

Indian Council of South America  
International Council For Human Rights  
Indigenous Peoples and Nations Coalition

Universal Periodic Review  
Wednesday 10 June 09  
Item 6 Canada  
Ambassador Ronald Barnes

We welcome H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio Fernandez Palacios and congratulate Cuba for the first Universal Periodic Review which incidentally coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, which has withstood the prophetic "Breckenridge Memorandum" dispatched by the U.S. Undersecretary of War from the United States Department of War on the 24 December 1897 where the United States of America planned the conquest of Cuba using "**methods Divine Providence used on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah**" and to "**impose a harsh blockade so that hunger and its constant companion, disease, undermine the peaceful population and decimate the Cuban army**". Your continuing struggle has been an inspiration to many, including those who are working to achieve their right to self-determination.

Your struggle has obviously contributed to the fight against apartheid in South Africa to the inspiration to the African Americans in the Americas. Your contribution to the cause of Indigenous Peoples deserves praise, one instance being your insertion of text, *when no one else would*, to continue the work of the Working Group of Indigenous Populations in the institution building process which lead to the creation of the Indigenous Expert Mechanism. Your contribution to human rights on the Special Session of the Right to Food in these times of economic challenges brings a level of assurance to lend a sense of responsibility toward preventative maintenance to alleviate the hardships we are facing. Your assistance in the field of medicine and education has also assisted peoples in need.

We congratulate you for ratifying the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances. While we note you have acceded to the ICCPR and the ICESCR, we call upon the government of Cuba to work toward the full ratification of these important human rights instruments as well as other important human rights instruments.

Our delegations also welcome your invitation to the Special Rapporteur on Torture to Cuba and we also call you to invite other Special Rapporteurs for country visits.

I thank you Mr. Chair

\* These organizations are accredited to the 2001 WCAR and fully participated in the 2009 Durban Review Conference.