
- Assist the Department of State Modernization and Governance (DSMG) of the Secretariat for Political Affairs (SPA) with the objectives of its Section on Decentralization in building stronger local democratic governance and increased civil participation;
- Collaborate with the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) to develop projects which address sustainable resource management; and
- Promote the work of the Department of Human Development, Education and Culture (DHDEC) of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI), especially in its Cultural, Identity and Diversity program.

5. Documents submitted by the CSO to the OAS

- Letter to the OAS Secretary General dated June 3, 2010
- Certificate of Incorporation and Constitution
- Bylaws
- Declaration of institutional mission statement
- Annual Report: 2009-2010
- Financial Statements for the year ended March 31, 2009 (audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP)
- Background document
- Organizational chart
- First Nations Action Plans: Economic Development, Energy, Fisheries, Justice, Mineral Exploration and Mining, Mountain Pine Beetle, Indigenous Child at the Center, and The Transformative Change Accord: First Nations Health Plan