

linkages at local, regional and national levels. Building and consolidating unity remain as challenges.

Mayan organizations are working closely with a number of government officials at the municipal level while avoiding errors from earlier periods to work **only** at the local level. Regional and national relationships are essential as well to constructing a new vision of the Guatemalan nation which is multiethnic, pluricultural and multilingual.

Other challenges include increasing the technical and professional capacity of indigenous people to develop proposals for greater political participation and for economic sustainability programmes. Participation of local community members in decisions which affect their lives must increase.

A representative from the United Nation's Verification Commission (MINUGUA) explained MINUGUA's role in monitoring and verification of the peace accords. MINUGUA's first assignment began in 1994 with the verification of the **Comprehensive Human Rights Accord**. Later, MINUGUA was assigned the monitoring and verification of the **Accord on Indigenous Identity and Rights**. In mid-April, it is expected that MINUGUA will be issued an expanded mandate to cover verification of all the accords.

The Coordination of Guatemalan Mayan Organizations (COPMAGUA) is currently the primary entity negotiating the implementation of the Indigenous Accord. But it is necessary to go beyond the accord - to the socio-economic accord and the accords dealing with demilitarization and demobilization - in order to encompass all the issues facing the indigenous sector. The indigenous accord is an exercise in nation-building in which the majority indigenous population is treated with respect and equity. Indigenous people must also have access to productive resources, including land, access to credit and to technical and administrative training in order to be economically productive.

Two options exist for creating a truly multicultural society in Guatemala: a) the establishment of completely separate Mayan institutions or b) the transformation of all of Guatemala's laws and institutions to take into account the Mayan cosmovision, perspectives and issues. Guatemalan indigenous people are excellent negotiators. These skills are essential for working through the process of nation building from a multicultural perspective.

IV. PEACE-BUILDING PRIORITIES:

As a meeting between Canadian and Guatemalan civil societies focusing on two of