

the speakers and events as well as four upcoming background papers (see the attached programme).

5. Synopsis of the Discussion

Participants addressed the dynamics between in-the-tent civil society groups and those without institutional access (i.e., 'street groups'). Some asked how do the recent events in Seattle and Washington impact on the planning for Windsor. How should the Canadian government respond to street protests?

While some were apprehensive about "radical groups" disrupting the OAS General Assembly, others argued that street protest is part of a healthy democracy. "There is no civil and uncivil society," said Nancy Thede. Street protesters do have legitimate reasons for their actions. Some of them believe there are real structural problems which can be only addressed outside of an institutional framework. Their messages should be heard, no matter how radical they may seem to government officials.

People on the streets should not be marginalised. The Canadian government should develop adequate responses to street pressure (unlike Vancouver during the APEC Summit). Communications strategy aimed at domestic as well as foreign consumption should include messages such as, for instance: Democracy is not always tidy, it involves disagreement as much as compromise. Dissent is legitimate. Public voices are valuable from inside-the-tent and from the street.

Allan Torbitt, AFN, said that the AFN, together with other Indigenous organisations throughout the Hemisphere has been trying to get inside of the tent of the Inter-American system. Indigenous Peoples have a unique window into the Inter-American system. *A working group has been established to work on drafting a Declaration on Indigenous Peoples. Efforts are aimed at constructing a mechanism which would allow an almost equal participation of Indigenous People in the system.*

Indigenous Peoples issues should not be ghettoised but addressed along with other concerns including human rights, sustainable development, trade liberalisation, narco-trafficking, small arms and others. The AFN vision and strategy go beyond the Windsor General Assembly and the Quebec City Summit. It involves the OAS member states individually as well as a range of Indigenous Peoples organisations. The Canadian government has been supportive and shows commitment to Indigenous Peoples issues.

Another unique window of opportunity for Indigenous People in the Hemisphere is the Inter-American Indigenous Institute. Established 60 years ago by the OAS member states, the Institute's activities have reflected practices of many Latin American governments toward Indigenous Peoples in the mid 1940ties (i.e., treating Indigenous Peoples in the region as a "problem"). *The AFN aims to help the Canadian government to develop a strategy to reform and*