

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities

Working Group on Indigenous Populations
Fourth Session
Geneva

29 July-2 August 1985

Items 4 and 5 of the provisional agenda

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS PERTAINING TO THE PROMOTION AND
PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS OF
INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

STANDARD-SETTING ACTIVITIES:

EVOLUTION OF STANDARDS CONCERNING THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

DRAFTING OF A BODY OF PRINCIPLES ON INDIGENOUS
RIGHTS, BASED ON RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION,
INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND OTHER JURIDICAL
CRITERIA

Material received from Governments

	<u>Page</u>
Brazil	2
Finland	2
Morocco	3
Venezuela	4

BRAZIL

[Original: English]

[16 April 1985]

As to the rights of the indigenous populations to the development of their cultures, traditions, languages and ways of life - including their rights to freedom of religion and to traditional religious practices - Brazil has signed the International Labour Organisation Convention No.107, concerning the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries, of 27 June 1957. Its article 4 (a) provides that in the process of integration of indigenous populations "due account shall be taken of the cultural and religious values and of the forms of social control existing among these populations, and of the nature of the problems which face them both as groups and as individuals when they undergo social and economic change".

The Brazilian Indian Statute (Law No.6001 of 19 December 1973)^{1/} protects the rights of the indigenous populations to the development of their cultures, traditions, languages, ways of life and religion. Articles 1, 2 para.VI, 6, 14, 52 and 53 of that text deal specifically with these matters. Furthermore, concerned about protecting and promoting the cultural heritage of the Brazilian indian populations, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) has created a chain of shops and boutiques throughout the country, called "ARTINDIA - Indian Artifacts", in order to diffuse costumes and traditions of tribal societies. With the same purpose, FUNAI has passed legislation on the protection of author's rights and on the adequate use of the image of indigenous populations through the issuing of its Act No.907/N of 19 May 1984.

Finally, as to the rights of the indigenous populations to education, the Permanent Delegation of Brazil refers to articles 47, 48, 49, 50, 51 and 52 of the Indian Statute which provide the legal framework to the exercise of those rights.

FINLAND

[Original: English]

[28 May 1985]

Finland supports the activities of the United Nations to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous populations. Finland also supports the ideas presented in the report of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and in the final report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. José R. Martínez Cobo. These ideas concur to a large extent with the principles applied in the Finnish policy on indigenous populations (Samis).

^{1/} This Statute, as submitted by the Brazilian Government, is reproduced in document E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1985/WP.1/Add.2 (English only).

MOROCCO

[Original: French]

[24 April 1985]

The problem of the rights of indigenous populations does not arise in Morocco since all citizens, whether living in the town or the country, enjoy the same rights and are subject to the same obligations.

The fact that certain areas of the country have particular traditions, their own dialects and a provincial way of life in no way bears upon their enjoyment of rights and religious practices.

Moroccans enjoy equal freedom, equal justice and equal treatment at law in all areas, whether family relations, inheritance, civil or commercial affairs, real estate or administrative matters are concerned.

The division of the country into administrative areas and provinces, while taking into account natural economic regions, is not designed to emphasize the presence of indigenous populations enclosed within fixed borders.

Mixing of the population takes place as a result of the freedom of movement of all individuals, marriage and the migration of rural populations to the towns.

Each and every Moroccan, whatever his ethnic origin, colour or religion, is entitled to education, health, medical care and other social services. He has the right to social security and to protection under the labour legislation.

He is free to engage in commerce and to maintain economic, technical, cultural and social relations without hindrance.

He may write and publish and is entitled to protection of copyright.

He is entitled to free access to the courts in order to protect his rights in all matters.

Professionally, he is free to pursue the career of his choice, either in the private or in the public sector.

He is free but under no pressure to join associations, parties or trade unions.

Thus, in Morocco the problem of the protection of indigenous populations does not arise. Everyone enjoys the right to life, physical and mental integrity and security in all areas.

VENEZUELA

[Original: Spanish]

[25 April 1985]

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA
ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1982/34,
ENTITLED "STUDY OF THE PROBLEM OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS"

This study has the approval of our Government. As we have said repeatedly in previous papers and reports, racial discrimination, as defined in article 1 (1) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, has not existed in Venezuela for more than a century.

Our Constitution, which is the foundation of our legal system, proclaims the existence of equal rights without distinction as to creed, race, sex or social status, as can be seen from article 61, which reads as follows:

"Article 61. Discriminations based on race, sex, creed, or social condition shall not be permitted.

"Documents of identification for acts of civil life shall contain no mention of any kind respecting filiation.

"No official form of address shall be used other than 'citizen' (ciudadano) and 'you' (usted), except in diplomatic formulas.

"Titles of nobility or hereditary distinction shall not be recognized."

Under the provisions of article 2 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Venezuela, like all countries ratifying the Convention, has assumed an obligation to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination and to promote understanding among all races.

No form of discrimination based on race, colour or ethnic origin exists in Venezuela, and it has therefore not been necessary to carry out the obligation assumed in the Convention mentioned above or take any government action to that end with regard to our territory or our population.

There are some indigenous groups in our country, generally in the forest areas near the borders with Brazil, Colombia and Guyana, which have not been integrated with the rest of the population. The necessary measures are, however, being taken to ensure appropriate development and protection of these racial groups and of the persons belonging to them, with a view to guaranteeing them full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal footing.

It should be stressed that the members of these communities enjoy the same rights and guarantees as other Venezuelans, whether in the political and social field or in the economic and cultural field.

The Venezuelan State takes steps to protect the rural population and indigenous communities and to improve their living conditions, as required by the Constitution in article 77, which reads:

"Article 77. The State shall strive to improve the living conditions of the rural population.

"The law shall establish an exceptional system required for the protection of Indian communities and their progressive incorporation into the life of the Nation."

Such protection was also the subject of decree law no. 250 of 27 July 1951, which regulates expeditions to areas inhabited by members of the indigenous population. It states that persons or organizations planning expeditions of any kind or for any purpose to places occupied by the indigenous population shall be required to fulfil previous established requirements regarding the conditions in which the expedition is to be undertaken, its purpose, duration and route and other characteristics and circumstances which will help to give a complete idea of what it involves. In our country, for the reasons given above, there are no "indigenous reservations", nor is Venezuela's indigenous policy designed to isolate the indigenous population. On the contrary, it is considered that isolation would delay the integration of the indigenous populations. The decree mentioned above accordingly provides as follows in articles 1, 2, 3 and 4.

"Article 1. Persons or organizations planning expeditions of any kind or for any purpose to places occupied by members of the indigenous population shall inform the Ministry of Justice in writing, stating the conditions in which the expedition is to be undertaken, its purpose, duration, route and other characteristics and circumstances which will help to give a complete idea of what it involves.

"Single paragraph. There shall be an exception to this provision in the case of expeditions connected with national defence and security and in general all expeditions of an official nature ordered by the national Government or state governments.

"Article 2. The Ministry of Justice shall in each case study the documentation and credentials submitted by the persons concerned and take a decision on the matter in the light of the guarantees given.

"Article 3. Anyone who violates the provisions of this decree by undertaking an expedition without due authorization or who departs from the conditions on which it was permitted shall be liable to a fine ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 bolívars, depending on the gravity of the offence and at the discretion of the Ministry of Justice, without prejudice to any other legal measures to which the offences committed may give rise.

"Article 4. The Ministries of Internal Relations and Justice shall be responsible for the application of this decree."

Venezuela has ratified the agreement on the protection and integration of indigenous and other tribal and semi-tribal populations in independent countries published in the Gaceta Oficial No. 3235 of 3 August 1983, the aim of which is that the indigenous populations should be integrated into our society politically, economically, ideologically, educationally, professionally, etc., without jeopardizing their culture, that is, preserving their individuality as a human heritage. As far as penal matters are concerned, the agreement in question states that they should be given special protection against the application of remand in custody and that when penalties are imposed on members of the populations in question under the general law, those populations' levels of cultural education should be taken into account.

The Act approving the Amazon Co-operation Treaty was published in Gaceta Oficial No. 31,993 of 28 March 1980. By it Venezuela became a contracting party, together with the Republics of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana and Suriname. The contracting parties agreed to join together in promoting the development of the Amazon territories in such a way that their efforts would have an equalizing effect through equitable distribution of the benefits of such development so as to raise the standard of living of their peoples and integrate their Amazon territories fully into their respective national economies, while preserving the environment and conserving and utilizing the natural resources of those territories. Article 1 of the Act approving the Treaty in question thus reads as follows:

"Article 1. The contracting parties agree to undertake joint efforts and activities to promote the harmonious development of their respective Amazon territories, in such a way that these joint activities produce equitable and mutually beneficial results, and also to preserve the environment and conserve and make rational use of the national resources of those territories.

"Single paragraph. To that end they shall exchange information and negotiate agreements and working arrangements, together with the appropriate legal instruments for fulfilment of the aims of this Treaty."

It was also agreed that indigenous cultures and natural resources should be protected, having regard to the national legislation on the subject.

"Article 13. The contracting parties shall co-operate in order to foster tourism, both national and from other countries, in their respective Amazon territories, without prejudice to the national legislation protecting indigenous cultures and national resources."

Another fundamental aspect of the defence of indigenous communities is the recognition of land ownership. This right is explicitly formulated in the Agrarian Reform Act, Gaceta Oficial No. 611 Extraordinary of 19 March 1960, which states as follows in article 2.1 (d):

"Article 2. In order to achieve these aims, this Act:

(a) Guarantees and regulates the right of private ownership of land, in accordance with the principle of the social function it has to perform and the other provisions contained in the Constitution and the law;

(b) Guarantees any individual or group of the population fit for agricultural work but having no land or not enough the right to be given the ownership of economically workable land, preferably in the places where they work or live, or, when circumstances make it advisable, in appropriately selected areas and within the limits and principles laid down by this Act;

(c) Guarantees farmers the right to remain on the land they are cultivating in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down in this Act;

(d) Guarantees and recognizes that members of the indigenous population who in practice preserve the communal or extended-family system, without prejudice to their rights as Venezuelans, in accordance

with the foregoing paragraphs, shall have the right to enjoyment of the lands, woods and waters they occupy or own in the places where they habitually live, without prejudice to their incorporation into the life of the nation in accordance with this and other Acts;

(e) Gives special encouragement and protection to the development of small and medium-sized rural holdings and agricultural co-operatives so that they will become stable and effective.

"To that end the right to family small-holdings is hereby established in accordance with the principles on free grants contained in this Act."

The National Agrarian Institute is the body responsible for all matters connected with the land of indigenous communities. The Institute's policy towards such communities is based on four fundamental principles:

1. Guaranteeing the indigenous population land and providing them with it through grants held collectively (by the community) and covering a sufficient area to permit the complete present and future development of the community in question.
2. Respect, promotion and strengthening of indigenous ethnic cultures, as a prerequisite for proper participation by the indigenous population in the country's social and economic affairs.
3. Study, promotion and establishment of economic organizations in indigenous communities, on the basis of the traditional socio-economic institutions of each ethnic group.
4. Support and promotion of the indigenous movement organized in such a way as to stimulate and channel the potential of ethnic groups towards the assertion of their rights both as Venezuelans and as indigenous ethnic minorities.

The policy followed by the Institute since 1971 has accordingly resulted in a complete reversal of the traditional policy towards indigenous groups prevailing since 1947 (a paternalist approach treating them as objects of assistance and undermining their culture) and has motivated the indigenous population to join and participate in the programmes for comprehensive agrarian reform.

Aims achieved

1. Land grants: In collaboration and co-ordination with the Land Management Board, 1,379,492 hectares of land has been granted on a collective basis to

4,134 families in 156 indigenous communities (Amazonas Federal Territory, Bolívar, Zulia, Anzoátegui, Delta Amacuro Federal Territory, Apure and Monagas). A national statistical register of grants made from 1972 to 1983 has been established.

2. Indigenous agricultural organizations: 68 indigenous agricultural enterprises (52 community and 16 intercommunity) have been promoted, set up and (partly) serviced, with the participation of 3,148 families in 140 communities (Amazonas Federal Territory, Bolívar, Apure, Delta Amacuro Federal Territory, Zulia).

3. Cultural activity: 30 community workshops have been promoted and organized, with the participation of 837 families in 30 communities (Amazonas Federal Territory, Bolívar, Anzoátegui, Zulia, Delta Amacuro Federal Territory and Apure).

Through the Sabaneta Craft School in the State of Aragua, 21 practical courses have been given in pottery, attended by 78 indigenous persons and 151 persons of Hispanic origin.

4. Promotion of agriculture, fishing and crafts: Between 1979 and 1983, various production projects were executed out of the Institute's regular budget in 333 communities (crop growing, fishing, cattle and goat raising, cassava complexes, maintenance of coffee plantations, construction of workshops by the craftsmen themselves, grants of agricultural equipment and implements) benefiting 8,582 persons at a cost of 7,151,051 bolívares (Zulia, Apure, Amazonas Federal Territory, Delta Amacuro Federal Territory, Bolívar and Anzoátegui).

5. Credit financing by ICAP: Since 1981 it has proved possible to arrange with ICAP a special credit line for indigenous agricultural organizations. Between 1981 and 1983, 34 projects were carried out, benefiting 1,348 persons at a cost of 2,149,370 bolívares (rice, fish, coffee, agricultural machinery).

6. Support for special programmes for indigenous areas and participation in them: Through the organization of meetings, seminars, symposiums and workshops with the indigenous population, efforts have been made to encourage the growth of the organized indigenous movement, on the basis of the specific features of the existing indigenous ethnic minorities.

Participation in and execution of the national indigenous census 1982 in co-ordination with OCEI.

Collaboration in and support for the Yanohami Reserve project in the Amazonas Federal Territory (co-ordinated by FLASA).

Development and presentation to CMA-CVG of the project for a storage centre in an indigenous area (Pemón and Gran Sabana communities).

Development of a preliminary proposal for the concentration and co-ordination of official activities relating to indigenous persons on the basis of the formulation and execution of comprehensive indigenous ethnic development projects (PROINEA), which would be organized and carried out on the basis of the specific ethnic features of the people in question and the physical characteristics of the geographical areas.

In addition to mentioning the achievements summarized above, we should also say that they have taken place despite the existence of certain specific limitations:

(a) Limited regular resources assigned to the programmes. Between 1971 and 1977, the programme functioned without resources for investment in community projects. It is only since 1978 that the programme has received specific resources for investment, which have always been below the sector's needs and requirements.

(b) The Indian Grants Office (Land Management Board) was in operation up to 1975 (it was abolished in that year). Since then, the Indigenous Programme of the Development Board has taken its place, collaborating on land questions with the Land Management Board.

(c) The Indigenous Programme of the Development Board's programme was substantially paralysed between 1977 and 1979, which had adverse effects on the progress and achievements secured between 1971 and 1976 and led to operational difficulties when it was reactivated at the end of 1979.

(d) The Programme has been greatly understaffed. At the regional level the work had to be done (from 1979 onwards) with just one programme chief in Zulia, Amazonas Federal Territory, Bolívar, Apure, Delta Amacuro Federal Territory (part-time) and Anzoátegui (very part-time).^{2/}

^{2/} A summary of the indigenous operations plan for 1985, attached to the Venezuelan reply, is available for consultation in the Secretariat files.

Mining concessions are governed by the Mines Act published in the Gaceta Oficial No. 121 Extraordinary of 18 February 1945, which states that everything to do with mines and mineral deposits, seams or fields in Venezuela is a matter of public interest and governed by the provisions of the Act, except where there are special acts on particular substances (article 4). For the granting of mining concessions, as we said earlier, there is no racial discrimination, and this is confirmed in article 27 of the Mines Act, which reads:

"Any person or company competent in domestic or foreign law may acquire mining concessions in the Republic, subject to the exceptions set forth in the following articles."

These concessions granted by the State relate to particular non-precious minerals, as indicated in article 7 of the Act, which says:

"Stones for use in building, ornamental stones and any other kind of non-precious stones, marble, prophyry, kaolin, magnesite, sand, slate, clay, lime, chalk, puzzolana, peat, earthy substances and guano shall belong to the owner of the land, who may work them without any special formalities. The working of such materials shall be subject to the supervision of the authorities with regard to the policing and security of the work."

Where a mining concession is granted for uncultivated land, the holder of the concession is given the right to use of the ground, but there are limitations on this right as far as exploitation of the resources is concerned, as stated in article 19:

"The holding of a mining concession in uncultivated land gives the holder of the concession the right, without his needing to comply with any other formalities, to make use of the ground granted to him without prejudice to third parties and for the duration of the concession. This entitlement does not include the right to work valuable species of timber, rubber and other vegetable products of importance in industry that are to be found in the area in question."

One of the tasks of our country's Ministry of Education is to promote the economic and educational development of the indigenous population through the Indigenous Affairs Department, whose goal is to guarantee the indigenous population an appropriate quality of life, through programmes in the planning, administration and execution of which the indigenous population play a direct, active, effective and decisive part. It accordingly promotes machinery to allow their participation and teaches them to make effective use of this machinery.

Similarly, it co-ordinates with other bodies technical, administrative and financial assistance designed to promote the comprehensive development of communities. In the same way it seeks to protect the consolidation of indigenous peoples and to make known their cultural heritage, thus spreading knowledge of their values and guaranteeing them freedom of cultural expression in order to enrich the national heritage.

The Department's programmes

Its aim is to raise the standard of living of the indigenous peoples through the establishment of organizations for operation and production in such fields as agriculture and crafts.

Projects for this programme cover the following:

(a) Establishment and consolidation of indigenous enterprises organized on a collective basis;

(b) Existing indigenous economic organizations; this includes matters relating to the purchase of materials and equipment for the operation of such organizations, which are classified as being concerned with crops, cattle, pigs, poultry, fish or manufactured goods (crafts);

(c) Co-ordination of the purchase by indigenous communities of agricultural equipment and materials for the use of the community.

Educational development

The aim is to attend to the education of the indigenous Venezuelan population at all levels and in all aspects of the educational system, respecting and valuing the culture of each of the ethnic groups in the country, and also to provide the indigenous population with what they need in order to establish relationships with the rest of Venezuelan society.

Measures have also been taken to provide these communities with forms of education in their own languages and with respect for their own cultures.

The education given is accordingly based on a bilingual intercultural system, characterized by balanced and dynamic participation by the indigenous cultures and languages in the national culture.

The aim of this system is to encourage harmonious development of the personality and to educate the indigenous person to realize his historic destiny.

This system of education encourages people to be bilingual and seeks to produce citizens who can communicate effectively and correctly both in their indigenous language and in Spanish, since they will have to have dealings with members of their own ethnic groups and with the rest of society.

The educational system for the indigenous Venezuelan population also promotes interculturalism, seeking to establish an exchange between the traditional culture and the culture of the rest of Venezuelan society, a relationship characterized by respect and recognition of the true value of every culture, in such a way that every culture follows its own normal development.

The legal basis for the system of intercultural education is decree No. 283 of 20 January 1979, which provides as follows:

"Article 1. At educational institutions in areas inhabited by the indigenous population, a bilingual intercultural system of education shall gradually be introduced, designed to suit the socio-cultural characteristics of each ethnic group concerned, without prejudice to knowledge of the national culture itself.

"Article 2. In the design of curricula, the selection of teaching material and the formulation of procedures, account shall be taken of the cultural patterns, rhythm of life and environmental conditions peculiar to each community. Teacher training shall be adapted to the characteristics required for this type of education.

"Article 3. In introducing the system referred to in this Decree, the Ministry of Education shall seek the advice of public and private institutions which have shown themselves to be suitable and consistent proponents of this type of education.

"Article 4. The Ministry of Education shall be responsible for the application of this Decree."

Legal basis for the bilingual intercultural
education system

The legal basis of the bilingual intercultural educational system is article 77 of the national Constitution, which we have already quoted, together with article 80, which reads as follows:

"Education shall have as its aim the full development of the personality, the training of citizens adapted to life and for the practice of democracy, the promotion of culture and the development of a spirit of human solidarity.

"The State shall organize and guide the educational system towards achieving the fulfilment of the aims set forth herein."

The system is also based on article 3 of the Organic Act on Education, which directly states the need to produce "men who are healthy, educated and fit to live in a democratic society". It also envisages the development of a civic consciousness for the preservation, defence and improvement of the environment, the quality of life and the rational use of natural resources.

The Organic Act on Education goes on to state in article 51:

"The State shall pay special attention to the indigenous population and preserve the indigenous socio-cultural values of their communities while fitting them to fulfil their duties and enjoy their rights as citizens without any discrimination. To that end appropriate educational services shall be set up. Programmes shall likewise be planned and carried out to achieve these aims."

Principles of the bilingual intercultural system

The principles behind the bilingual intercultural education system are based on the idea of positive planning, which results in teaching practice governed by the idea of goals that must be achieved. These principles are:

Self-determination of peoples:

The right of indigenous peoples to decide their own future, in harmony with the future of the country and within a context of cultural pluralism, must be recognized.

Freedom:

The indigenous peoples must be allowed free choice and the right to take informed decisions on their future as individuals and as a people.

Tradition:

The system must be based on tradition and recognize parents and older persons as the first educators of children and adolescents, to whom they transmit values, culture and ways of life and work.

Full development of the personality:

The system must allow the indigenous person to develop his personality to the full, treating him as a being who is bio-psycho-socially rooted in his traditions and in his interaction with the modern world.

Cultural assertion:

The system must ensure the right of each people to secure respect for their own culture, in order to ensure the continuance of fundamental values and activities present in the indigenous tradition of each ethnic group.

Cultural pluralism:

The co-existence and interaction of different cultures in the country shall be recognized.

Recognition of the value of cultures:

Indigenous Venezuelan cultures shall be given due recognition of their value within the complexity of Venezuelan culture, since they are the basis of our national identity.

Planning the curriculum in the bilingual
intercultural education system

The curriculum in the bilingual intercultural education system has been planned in the light of the general objectives of education, the level of the pupils receiving the education and the duration of their studies.

The resulting curriculum is a separate system within the basic education system, at the same level of education.

On the basis of the objectives set in the curriculum, a profile was drawn up of the pupil in that group, and subsequently, in accordance with the needs identified among the pupil population, general objectives were set for the level in terms of the basic skills that the pupil should have acquired when he completes that level, and then the general objectives of the course, account being taken of the performance the pupil should achieve on completing each of the courses. After that general and specific objectives were set for each grade, and finally the syllabuses were drawn up for each area.

The time-table was organized into areas of study each made up of individual subjects. The different study areas and subjects are given below.

Area	Subject
1. Language	1.1. Indigenous language 1.2. Spanish 1.3. Foreign languages
2. Natural sciences and mathematics	2.1. Natural sciences 2.2. Mathematics
3. Health	3.1. Health education 3.2. Physical education and sports

Area	Subject
4. Artistic expression	4.1. Plastic arts 4.2. Music 4.3. Theatrical arts
5. Social studies	5.1. Venezuelan history 5.2. Venezuelan geography 5.3. Family and civic education
6. Vocational training	-

As far as the syllabuses are concerned, they have been drawn up in accordance with observable and measurable performance targets, from which are derived strategies covering technical activities, methods, resources and evaluation of the learning/apprenticeship process.

The content of the programmes was chosen in accordance with the biopsychological characteristics of the indigenous pupil, his interests and his needs.

Implementation of the project

Of the 28 ethnic groups in the country, only nine have so far been included in the bilingual intercultural education system. These are groups on which ethno-linguistic studies have been carried out, so that systematic information is available on them. In March and October 1981, during the first stage in the application of presidential decree No. 283 reproduced above, there was established for the first time in Venezuela an interdisciplinary commission of specialists, consisting of anthropologists, sociologists and indigenous teachers, for the purpose of working out alphabets for the indigenous Venezuelan languages - Goajiro, Yaruro, Pemón, Warao, Kekwana, Kariña, Yanomani, Y'ekuana and Yukpa - and also to analyse and resolve the theoretical and practical problems relating to the description of the phonetic system of those languages and to prepare reading books for the different ethnic groups.

This stage of the project was begun in September 1982, when seminars were held for the indigenous teachers and supervisors in order to prepare them to handle and carry out the syllabuses that had been prepared.

We give below information on various aspects so as to provide an over-all view of the way the project was launched.

Distribution of ethnic groups by federal division^{3/}

<u>Federal division</u>	<u>Ethnic group(s)</u>
Amazonas Federal Territory	Yanomami Y'ekuana Goajibo
Anzoátegui	Kariña
Apure	Yaruro
Bolívar	Pemón
Zulia	Guajiro Yukpa
Delta Amacuro Federal Territory	Warao

Conclusions

With regard to the inclusion of the remaining 19 ethnic groups in this project, account will be taken of the availability of linguistic studies giving a phonological description of the language, the relative size of the population and the extent of their intercultural relations with the majority population.

In the current year it is hoped to provide for the continuation of the project year by year. So far syllabuses have been drawn up for the first, second and third years of basic education and they are being planned up to the ninth year in order to complete the curriculum at this level.

Goals to be achieved in 1985

We describe below the goals which the Indigenous Affairs Department hopes to achieve in 1985.

1. To take action to combine the indigenous and frontier policies pursued by the country in the field of education: period of execution - 1 March to 27 December 1985.
2. To carry out a feasibility study on the extension of the bilingual intercultural education system to the 19 ethnic groups not taking part in the experiment: period of execution - 1 March to 27 December 1985.

^{3/} An additional table and an ethnic map, attached to the Venezuelan reply, are available for consultation in the Secretariat files.

3. To undertake, in conjunction with the Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the Planning and Budget Sectoral Office, activities which will enable a school evaluation system to be designed for the bilingual intercultural education system: period of execution - 1 March to 31 July 1985.
4. To introduce the curriculum and syllabuses for the first to fourth years of the bilingual intercultural education system and the school evaluation system: period of execution - 2 September to 4 October 1985.
5. To help prepare plans for training indigenous teachers and bringing them up to date: period of execution - 1 March to 27 December 1985.
6. To continue with activities aimed at revising the educational inspection system in the indigenous sector for the bilingual intercultural education system: period of execution - 1 April to 13 September 1985.
7. To make visits of inspection to five of the areas with indigenous population: period of execution - 1 March to 13 August 1985.
8. To carry out programmes aimed at the comprehensive development of indigenous communities, dealing with the actual needs identified during the inspections: period of execution - 2 May to 31 December 1985.

In conclusion, we may say that Venezuela has at present in its rural, forest and frontier areas an indigenous population of the order of 130,000 (not including the population settled in urban areas). This represents more than 20,000 families, organized into some 1,000 indigenous communities, constituting coherent and established nuclei of population which are held together by cultural and linguistic ties, in more than 25 indigenous ethnic minorities, which are perfectly distinguishable from each other and have been identified at the national level.

(These figures are subject to change and correction in the light of recent figures that have not yet been processed.)

These many communities are for the most part strategically located in 21 geographical areas or regions of the national territory. They constitute quantitatively and qualitatively an age-old presence of great importance for the present and future development of these areas of the country.

Over many thousands of years each and every one of them has established its way of life on the basis of the family, work and land, which it has succeeded in applying and establishing in this way without destroying the resources of its environment within the national territory.

We therefore consider that these indigenous communities represent an expression of a self-managing agrarian process governed by principles of ecological and ethnic development.

We should above all else recognize that our indigenous ethnic minorities have shown over a period of more than 450 years, despite the opposition of certain sectors and interests, that they are fully competent and have a high capacity for managing and developing in their environment, that they are also capable of surviving in it and that in order to maintain the unity of their groups they are engaged in a constant struggle to preserve their culture.

It is also evident that they have a coherent production system which they have built up through the contributions they put into it and the improvements they make every day, thus demonstrating their creative capacities.

For these reasons we consider that the indigenous people are not static human products, nor a cause of our under-development, but that on the contrary these communities have shown themselves to be creative nuclei which have established close ties and maintained themselves over time, generating our ancestors' tradition of making the best possible use of renewable natural resources.

