

Readers may reprint, translate, and disseminate this newspaper and its contents.

Summer / Fall 2005 Volume 4 Issue 1

Promoting the rights, voices, and visions of indigenous peoples



Lisa Odjig, a hoop dancer from the Odawa/Ojibwa Nation in Wlkwemikong, Manitoulin Island, Ontario, performs at the World Summit on the Information Society Indigenous Thematic Planning Conference in Ottawa, Canada, on March 17 and 18.

© J. Brown

A Peace-Building Initiative Based on Indigenous Values

By Tara Tidwell Cullen

When war breaks out, international investigators clamor to assess the human rights situations in the conflict areas. But these fact-finding missions often fail to consider the special concerns of indigenous peoples, and sometimes put local communities in greater danger.

Indigenous peoples are responding with their own conflict resolution methods.

"It is an imperative ... that indigenous peoples define their own research agenda and undertake studies which they can use to strengthen their initiatives to bring about peace, resolve and transform conflicts, and bring about sustainable development," indigenous peoples declared when they came together in Manila, Philippines, in December 2000 for the International Conference on Conflict Resolution, Peace Building, Sustainable Development, and Indigenous Peoples. They wanted to create a concrete

response to a peace-building initiative called for by Maya activist Rigorberta Menchu years before. According to the Manila Declaration, an Independent International Commission of Indigenous Peoples for Mediation and Conflict Resolution would document cases of indigenous peoples in conflict situations and research indigenous methods of conflict resolution.

Uwa delegates at the Manila conference asked that the commission's first project be a fact-finding mission to their home country of Colombia, where indigenous peoples have been trapped in the crossfire of a nearly 40-year civil war. It was during the preparation for this mission that the commission recognized how important an indigenous-driven approach would be.

"We realized that many missions have already been to Colombia, but so far we don't know if they have even been helpful to indigenous peoples," said Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, director of the

continued on page 5

This issue of *Cultural Survival Voices* focuses on indigenous peoples in conflict areas and indigenous women's struggles and achievements (see page 2).

The World Summit on the Information Society

By Jamie Brown

From "tele-health" to internet radio, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have changed the way the world operates. The United Nations and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) established the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in recognition of the need for a conversation to address the potential advancements of the digital revolution and how best to bridge the digital divide between developed and developing countries.

WSIS consists of two phases. Phase I took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on December 10-12, 2003. During this meeting, a Declaration of Principles and a Plan of Action were adopted. Phase II is scheduled to take place in Tunisia on November

16-18, 2005. Internet governance, financing mechanisms, and implementing the Plan of Action will be major topics. Also, WSIS Phase II will discuss ways to use ICTs to address the digital divide and achieve the U.N. Millennium Development Goals.

Indigenous Peoples' Role in WSIS

In December 2003, the government of Canada and the Aboriginal Canada Portal and Connectivity Working Group, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and other U.N. agencies helped organize the Global Forum of Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society (GFIPIS), which took place in conjunction with Phase I of WSIS.

Get Involved in WSIS - *continued on page 11*

Indigenous Voices
Know Your Rights
Visions
From *Weekly Indigenous News*
Behind the Headlines
Become a Member

Pages 4-6
Pages 7-10
Page 12
Pages 13
Pages 14-15
Back Page

With the generous support of The Christiansen Fund, this issue of *Voices* is being translated into Spanish, French, and Russian and will be distributed to indigenous communities throughout the world.

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No 2226
Worcester, MA