

Second World Indigenous Youth Conference

Darwin 5–11 July, 1993

As part of the International Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1993 the Northern Territory will play host to the second World Indigenous Youth Conference in Darwin on 5–11 July. Thousands are expected to attend the week long conference, which will involve indigenous participants from all over the world.

Purpose

The main purpose of this historic conference is to once again unite over two thousand grass-roots youth along with respective Elders from world-wide populations of the Indigenous Peoples. Elders would serve as advisers to guide the direction with wisdom and knowledge as passed on from the dreamtime. Leaders as well as those others interested are welcome to observe and audit this gathering.

It is usually said, but rarely respected, that the youth are the leaders of tomorrow. This gathering will again allow the Indigenous youth to give testimony of the situations and lifestyles that they must endure in their own homelands. Situations which may be life threatening and situations which we as young Indigenous peoples will have the opportunity to hear first hand.

This gathering will also enable youth to express their experiences and values and to enhance their cultures for a better environment for future generations and to pursue peace, harmony, co-operation and understanding with all other people of the world. Bearing the testimonies in mind we must again continue to seize the opportunity to discuss solutions to our present problems, hopes and aspirations for the future.

Moreover, to discuss, express and voice common views to re-affirm our respective authentic cultural heritages, examine critically our present dislocations in society, and find ways and means to enhance our traditions and values for a visionary future in a more peaceful, harmonious and cooperative environment.

Objectives

- To bring together Aboriginal Australian/Indigenous Peoples living in Australia and non-Indigenous youth with over 1500 Indigenous youth and elders around the world to enhance global inter-cultural knowledge, discuss problem-solving and develop strategies for future aspirations in a co-operative world;
- To provide a setting for youth to promote the conservation and protection of ecological and authentic heritages, to examine critically dislocations in society and to find ways and means to enhance traditions and values for a visionary future in a more peaceful and co-operative environment;
- To ensure direct Aboriginal Australian/non-Aboriginal youth involvement in the 'Reconciliation Process' who will be the future beneficiaries of the eventual process;
- To begin the process of involving Aboriginal Australian youth in the event that will solidify inter-cultural co-operation to promote the affirmation of culture development and identity.
- To find ways and means to allow Indigenous Peoples to enjoy peaceful co-existence with Non-Indigenous neighbours by recognising the principle of preserving and enhancing mutual respect amongst people.

This is an opportunity for both the achievements and the problems that our youth face to be exposed and reiterated to society as a whole. Without doubt, the opportunity for Aboriginal youth to come together to discuss the battles we face in society is a very valuable one. It will enable a strong union of black youth to be formed, which is very important and indeed very powerful.

The Conference Program

This conference will continue with the six issues addressed at the First World Indigenous Youth Conference. The central theme however, *Claiming Our Future: the reality of where we are and where we are going* will be the major focus of the conference. The broad issues are as follows:

Culture and Education: Indigenous peoples have an inherent right to their own languages and culture. The cultural development of indigenous Peoples is critical to the survival of our ways of life. This theme will examine ways to protect our culture: that is, our art, language, our spirituality and our relationship to the land, for future generations. This theme will look at ways indigenous youth can help educate the wider community about our cultures to develop a better understanding.

Environment and Development: This topic will examine the role young indigenous people can play in rehabilitating and preserving our homelands. Indigenous people are the first to suffer the effects of humanity's war with the environment. The Earth now more than ever is in need of healing, and it is becoming clear that modern science and technology don't have all the answers. We must discuss how youth can contribute to the preservation of our lands from devastation, in our communities and on a global front.

Social Issues: At the inaugural meeting of Indigenous youth in Quebec, Canada in July 1992, the following issues were identified as some of the main social problems confronting young people: Alcohol and Drugs; Racism; Unemployment; The Legal System; Health; Poverty; Land Rights; Cultural Identity.

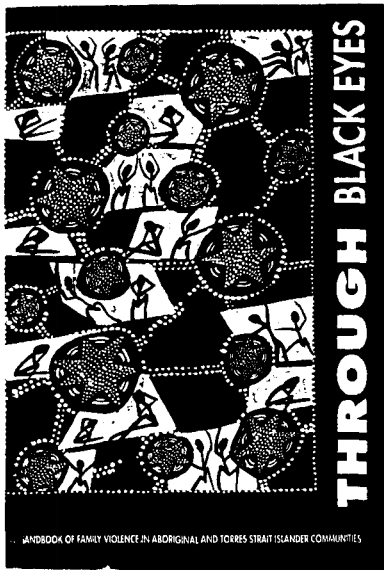
Women and Society: Women are the bearers of tradition, and as such they are the key to continuity in indigenous societies. But as our peoples have been forced to adapt to environmental destruction and dispossession of our homelands, and the breakup of families, the role of women is changing. This theme will discuss that changing role and how young indigenous people can help restore safety and respect to women's lives.

Indigenous People's Rights: The International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples opened on December 10, 1992 in New York. This theme will identify the developments with the Universal Draft Declaration of Indigenous Rights, how those developments will affect our futures, and what contribution youth can make.

International Indigenous Youth Council: At the first World Indigenous Youth Conference, there was strong support for the establishment of an International Indigenous Youth Council. This topic will direct the policy and constitutional goals of such a council.

These themes are open to suggestions and recommendations. The Organisers expect these topics will provide a starting point for discussion and action, so be prepared.

For further information on the conference, contact Alfred Lacey (089) 482155, or Yolanda Walker at SNAICC on (03) 417 6744.



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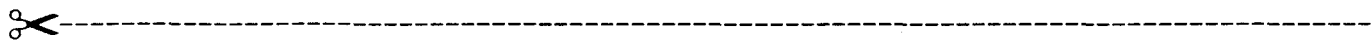
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