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For Immediate Release: December 10, 1991
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Forty-three Indian tribal leaders and officials of the Department of the Interior (DOI) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) will meet December 16-18 in Tampa, Florida, to discuss the reorganization of the BIA.

The ninth meeting of the Joint Tribal/BIA/DOI Advisory Task Force for the Reorganization of the BIA will be held from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day at the Sheraton Tampa East, 7401 East Hillsborough A venue. The Task Force will hear testimony from Indian tribal leaders and Indian organizations from Florida and other Eastern Area states on their ideas as to how the BIA should be reorganized to better serve Indian tribes and individuals. The meeting is open to the general public.

Established for a two-year period last January by Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, the Task Force is comprised of 36 Indian tribal leaders, two DOI officials and five BIA personnel. A status report on their reorganization efforts was submitted to Secretary Lujan and the U.S. Congress last April. The Tampa meeting will be the fourth since that report was submitted. The Task Force last met in San Diego, California, in November.

Eddie F. Brown, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in Interior, is co-chair of the Task Force for the federal representatives, and Wendell Chino, President of the Mescalero Apache Tribe in New Mexico, is co-chair as the tribal leaders representative.

The names of Task Force members are enclosed as well as a briefing paper that summarizes the Task Force's actions to date.