

now to shape the agenda, within the framework of the OAS mechanisms.

### **III Priorities and Recommendations for Policy Options**

#### **1. Institutionalising Inclusion and Access: Focus on Indigenous Peoples**

Many participants agreed that inclusion and access of traditionally excluded groups to decision-making and deliberative bodies should be institutionalised or at least formalised in some way. Particular attention should be paid to Indigenous Peoples. Other groups including, NGOs and labour, disabled people, women, as well as youth and children also need attention.

Allan Torbitt from the Assembly of First Nations talked about the AFN's ties with Indigenous Peoples living in the Hemisphere as well as Latin American governments. The AFN has been actively engaged in the OAS. It is here where an opportunity exists to work together, with other civil society representatives, in trying to enhance the engagement of traditionally marginalised groups in decision-making and deliberative bodies. Some progress has already been made toward a formalised process of addressing the rights of Indigenous Peoples within the OAS mechanism. The AFN has also developed a positive bi-lateral relationship with Mexico as a result of various diplomatic and trade missions. Through this relationship some steps toward inclusion and access have been made on a bi-lateral basis.

Access and inclusion can also be facilitated through various fora with a formal transparent link to the OAS or other Hemisphere decision making and deliberative mechanisms. Leading up to the Toronto Trade Ministers' Meeting (November 1999), a Business Forum and a Civil Society Forum have already been organised. Patty Barerra from Common Frontiers outlined the process for preparing such a large initiative as a Civil Society Forum: [csforum@web.net](mailto:csforum@web.net). Sheila Katz of the Canadian Labour Congress suggested institutionalising access to labour representatives and other social partners through an official Labour Forum running alongside the Business meeting. Another idea, suggested by Nancy Thede of ICHRDD, was that a Human Rights framework could function as a venue for introducing specific economic, social and cultural rights issues.

#### **2. Equity Through Targeted Social Policy: Focus on Labour**

The growing inequality in income and wealth distribution in Latin America should be addressed through targeted social policy. Social policy should aim not only at traditionally disadvantaged and marginalised groups (Indigenous Peoples, women, disabled, etc.) but also at new groups negatively affected by globalization (low paid workers and the unemployed in particular).

Participants representing labour, Gerry Barr of the United Steelworkers of America and Sheila Katz, addressed the deteriorating situation of workers in Latin America. Katz argued that