



Meeting of European Support Groups for Indigenous Peoples in North America

**Working Principles
of NGOs represented in the Meeting of European Support Groups
for Indigenous Peoples in North America (EUROMEETING)**

Aktionsgruppe Indianer & Menschenrechte (AGIM), Munich, Germany:
www.aktionsgruppe.de

Arbeitskreis Indianer Nordamerikas (AKIN), Vienna, Austria:
www.arbeitskreis-indianer.at

**Internationales Komitee für die Indigenen Amerikas Schweiz, Zürich,
Switzerland:** www.incomindios.ch

Menschenrechte 3000, Freiburg, Germany: www.menschenrechte3000.de

**Verein zur Unterstützung nordamerikanischer Indianer (ASNAI), Berlin,
Germany:** www.asnai.de

**Comité de Solidarité avec les Indiens des Amériques (CSIA-NITASSINAN),
Paris, France:** www.csia-nitassinan.org

Working Principles

The EUROMEETING is a network of several independent European support groups. Our aim and focus is to support the rights of Indigenous Peoples of North America, in particular their right to self-determination.

Over hundreds of years there have always been do-gooders who believed to know what is “good” for Indigenous Peoples. We as support groups are definitely no do-gooders!

Our work is based on the following principles:

- We are dedicated to promoting the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. Through political engagement we are trying to fundamentally change and improve the legal and political situation of Indigenous Peoples.
- We support the rights and issues of Indigenous Peoples, not indigenous individuals; and also, we are no welfare, charity or fundraising organisations.
- This support includes informing and educating the general public in Europe about the present living conditions and the violations of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- We reject any sell-outs of land rights and culture. We strictly oppose and condemn any commercialization of Indigenous Peoples’ cultural heritage, in particular the esoteric exploitation of Indigenous Peoples’ spirituality. We understand indigenous spiritual beliefs to be an exclusive expression of indigenous societies’ cultures, traditions and value systems. Hence, we don’t want to have anything to do with wannabes or new-agers.
- Campaigns are only undertaken in coordination with and by request of indigenous organisations or nations to whom we are in direct contact with.
- Based on our principles, our capacities determine the issues we are able to support. At any rate, we never interfere with internal issues of Indigenous Peoples.
- We see ourselves as facilitators for setting the stage for Indigenous Peoples without putting ourselves in the foreground.
- Our work is built upon on a rights-based rather than on a short-term project-based approach.
- Our work is of political nature; we are primarily activists, not anthropologists.
- Although it is not our main focus, we are interested in cultural events with indigenous artists and organise concerts, readings and film festivals. We are aware that cultural events serve to carry political messages. In our understanding, contemporary native arts – music, literature and films – are an essential aspect of exercising the right to cultural self-determination.

Fundamentals of our activities:

- We are truly independent NGOs – NON governmental organisations. We have only limited financial and human capacities. Our work is not profit-oriented.
- In order to be effective we are increasingly aiming at coordinated actions and campaigns on a European and global rather than on a country level.
- Networking and advocacy is essential.
- Our work is mainly carried out on an unpaid voluntary basis. Our members come from a broad variety of professional and scientific backgrounds.
- Most of the support groups have been in existence for decades, meet regularly and have accumulated a lot of know-how. Therefore the continuity of our work and issues is given.