We are the original peoples of the Western hemisphere of the continents of North, Central, and South America. Our principles are based upon our profound belief in the sacredness of all Creation, both animate and inanimate. We live in a reciprocal relationship with all life in this divine and natural order.

Our responsibility as Indigenous Peoples is to insure the continuity of the natural order of all life is maintained for generations to come.

We have a responsibility to speak for all life forms and to defend the integrity of the natural order.

In carrying out these responsibilities we insure that all life in its natural process and diversity continues in a reciprocal relationship with us.

We hold precious all life in its natural form. The harmonious progress of the natural order in the environment shapes and defines healthy genetic diversity.

The principle of harmony requires that we do not violate the principles of Creation by manipulating and changing the natural order.

Given that our natural relationship has been interfered with by foreign or non-indigenous external forces in a long history of destruction we have never abandoned those responsibilities.

In the long history of destruction which has accompanied western colonization we have come to realize that the agenda of the non indigenous forces has been to appropriate and manipulate the natural order for the purposes of profit, power, and control.

To negate the complexity of any life form by isolating and reducing it to its minute parts, western science and technologies diminished its identity as a precious and unique life form, and alters its relationship to the natural order.

Genetic technologies which manipulate and change the fundamental core and identity of any life form is an absolute violation of these principles, and creates the potential for unpredictable and therefore dangerous consequence.

Therefore, we the Indigenous Peoples and Organizations participating in this meeting from North, Central, and South America reject all programs involving genetic technology.

We particularly oppose the Human Genome Diversity Project which intends to collect and make available our genetic materials which may be used for commercial, scientific, and
military purposes.

We oppose the patenting of all natural genetic materials. We hold that life cannot be bought, owned, sold, discovered, or patented, even in its smallest form.

We denounce and identify the instruments of intellectual property rights, patent law, and apparatus of informed consent as tools of legalized western deception and theft.

We denounce all instruments of economic apparatus such as NAFTA, GATT, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) which continue to exploit people and natural resources to profit powerful corporations, assisted by governments and military forces of developed countries.

We demand that scientific endeavors and resources be prioritized to support and improve social, economic, and environmental conditions of Indigenous peoples in the environments, thereby improving health conditions and raising the overall quality of life.

We reaffirm that Indigenous peoples have the fundamental rights to deny access to, refuse to participate in, or to allow removal or appropriation by external scientific projects of any genetic materials.

We demand the Human Genome Diversity Project and any other such scientific projects cease any attempts to seduce or coerce participation in their project through promises of benefits and financial gain in order to obtain consent and participation of Indigenous peoples.

We demand an immediate moratorium on collections and/or patenting of genetic materials from Indigenous persons and communities by any scientific project, health organization, governments, independent agencies, or individual researchers.

We demand that nation-state governments and their departments do not participate, fund, or provide any assistance to the Human Genome Diversity Project or any related programs or seek to hold patents or otherwise benefit from the genetic materials taken from indigenous peoples.

We call on religious communities, human rights, social justice and environmental organizations, funding agencies, all individuals, and institutions refuse to participate, fund, or provide other assistance to the Human Genome Diversity Project and any related programs.

We extend our support and solidarity to all those who are resisting these efforts, or are seeking the repatriation of genetic materials already taken or removed from their control.

We urge the international community and the United Nations to participate with Indigenous peoples in developing international policies and conventions which protect all life forms from genetic manipulation and destruction.

We call on our brothers and sisters of the Indigenous nations around the world and concerned peoples in the international community to stand up and unite in our efforts to protect the natural diversity and integrity of all life.
The support of all humans in this Declaration would protect the sacredness of all life, the natural order, and would provide a healthy future for generations to come. As declared by the undersigned participating organizations in Phoenix, Arizona on February 19, 1995:

- Amazanga Institute, Provincia de Pastaza, Ecuador
- Asociacion Kunas Unidos Pro Napguana, Panama
- Coordinadora de Mujeres Indigenas de Bolivia, La Pas, Bolivia
- CONIC Consortium, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments, Stevens Village, Alaska
- En'owkin Center. Penticton, British Columbia, Canada
- Independent Traditional Seminole Nation of Florida, Immokalle, Florida
- Indigenous Environmental Network, National Office, Bemidji, Minnesota
- Indigenous Environmental Network, Oklahoma Region, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Indigenous People's Alliance, Phoenix, Arizona
- Indigenous Peoples Support Network, London, Ontario, Canada
- Indigenous WomenÕs Network, Lake Elmo, Minnesota; Ponsford, Minnesota; Boulder, Colorado
- Inter-Ethnic Association of the Peruvian Rain Forest (AIDESEP), Peru
- International Indian Treaty Council, San Francisco, California
- South and Meso American Information Center (SAIIC). Oakland, California
- Sovereignty People's Information Network, British Columbia, Canada
- Tonantzin Land Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- Tonatierra, Phoenix, Arizona

For more information:

Debra Harry
PO Box 72
Nixon, NV 89424
(702) 574-0309
e-mail: dharry@igc.apc.org

Jeannette Armstrong
En'owkin Centre
257 Brunswick Street
Penticton BC V2A 5P9
(605) 493-7181.

Nilo Cauqueo
SAIIC
PO Box 28703
1212 Broadway, Suite 830
Oakland, CA 94604