

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP TO
PREPARE THE DRAFT AMERICAN DECLARATION
ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

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Washington, D.C.

The Chair of the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is pleased to invite the representatives of the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the representatives of the indigenous peoples of the Americas to the special meeting of the Working Group that will be held from February 24 to 28, 2003, at the headquarters of the OAS in Washington, D.C.

The special meeting is being convened pursuant to resolution AG/RES. 1851 (XXXII-O/02), adopted by the OAS General Assembly in Barbados in June 2002. This meeting will follow the same procedure as the special meeting of March 2002.

The Chair of the Working Group hopes to see broad and open participation by representatives of the states and the indigenous peoples, with a view to significant progress in the deliberations aimed at the adoption of the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Chair of the Working Group wishes to call upon both the states and the indigenous organizations to make every effort to ensure participation by representatives of indigenous peoples in this meeting.

An important step in this process was the establishment, in May 2002, of the Specific Fund to support the preparation of the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [CP/RES. 817 (1319/02)], the purpose of which is to defray travel and per diem expenses for representatives of indigenous peoples or organizations, enabling them to participate in the special meetings of the Working Group. I invite the states and national and international organizations, whether public or private, to lend financial support to the Fund.

In view of the Specific Fund's financial limitations, we recommend that applications to the Fund be from indigenous organizations that are unable to finance the participation of their representatives with resources of their own or from other sources.

Should you require additional information, please go to the OAS web page: www.oas.org.