

MISURASATA VISIT TO NORTH AMERICA

As a result of a Mutual Support and Assistance Agreement signed in August of 1983 between the U.S. based National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and MISURASATA (Miskito Nation, Sumo Nation and Rama Nation) of the Eastern Region of Nicaragua a four person MISURASATA Delegation will travel to North America in July on a Cultural Exchange Mission to several Indian Reservations in the U.S. and Canada. The NCAI/MISURASATA agreement established a commitment to encourage closer communications between North American Indian Nations and the Miskito, Sumo and Rama Nations through cultural exchanges and direct nation-to-nation visits.

The MISURASATA Delegation will visit the Six Nations of Haudenosaunee Confederacy in the northeastern United States and then travel to Northwest United States and Southwest Canada. The Quinault Nation and Lummi Nation in the Pacific Northwest of the U.S. have extended invitations to the MISURASATA Delegation and the Nuxalk Nation in Southwestern Canada have invited the MISURASATA Delegation to visit their Nation.

The MISURASATA Cultural Exchange Delegation is expected to visit the three nations in northwest United States and Southwestern Canada during a ten-day period in mid-July. In addition to two-day visits to the three Indian nations the Delegation will spend one-day in Seattle, Washington visiting the Day Break Star Center and one day in Vancouver, British Columbia visiting the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs before returning to Eastern Nicaragua.

In cooperation with the Quinault, Lummi, and Nuxalk Nations and MISURASATA the Center for World Indigenous Studies is coordinating the Delegation's travels during their visits on the west coast of North America.

ABOUT THE MISURASATA DELEGATION:

The four member MISURASATA Delegation will include the following people:

JOAQUIN SUAZO: A leading elder of the Miskito Nation from a village on the Rio Coco. Mr. Suazo was a founder of the first national Indian organization in Nicaragua to Press for Indian land rights called by the acronym ALPROMISU (Rama, Miskito, Sumo Alliance). ALPROMISU, established in the late 1960's and early 1970's changed its name after 1979 to MISURASATA. Mr. Suazo is a leading member of the MISURASATA Warriors and the Miskito Nation Representative on the five member directorate of MISURASATA-SICC.

THEODORO DOWNS: The Cultural and Linguistic Minister of MISURASATA and a Miskito who lived in the coastal town of Puerto Cabezas and then served as an official of the local Government. Mr. Downs was arrested by the Sandinista Government in Managua after the 1979 revolution and was held in Prison until he was released in December 1983 after the Managua Government announced its amnesty Program.

MARGUERITA CURBELO: A Miskito who lived along the Rio Coco which was devastated as a result of a Managua Government sweep in 1980. Ms. Curbelo had been a local Government official. She is now a Regional Representative of MISURASATA.

YUTAM LOPEZ: A Sumo leader who sat as a member of ALPROMISU. Mr. Lopez was arrested by the Managua Government as a member of MISURASATA's directorate in 1981 and exiled. He now sits as the Sumo Nation Representative on the five person directorate of MISURASATA-SICC.

TENTATIVE DELEGATION SCHEDULE:

The MISURASATA Delegation is tentatively scheduled to visit the Quinault Nation, Lummi Nation, Nuxalk Nation, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and the United Indians of All Tribes Day Break Star Center during the period of 24 JULY through 4 August.

PURPOSE OF DELEGATION VISIT:

The MISURASATA Delegation Plans to visit the Quinault Nation, Lummi Nation and Nuxalk Nation to share in cultural celebrations and seek measures to establish closer relations between the Miskito, Sumo and Rama Nations with Indian Nations in the United States and Canada. The Delegation will pay a visit to the United Indians of All Tribes Day Break Star Center in Seattle and deliver a Public Presentation on the current situation of the Miskito, Sumo and Rama Nations. Finally the Delegation will visit the leadership of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs in Vancouver, British Columbia. The Delegation may conduct news conferences during their visits to Seattle and Vancouver.

BRIEF BACKGROUNDER:

Before 1979 the Miskito, Sumo and Rama Nations lived relatively undisturbed and essentially neglected by the Government of Nicaragua. Not until the Somoza Government nationalized the forest region of the Rio Coco following the pullout of several U.S. business owned timber companies did the Miskito villages along that river begin to organize community land rights

organizations. After several years when more villages along the Rio Coco and down the Atlantic Coast organized community land rights organizations it was determined that a national organization of Miskito, Sumo and Rama nations should be formed to deal with the increasingly oppressive Somoza government. It was in the early 1970's that the national land rights organization ALPROMISU was formed.

Organized at the community level and controlled by village elders ALPROMISU rapidly became a staunch advocate of Indian Rights and a systematic organizer in villages throughout Indian Territory. Soon, ALPROMISU included representation from the whole Atlantic Region which included 275,000 inhabitants. The population consisted of 55% Miskito, 22.5% Creoles, 15% Mestizos, 5% Sumos, 5% Ramas and 1% others. With the Creoles joining in alliance with Indian Nations ALPROMISU represented more than 80% of the population in the Atlantic Region.

Though ALPROMISU did not take direct part in the revolutionary movement that began to swell against the Somoza government the Indian Leaders did eventually extend support to the new government in 1979. ALPROMISU agreed to send a delegate to the new Council of State established by the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN) (Sandinista National Liberation Front). ALPROMISU also agreed to change its name to MISURASATA and thus become an active participant in the new government. With the new government controlled by the Sandinista Party ALPROMISU/MISURASATA continued to press the government to recognize Indian land rights and other rights to language and culture.

Like the preceding Somoza government, the new Sandinista government took extreme exceptions to Indian Rights claims and charged the Indian leadership with being "anti-revolutionary", "anti-Spanish" and "anti-Nicaragua". The Indian leadership were undeterred; they continued to press for land rights, political autonomy and Indian rights in general. In August 1980 the new Managua government announced plans for NATIONALIZING LANDS ON THE ATLANTIC COAST to integrate the Indian majority population and their territories into the rest of Nicaragua. In September 1980, MISURASATA obtained a grant to conduct an intensive study of community land rights on the Atlantic Coast. The research was completed in January 1981 and was submitted to the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA), the National Institute of Natural Resources and the Environment (IIPENA), the national Forestry Institute (CORFON) and the Nicaraguan Institute of Mines (CONDEMINA). The Nicaraguan government's response was to charge the Indian leaders as being racist and separatist and, therefore, a threat to the revolution. As some indigenous observers and others have noted: The Miskito reaction to the proposed nationalization of their lands and resources was not a product of some historic opposition to "Spaniards", but rather,

"it was a response to a perceived threat against their subsistence security and their status as equals in relations with nation-states." Put another way, Indian leaders saw this most recent attempt at Nicaraguan nationalization as an encroachment by one sovereign on the sovereignty of the Miskitos, Sumo and Rama Nations and their territories.

Following more accusations of racism, separatism and incipient regional revolt from within the Nicaraguan Government authorities arrested all thirty-three leaders of MISURASATA and held them in jail. Declaring in the Summer of 1981 the "Integration of the Atlantic Coast a Priority" the Managua Government took steps to install a new MISURASATA leadership. Indian Rights, land rights and autonomy remained a priority of MISURASATA. In February 1982 the Managua Government initiated the forced relocation of the Indian people living in villages along the Rio Coco and placed them in internment camps. It was this act of the Managua Government which finally caused the Miskito, Sumo and Rama Nations with their Creole allies to organize a formal resistance against the Sandinista Regime.

The goals of the Indian resistance which has continued since 1982 are to establish rights for self-determination, political status as distinct peoples and recognition of traditional rights to indigenous land, waters, and autonomous control over their homelands. Rafael Zelaya, a MISURASATA leader, puts it this way: "We want autonomy and self-determination so we can protect our culture, our Indian life, Indian rights. Without Indian self-determination, our way of life will be dominated by capitalism or marxism. Those are not Indian ways. We have our own ways." An Indian Warrior said "...autonomy, our land, that's why the Indian people are getting into this war." The Indian AIKLABANKA (war) continues ... the Indian TRABILKA (trouble) is still a part of the daily lives of the Indian and Creole peoples who live in what the Miskito people call Aisuban Tashva (home land).

Since the Indian Resistance began an Indian warriors began to defend Indian homelands:

1. one-fourth (43,000) Miskito, Sumo and Rama people are displaced from their homes and are in government-controlled camps or in Honduras or Costa Rica as refugees and exiles.
2. one-half of Miskito and Sumo Villages have been destroyed by bombing or burning.
3. Indian rights to self-government, traditional lands, waters and resources have been abolished.
4. subsistence and staple foods are scarce, hunger

is common, medicine and doctors are unavailable in many communities, freedom of movement is severely restricted or prohibited.

5. many Indian communities have been invaded and occupied by Nicaraguan forces during which alleged and documented human rights violations have occurred.

6. more than 80 Indians taken by Government security forces have disappeared and are not accounted for in prisons or relocation camps.

7. every person, every family has had to decide whether to side with the FSLN, to seek refuge in another country, or resist.

8. several thousand Indians have taken up arms to fight against the FSLN and many thousands more want arms.

9. their three-year long political and military resistance continues determinedly despite the military superiority of their adversary and the limitations imposed by their fictive allies, yet Indian civilians suffer from often indiscriminate FSLN counterinsurgency aimed at suppressing the resistance.

Center for World Indigenous Studies

Board

Rudolph C. Ryser, Chairman of the Board

June 17, 1989

To: The Board of Directors of CWIS

I am writing to remind you that CWIS played a part in establishing Pana Pana, an International Miskito, Sumo and Rama Support Group. Their association with the National Indian Youth Council has come to an end, and they are seeking an umbrella organization under which to continue work.

I wish to recommend that CWIS take Pana Pana on as a project of the Center. Please find enclosed a copy of Resolution 9-89, which needs to be considered by the Board. I would appreciate it if you would call me at (206) 672-7272 to express your views on this.

Warm Regards

Rudolph C. Ryser
Rudolph C. Ryser

July 4, 1989

Dear Rudy,

I have read Resolution 09-89 and support the intent. Good luck!

I'll call you the next time I'm in Seattle.

Ralph I. Hunka
5028 Mills Dr
Anchorage AK 99508
907-338-2322

Center for World Indigenous Studies

RESOLUTION 09-89

RESOLVED:

WHEREAS, Pana Pana, an International Miskito, Sumo and Rama Support Group, requests that the Center for World Indigenous Studies adopt their organization as a project of the Center, and

WHEREAS, Pana Pana agrees to provide the Center with a plan of their activities for the coming year, to provide copies of all their publications, brochures and solicitations, and to use the Center's name as sponsor of only those activities which the Center wishes to sponsor, and

WHEREAS, Pana Pana also requests that the Center accept funds made payable to the Center for the activities of Pana Pana endorsed by the Center and that reimbursement to Pana Pana volunteer staff for documented expenses be made in a timely manner, and agrees to cooperate to set up any procedures to assist in financial accountability and in accordance with the Center's 501 (c) (3) status under Federal Law, and

WHEREAS, it is the purpose of the Center for World Indigenous Studies to, among other things, provide for the well being of indigenous peoples.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED and agreed that Pana Pana shall be incorporated as a program of the Center for World Indigenous Studies effective immediately, provided that Pana Pana agrees to pay C.W.I.S. an administrative fee equal to ten percent of those funds raised expressly for Pana Pana activities.

Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried, this resolution has been adopted by the Directors of the Center for World Indigenous Studies during a Special Meeting on June 20, 1989 conducted during a conference call where all members were present.

CERTIFICATION

_____ KENNETH BENSHOOF, Secretary

_____ Date

July 4, 1989

*I Ralph I Elasha am in favor of
Res 09-89, agreeing to adopt Pana Pana
as a program of the C.W.I.S. provided Pana
Pana meets the conditions or minimally set
out in the above Resolution. Ralph I Elasha*

Center for World Indigenous Studies

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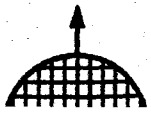
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Center for World Indigenous Studies

07-12-1989

Dear Joe:

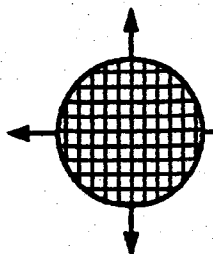
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If you are still interested in using the Center as an umbrella organization for Pana Pana, then I need you to send me a copy of your chart of accounts, and copies of your bank statements and check register for January '89 through now. Please continue sending copies of these every month hereafter.

I am pleased to welcome you aboard!

Best Regards,

Rudolph C. Ryser



Center for World Indigenous Studies

P.O. Box 82038, Kenmore, Washington 98028

U.S.A.

206/672-4918

07-12-1989

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PANA PANA, *an International Miskito,*

*Sumo and Rama Support Group**

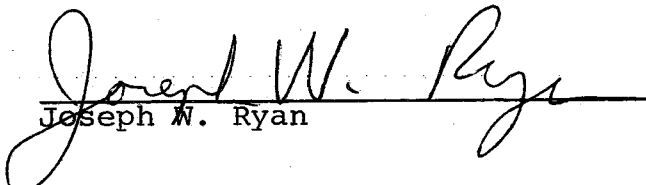
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Martha M. Roberge


Joseph W. Ryan

*A Project of the National Indian Youth Council

please reply to:

☐ Martha M. Roberge
General Delivery
Accord, N.Y. 12404
USA

☐ Joe Ryan
2451 Perkins Lane West
Seattle, Washington
98199

☐ Jim Anaya,
National Indian Youth Council
318 Elm, S.E.
Albuquerque, N.M. 87102

June 17, 1989

To: The Board of Directors of CWIS

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Warm Regards,

Rudolph C. Ryser

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*an International Miskito,
Sumo and Rama Support Group**

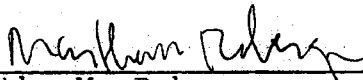
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National Indian Youth Council
318 Elm, S.E.
Albuquerque, N.M. 87102

PANA PANA, *an International Miskito,*

*Sumo and Rama Support Group**

June 7, 1989

Mr. Rudy Ryser
Center for World Indigenous Studies
728-212 Place S.W.
Lynnwood, WA 98036

Dear Rudy:

Greetings! This letter is long overdue. How are you?

I now have two children and precious little time to do for Pana Pana what needs to be done. But according to Joe Ryan, you are willing to take Pana Pana on as a project of your organization and this will be a big help to us. Here is my understanding of our current effort:

(1) Resolution from Pana Pana requesting your sponsorship--see the attached which I have sent separately to Joe to sign and forward to you. If you wish to make changes or additions, please do so.

(2) Current plans for Pana Pana--The Indian Law Resource Center has requested that we circulate the New York Times letter with a request for material aid for reconstruction. This will be included in a 300-person mailing we are preparing. This mailing will also include an updated brochure and media list and a copy of the current Yatama Peace Initiative which we recently printed (in English--the Spanish version will be ready shortly).

(3) Previous work--attached is a memo written to Brooklyn in November 1988, which outlines recent work. Enclosed also is the video interview with Brooklyn.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Jim Anaya who I believe is at the University of Iowa. We have had no contact with him for a couple of years and, with Gerald Wilkinson's passing, I don't know what the situation is at N.I.Y.C.--thus our gratitude to you to sponsor the work we are able to accomplish.

I can be reached at home (914)626-4804 or you can leave a message at (914)331-7966, if you wish to discuss any of the above. Please do call or write as soon as possible, since the new brochure listing you as sponsor will be ready for the printer June 15th. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Marti

Marti Roberge

*A Project of the National Indian Youth Council
MMR:djh

Enclosures (To follow separately)

please reply to:

☒ Martha M. Roberge
General Delivery
Accord, N.Y. 12404
USA

☐ Joe Ryan
2451 Perkins Lane West
Seattle, Washington
98199

☐ Jim Anaya,
National Indian Youth Council
318 Elm, S.E.
Albuquerque, N.M. 87102

PANA PANA, *an International Miskito,* *Sumo and Rama Support Group**

ALERT!

Dear Supporter of the Miskito, Sumo and Rama People,

YATAMA seeks our help to build support for their new Peace Initiative. Brooklyn Rivera has announced he is returning to Nicaragua on June 29th.

There are many ways you can help:

- **Write today** to Nicaragua President Daniel Ortega (Casa de Gobierno, Managua, Nicaragua).
Urge him to guarantee a safe return to Rivera and his delegation. Send copies to Pres. Oscar Arias (Casa Presidential, San Jose, Costa Rica) and Pres. Carlos Andres Perez (Casa Presidential, Caracas, Venezuela).
- **Circulate this ALERT** to your colleagues, elected officials, church members and concerned citizens.
- **Send a contribution** for material aid to those returning to Nicaragua.

THANK YOU!

(We too would appreciate copies of all correspondence and a contribution to help defray the cost of this mailing.)

*A Project of the National Indian Youth Council

please reply to:

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☐ Joe Ryan
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Seattle, Washington
98199

☐ National Indian Youth Council
318 Elm, S.E.
Albuquerque, N.M. 87102

PANA PANA, *an International Miskito,
Sumo and Rama Support Group*

SPREAD THE WORD!

We can't do it without your help. . . .

Distribute this mailing to your:

school
church or synagogue
community organization
peace group

Order bulk copies-- Pay postage only!

Detach and return to Pana Pana, General Delivery, Accord, N.Y. 12404 U.S.A.

Please send us _____ copies of brochure.

Enclosed is _____ (\$5.00 for 100, \$10.00 for 200, etc.) for _____ brochures.

Send to _____

please reply to:

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Accord, N.Y. 12404
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PANA PANA, *an International Miskito,*

*Sumo and Rama Support Group**

SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT JEOPARDIZES RETURN OF EXILED INDIAN LEADERS JULY 31, 1989

Brooklyn Rivera and other leaders of the Nicaraguan Indian Organization, YATAMA, had planned to return to Nicaragua on this date. That return has now been postponed indefinitely.

Support for this long-planned peace effort has been provided by a church-sponsored reconciliation commission inside Nicaragua, by President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica and by others in the international community including members of the U.S. Congress.

At the eleventh hour, Sandinista Commandante Tomas Borge issued a directive requiring that the Indian leaders submit a formal amnesty request before their return. He also demanded that each returnee agree to seven specific obligations upon return.

These preconditions are viewed by the Indian leaders as onerous and unacceptable violations of the accords under the Arias peace plan. In effect, they require that the Indians declare complete submission to the Sandinista government and to the government's plans for the Indian territory of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast. Non-Indian leaders of resistance groups who have returned to Nicaragua under the peace plan have not been required to sign such documents. It is unfortunate that the 10th Anniversary celebration of the Sandinista triumph over the Somosa dictatorship cannot also include celebration of the indigenous leaders to the East Coast. More information will follow.....

ADDENDUM TO YAMATA PEACE INITIATIVE

On your copy of the Yamata Peace Initiative, please change the dates as follows:

APRIL 15.... Changed to..MAY 28
APRIL 30.... Changed to..JUNE 15
MAY 15..... Changed to..JUNE 30
JUNE 15..... Changed to..JUNE 30
JUNE 30..... Changed to..AUGUST 15
SEPTEMBER 30..Changed to..OCTOBER 15

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A Plea by Nicaragua's Indians

By Brooklyn Rivera

WITH the signing of the most recent agreement by Central American presidents and

the U.S. bipartisan accord on Nicaragua, this is an opportune moment for the Indian people of Nicaragua to return to their homelands on the Atlantic coast. We are pleased that the Nicaraguan Government at last seems ready to discuss our demands seriously.

Our struggle of more than eight years has remained unwavering in its objective of securing our land and resource rights and a meaningful measure of self-rule. We seek full implementation of the accords of Feb. 2, 1988, whereby the Nicaraguan Government committed itself to a process of reconciliation based on the recognition of our historic rights and

Brooklyn Rivera is a member of the Yatanza Directorate, a Nicaraguan Indian resistance organization.

We want to go home — help us.

full political freedoms.

We intend to see the Sandinistas live up to their commitment to allow for freedom of speech, movement and organization. Our goal is to foster a peaceful dynamic by which our rights will become secured and our Indian people, including those tens of thousands who fled Nicaragua as a result of the violence, can live in conditions of mutual benefit and understanding with other Nicaraguans.

Our efforts are a complement to the national process of internal democratization and pacification of the country. We intend once again to sit in negotiations with the Sandinistas and challenge them to enhance the ideals of their revolution to include full respect for the rights of Indian peoples, who occupy a territory covering

more than a third of Nicaragua.

Our efforts require the moral, spiritual and material solidarity of all people truly interested in the well being of the Nicaraguan people. The physical security of the Indian leaders as we return and work inside Nicaragua must be a matter of constant vigilance. The Sandinista Government must be encouraged in specific terms to deal with us honestly and fairly, and to fully extend to us the freedoms it has promised.

The suffering of our people, who have been battered by war and natural disaster, must be alleviated. This will require generous material aid by those more fortunate throughout the world. Material support from politically impartial sources also is needed for the Indian leadership and organization so that it may operate effectively and independently.

The struggle of indigenous peoples in Central America and elsewhere has commanded considerable attention in international forums like the U.N. but surprisingly little attention in practical geopolitical discourse. We appeal to the international community to join us in our quest for peace and dignity. □

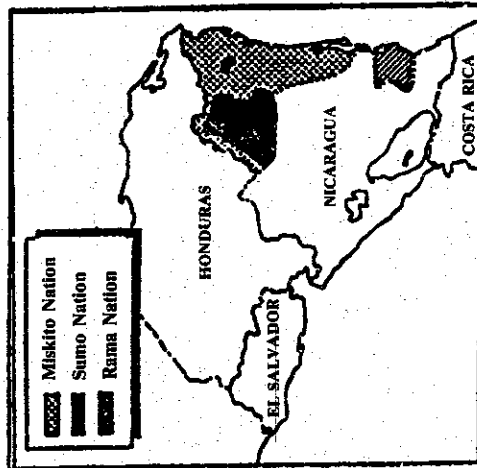
PANA PANA*

—an International Miskito, Sumo and Rama Support Group—

PANA PANA* is a global network of individuals and organizations who promote the rights of indigenous (the "original," native or Indian) peoples. We believe that indigenous peoples are entitled to enjoy the same rights enjoyed by all races: the rights to be self-governing, to choose their own form of political organizations, to control their villages and land. They have the right to decide when and how their natural resources will be developed and to raise their children in their own language and culture.

We are organizing to promote the rights of the Miskito, Sumo and Rama peoples of Nicaragua. We support their right to be self-governing and to control their resources, and we wholeheartedly support the current negotiations over these issues between MISURASATA ("Miskito, Sumo, Rama and Sandinista working together") and the Nicaraguan government.

We are opposed to all external military intervention in Nicaragua and recognize the right of the Nicaraguan people to determine their own future. We see Indian self-determination not as a threat but as ultimately strengthening and building support for the Nicaraguan people.



MISURASATA is the most representative of Nicaraguan Indian organizations. We respect all Indian organizations in the country but believe that there will be no lasting peace between the Indian and non-Indian peoples until a just agreement is reached with MISURASATA.

We believe MISURASATA's goals, which have been presented to the Nicaraguan government in a four-part peace plan, are just, honorable and in accord with the legitimate aspirations of native peoples throughout the world. Indian peoples view this as a pivotal struggle. Achievement of these goals will signal hope to all Indians in the Americas.

Our work will include:

NEWSLETTER: Supporters will receive periodic updates about the situation in Eastern Nicaragua.

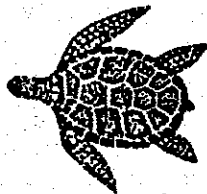
EMERGENCY RESPONSE NETWORK: Supporters will be alerted when we need to write or telephone specific public officials in an organized way.

FUNDRAISING: We are working to raise money for the Misurasata office, travel expenses for their negotiators, and humanitarian aid for the reconstruction of Atlantic Coast communities destroyed in the present conflict.

PUBLIC EDUCATION: We ask your assistance in developing education programs in Europe and the Americas concerning peace with justice for Indians in Nicaragua.

join us!

*PANA PANA is a Miskito expression which translates "to help each other" and refers to the traditional village practice of communal planting of neighborhood gardens.



—an International Miskito, Sumo and Rama Support Group—

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the formation of

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a project of the National Indian Youth Council

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Albuquerque, N.M. 87102

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Who are the Miskito, Sumo and Rama People?



Map and photo courtesy of Dr. Bernard Nietschmann.

In harmony with "wan tasbia"

The Miskito, Sumo and Rama peoples live in eastern Nicaragua. For more than nine thousand years, they have watched the rising sun, fished the turtle, nurtured their young and respected the elders. A virtually unbroken chain between grandparent, parent and child has given vitality and strength to their enduring culture. At the root of this enduring culture is "wan tasbia," "our land." Since before recorded history, the inhabitants of "wan tasbia" have lived in harmony with nature, their agriculture, fishing and hunting sustaining village life in an ecologically sound manner.

Intrusions into "wan tasbia"

They have now known foreign invasions for nearly half a millennium, but they have always met outside intrusions with firm defense. Neighbors across the mountains, to the west, were not as successful. Overwhelmed by Spanish invaders, the European "foot-hold" became a colony which, with its own complex history and memories of the Spanish culture and way of life became the present state of Nicaragua. Unlike the original peoples of the Pacific Coast that had long coexisted with the Miskito, Sumo and Rama, many generations of Nicaraguans have attempted to intrude into "wan tasbia."

Treaty of 1860

During the first 350 years of European presence, Eastern Nicaragua was neither part of Nicaragua nor a Spanish colony. Much of Eastern Nicaragua was a British Protectorate known as "Moskita." In 1860 Britain ceded to Nicaragua its claim to Moskita, but with the proviso that the territory and internal affairs of the Miskitos would not be disrupted by the Nicaraguan state. Nevertheless, in 1890 Nicaragua unilaterally claimed complete sovereignty over Moskita.

The Sandinistas' Indian War

Upon the triumph of the revolution in 1979, the present Sandinista government, although with professed interest in the welfare of the Indian peoples, attempted to impose unilateral and unprejudiced external control over Indian villages. Although the Indian peoples initially expressed a willingness to work with the new government (and remained their organization MISURASATA which translates "Miskito, Sumo, Rama and Sandinista working together"), government policies which began to severely disrupt village life resulted in the Indians taking up arms in 1981. Many Indian villages were destroyed, thousands of people were relocated and both sides have suffered many casualties.

Negotiations with MISURASATA

In December, 1984, both sides agreed to negotiate. (As currently acknowledged by the Sandinistas, the Indian war is separate from the *contra* forces trying to overthrow the Managua government.) With the assistance of Colombia and several European countries, MISURASATA and the Nicaraguan government have begun the long, slow process of establishing a bilateral agreement. MISURASATA has presented a peace proposal which provides a guarantee of meaningful self-determination over Indian lands. The negotiations already have resulted in the Sandinistas acquiescing in the return of many Indian peoples to their own villages. Acceptance of MISURASATA's proposals would create hope for a better future for all Indian peoples.

At the May, 1985, negotiating session between MISURASATA and the Nicaraguan government, many indigenous leaders were present as observers. Over 30 leaders signed a "Declaration of Support" of MISURASATA's position. The following are excerpts from the "Declaration."

The undersigned support:

MISURASATA's position that the Miskito, Sumo and Rama... are sovereign Indian nations;

MISURASATA's position that the Miskito, Sumo and Rama, as with all indigenous nations and peoples, possess the right to their land and waters, including all natural resources within the territories where they traditionally have lived and worked, and which they have not ceded freely by treaty or other manner, and that those rights preclude the Nicaraguan state from claiming or retaining any part of the unceded territories of the Atlantic Coast indigenous peoples and nations;

MISURASATA's position that the Miskito, Sumo and Rama, as with all indigenous nations and peoples, have the right to be free from external jurisdictional control, unless pursuant to a valid treaty or other agreement voluntarily made by the legitimate representatives of those indigenous peoples and nations.

- Clem Charter, President, World Council of Indigenous Peoples (Canada)
Cristobal Tappay P., President, CONFENIAE of Ecuador
Russell Means, American Indian Movement
Evaristo Nugkuang Ikann, President, AIDESP of Peru
Marlyn A. Kane, President, Native Women's Association of Canada
Hank Adams, National Director, Survival of American Indians Assoc. (USA)
Asuncion Ontiveros Yucquila, Coord. General, Consejo Indio de Sud America (South American Indian Council)
Gerald Wilkinson, Exec. Dir., National Congress of American Indians (USA)
Suzanne Harjo, Secretary, N.S.W. Aboriginal Land Council (Australia)
Della Love, Secretary, N.S.W. Aboriginal Land Council (Australia)
Hans Pavia-Rosing, President, Inuit Circumpolar Conference (Greenland)

(PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN TO PANA PANA, GENERAL DELIVERY, ACCORD, NY 12404 USA)

YES, I join with you to help the Miskito, Sumo and Rama peoples achieve recognition of their land, natural resource, territorial and political rights!

You may use my name as a supporter of the goals of MISURASATA.

Please add me to the PANA PANA mailing list. Enclosed is

\$100. \$50. \$25. \$15. (other)
(Please make all checks payable to "National Indian Youth Council."
All contributions are tax deductible.) Thank you!

I want to organize local activities to support the Miskito, Sumo and Rama peoples. Please contact me.

Please send me a copy of *Indian War and Peace in Nicaragua*, edited by Eleanor J. Menzies (Please enclose a separate check made payable to the "Center for World Indigenous Studies" in the amount of \$5.50.)

Please send me more information.

NAME

ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION

TELEPHONE

