



The Embassy of Colombia in Washington, D.C.

*The Mission of Colombia to the Organization of
American States*

*The Department of Sustainable Development –
Secretary of Integral Development at the
Organization of American States*



Cordially invite you to a conference on

Indigenous Governance and Rainforest Conservation in the Amazon Region of Colombia

By

Dr. Martin von Hildebrand

*Place: Padilha Vidal Conference Room
OAS Building
1889 F street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006*

*Date: November 16, 2006
Time: from 3:30 P.M. to 6 P.M.*

Dr. Martin von Hildebrand is the founding Director of Gaia Amazonas Foundation. He also coordinates the COAMA (Consolidation of the Amazon region) program that supports indigenous peoples in putting into practice their constitutional rights and establishing local government, within the context of political and administrative decentralization in Colombia. In 1986, he was appointed Head of Indigenous Affairs, by President Virgilio Barco, enabling him to encourage government policy favorable to indigenous rights and resulting in over 20 million hectares of Amazon rainforest being handed-back to indigenous inhabitants under the legal figure of ‘resguardos’. This proved a critical impetus for the new Colombian Political Constitution of 1991 and ratification of ILO Convention No.169, which provide an essential framework for indigenous territorial rights and environmental management. He has been honored with the Right Livelihood Award (Sweden, 1999), Colombia’s National Environment

Award (1999), the Order of the Golden Ark (Holland, 2004) and the Colombia's National Award for Ecology (2004).

In the Colombian Amazon the constitutional and legal framework recognize the collective and inalienable rights of indigenous peoples to over 240,000 km² of rainforest (an area of the size of Great Britain), along with the responsibility for political-administrative management of these territories. Dr. Hildebrand, who has been instrumental in these processes will present how the indigenous people are assuming these new rights and responsibilities, and how they are basing them on their traditional knowledge despite challenges of the 21st century.

R.S.V.P. (by November 15, 2006) usdecpr7@oas.org (please feel free to redistribute this invitation)