

CONCEPT NOTE

High-level side event

"Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Taking up the challenge in the context of the 2030 Agenda"

**on the margins of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly
hosted by the Government of the Republic of Estonia in cooperation with the European Commission, the International Labour Organization, the Indigenous Peoples Major Group for SDGs and Partners**

21 September 2017

11.00 to 12.30am, UN Headquarters New York, Room C

Marking the 10th anniversary the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On 13 September 2007, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In 2014, Member States reaffirmed their support for the Declaration in the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration represents the culmination of a series of major achievements over recent decades in building an international framework for the advancement of the rights and aspirations of indigenous peoples, such as the establishment of dedicated UN mechanisms and ILO Convention No. 169.

The challenge of implementation

Despite some progress made in implementing the Declaration over the last decade, gaps between the rights it proclaims and their implementation on the ground continue to be seen. It is now crucial to take up the challenge of making the realisation of indigenous peoples' rights a reality. There are more than 370 million women and men belonging to indigenous peoples across at least 90 countries. They speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures. They make up less than 5 per cent of the world's population but account for 15 per cent of the world's extreme poor and continue to face exclusion, marginalization and serious human rights violations and abuses. Indigenous women are subject to discrimination on account both of gender and ethnicity.

There is now a unique and historic opportunity to tackle these challenges. Major global policy agendas on development, rights and climate change concur that recognizing, promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples must be an integral part of all efforts to tackle exclusion and poverty, highlighting their crucial role as development actors and change agents in the development process and climate change action.

Indigenous peoples were engaged in the preparations of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the continuing engagement is indispensable for making sustained progress in the fulfilment of their rights. As stated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations: "The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must realize the rights of indigenous peoples across all the Goals. Indigenous peoples must not be left behind".

From commitment to action

The **EU Council Conclusions on Indigenous Peoples** of 15 May 2017 reaffirm the EU's commitment to the promotion and protection of the right of indigenous peoples, highlighting as priorities action to address discrimination and inequalities based on indigenous origin and identity, and action to address violence against indigenous peoples and individuals and human rights defenders, in the context of land and natural resources in the protection of the environment, biodiversity and the climate. The 2017 **European Consensus on Development** commits the EU and its Member States to give special attention to indigenous peoples, as a group facing disadvantages and marginalization while underlining the importance of respect of the rights of indigenous and local communities in support of the conservation and sustainable management and use of natural resources. The **2015 ILO strategy for action on indigenous peoples** stresses the protection of their rights in the context of inclusive and sustainable development and prioritizes the building of strong and effective mechanisms for dialogue, consultation and participation.

The Indigenous Navigator initiative

Leveraging the contributions of indigenous peoples, respecting their rights and ensuring that their perspectives and voices are included in processes will make the implementation of the 2030 Agenda stronger and more successful. Sharing this conviction, the European Union, the ILO, the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG), the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), Forest Peoples Programme (FPP), the International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and the Tebtebba Foundation have joined forces as a collaborative partnership to develop and promote a community-based monitoring framework, known as the **Indigenous Navigator**.

The Indigenous Navigator provides an enabling set of community-generated data collection tools that can be used by indigenous peoples world-wide to gather information on their rights and development against an integrated framework grounded in international human rights instruments such as UNDRIP and Convention No. 169 and also aligned with key SDGs targets and indicators of particular relevance for indigenous peoples. Hence, the Indigenous Navigator seeks to reinforce the capacity of indigenous peoples to gather their own data and conduct evidenced-based advocacy and engagement with policy and decision makers at different levels. It also reinforces their contributions to the design, implementation and monitoring of public policies affecting them.

Objectives of the event

The opening of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly offers a timely opportunity to hold a high-level side event to celebrate 10 year of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The anniversary is a reason for celebration, but also an occasion to reflect on ways and means to accelerate individual and collective efforts in support of the realisation of indigenous peoples' rights world-wide and to explore innovative approaches, alliances and partnerships for ensuring that indigenous peoples are not left behind on the path to 2030. This event is an opportunity for presenting the Indigenous Navigator as a practical tool contributing to realising indigenous peoples' rights and development.

The event will be opened by an **Indigenous Cultural Ceremony (Olga Letykai)**.

The event will be followed by a **networking reception/cocktail and a cultural performance by indigenous artists at the ONE UN HOTEL 1.00 to 2.30pm (performance by Olga Letykai, her daughter Alissa Csonka and Tatiana Kalyantagrau)**