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UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples: 30 years of empowering indigenous peoples to claim their rights



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

**UN Voluntary Fund for
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Foreword

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples was established 31 years ago. During this time, the Fund has been instrumental in ensuring that voices of indigenous peoples are heard within the UN system. The Fund has thus far supported the participation of over 2,000 indigenous peoples' representatives in various UN processes, including the sessions of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) as well as relevant meetings of the Human Rights Council and treaty bodies.

Over time, the development of indigenous peoples' rights has been driven by indigenous peoples themselves through a united, transnational movement. This has allowed indigenous peoples to bring their issues to the attention of the international community. Without grants from the Fund, international avenues for achieving self-determination, effective participation and informed consent would have been unavailable to numerous indigenous peoples striving to gain access to justice.

For over 30 years, the participation of indigenous peoples at the United Nations has also led to considerable developments in international human rights standards on indigenous peoples, such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to the creation of the key mechanisms, including UNPFII, EMRIP and the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples.

The indigenous peoples of the world represent strength, persistence and depth of wisdom. With clarity and knowledge, they stand ready with the international community to build societies based on partnership, mutual respect and human rights. I urge all Member States to show their commitment to indigenous peoples' rights by making financial contributions to the Fund and by providing other support to international and national initiatives that focus on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. This commitment should be undertaken in conjunction with measures to implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the national level. Only then can we lay claim to being a part of a human rights regime that fully appreciates the inherent dignity and diversity of humanity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein', is written over a horizontal line.

Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples: Empowering indigenous peoples to claim their rights

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples was established by the General Assembly in 1985 as a response to the needs of indigenous peoples to participate and self-represent their nations and organizations in the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Since then, the mandate and scope of the Fund has significantly broadened and today the Fund provides support for indigenous peoples' representatives to participate in sessions of the **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Human Rights Council, including its Universal Periodic Review, and UN human rights treaty bodies.





While the Fund assists by ensuring that indigenous peoples have the means to travel from their often remote communities to these UN meetings, the impact goes beyond the **travel grant** it provides.

By giving indigenous peoples a voice in UN meetings, the Fund contributes to increased international **awareness** of the rights, status, and conditions of indigenous peoples worldwide. Grantees of the Fund are also able to **build networks**, exchange information with other indigenous peoples' representatives and **create partnerships** with other indigenous peoples, governments, UN agencies, NGOs and experts. In addition to providing financial support for participation of indigenous peoples in UN meetings, the Fund also **builds the capacity** and ensures the **constructive engagement** of indigenous peoples in UN meetings and mechanisms and contributes to strengthening and supporting their work back home. Following their participation at UN meetings, grantees are able to use the contacts they have created and the information they have gained to better protect indigenous peoples' rights in their home communities.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/131, the Fund is administered by the Secretary-General, in accordance with the relevant financial rules and regulations of the United Nations on general trust funds for humanitarian assistance, and with the advice of a Board of Trustees. The recommendations of the Board are approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of the Secretary-General. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) acts as the secretariat of the Fund and its Board.

Ensuring the effective and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in international processes affecting their lives

To the extent that it has been permitted to date, indigenous peoples' participation at the United Nations has been a positive experience. It has enabled indigenous peoples who had been historically excluded to work together peacefully and in partnership with States to advance their issues and rights. It has been a process of mutual trust-building, premised on equality and equity among stakeholders, and has led to fruitful outcomes and greater commitments by indigenous peoples, States and the United Nations system to strengthen recognition and respect for indigenous peoples' rights.

Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary General (A/HRC/21/24 – para. 66)

Indigenous peoples have endured centuries of marginalization and exclusion and many of them continue to find themselves among the poorest and most vulnerable. Entrenched discrimination and indigenous peoples' socio-economic position frequently compromises their access to basic services such as education and healthcare.

Since the 1980s, indigenous peoples have brought to the UN's attention allegations of systematic discrimination and threats to their cultural, physical and economic survival as peoples, often closely linked to their right to self-determination and their rights to lands, territories and natural resources.

Ensuring the participation of indigenous peoples is a means to acknowledge and address their experiences of oppression, colonization and profound discrimination. Direct representation in international mechanisms and processes also empowers indigenous peoples to shape their own futures and ensure the protection and recognition of their fundamental human

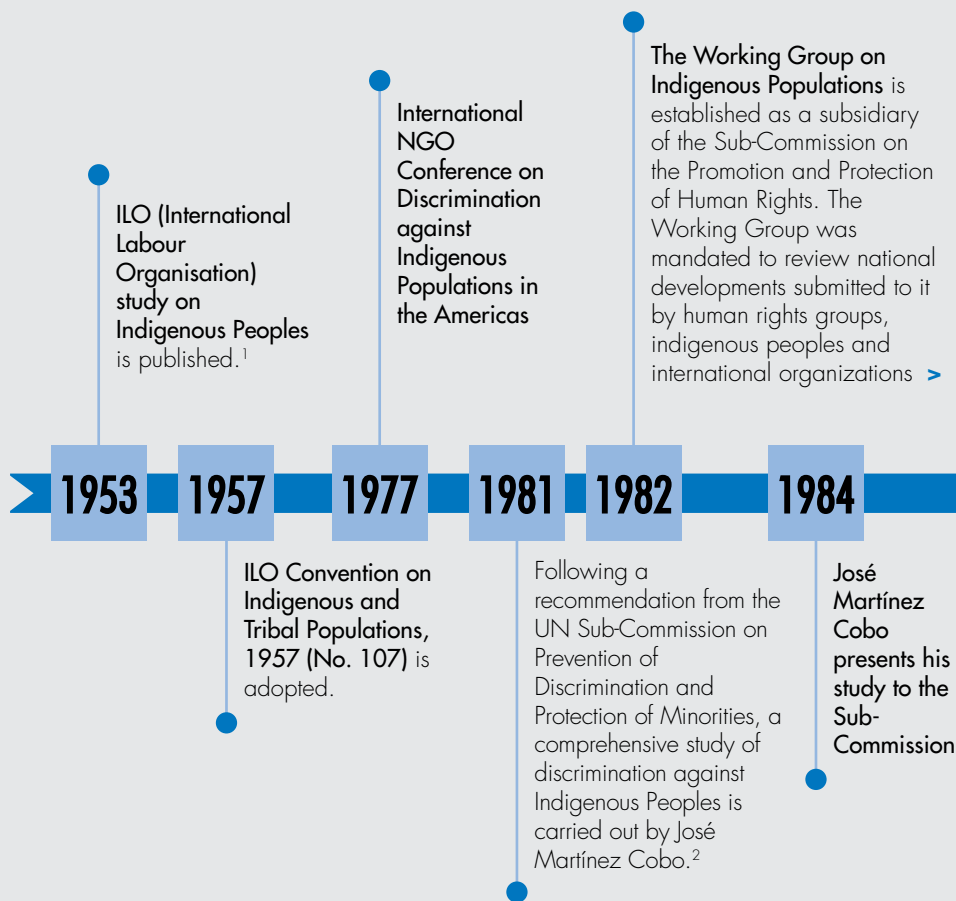


rights. Indigenous peoples' participation at the international level also opens up a forum for the redress of historical injustices.

The UN offers a unique opportunity for indigenous peoples to come together, build relationships and share knowledge in order to overcome challenges. Enabling indigenous people to bring their claims to the UN has the power to influence domestic responses to indigenous issues and offer alternative pathways for redress and ensuring compliance with human rights standards. As a mechanism that supports indigenous peoples' participation, the Fund is a vital component of the UN human rights framework.



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES



¹ International Labour Office Indigenous Peoples: Living and Working Conditions of Aboriginal Populations in Independent Countries (1st ed, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1953).

² Resolution 4B (XXIII) of 26 August 1970.



> in respect of the promotion and protection of freedoms of indigenous peoples. Further, the Working Group was mandated to develop international standards, which take into account the varying experiences of indigenous peoples around the world.³

ILO Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, 1989 (No. 169) is adopted.⁴

1985

The Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples is established by the UN General Assembly to fund the participation of representatives of indigenous communities in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

The Working Group on Indigenous Populations begins preparing the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

1989

1993

International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples.⁵

The Working Group on Indigenous Populations submits the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to the Sub Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

³ *Study of the problem of discrimination against indigenous populations* ECOSOC Res 34 (1982).

⁴ International Labour Organisation C169 *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention* (Geneva, 1989).

⁵ *International Year of the World's Indigenous People* GA Res 47/75, A/RES/47/75 (1993).



⁶ *International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples* GA Res 49/214, A/RES/49/214 (1995).

⁷ *International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples* GA Res 49/214, A/RES/49/214 (1995).

⁸ *Establishment of a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues* ECOSOC Res 22 (2000).



Over 600 Indigenous peoples' representatives, delegations and observers attend the **Alta Preparatory Conference on Indigenous Peoples**¹¹ to make recommendations for the upcoming World Conference.

The **World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**¹² was organized to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, including pursuing measures to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

2007

2013

2014

2016

The **Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** is established as a subsidiary body of the Human Rights Council, with a mandate to provide thematic advice on the rights of Indigenous peoples. The Expert Mechanism has completed various studies including on right to participation in decision making.⁹ **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is adopted by the General Assembly.** It includes individual and collective rights to self-determination, culture, identity, education, health, employment, language and lands territories and resources.¹⁰

The **mandate review of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** significantly changed EMRIP's mandate. These changes include: the provision of technical advice at the country level upon request from Member States or Indigenous peoples; the expansion from five to seven independent experts to reflect the seven indigenous socio-cultural regions; and greater autonomy for the Expert Mechanism to decide on its work.

⁹ *Expert mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples* HRC Res 6/36 (2007).

¹⁰ *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* GA Res 61/295, A/RES/61/295 (2007).

¹¹ United Nations "Indigenous Peoples Voices on the World Conference" <http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples/WorldConference/IndigenousPeoplesVoicesontheWorldConference.aspx>

¹² GA Res 69/2





The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

The first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples was held on 22-23 September 2014. The meeting provided an opportunity to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, including pursuing the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Over 1 000 indigenous peoples' representatives, Heads of State and Government, UN officials and national human rights institutions participated in the World Conference.

The Fund played a crucial role in supporting the participation of 105 indigenous peoples' representatives in the World Conference and its preparatory process, thereby contributing to the robust participation of indigenous peoples in this landmark event for the advancement of their rights.

The **follow-up to the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples** is of particular importance for the Fund as some areas had an immediate impact on the work of the Fund. In 2016, for example, the Fund supported indigenous peoples' participation in the General Assembly's Consultation Process Aiming to Enhance the Participation of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives in UN Meetings on Issues Affecting them, as well as in the Expert Workshop to review the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Impact of the Fund

Over the years, the Fund has assisted approximately 2,000 indigenous women and men, including youth, elders and indigenous persons with disabilities, who have been historically excluded from decision making processes, to participate in UN meetings where issues affecting their lives have been discussed.

Beneficiaries of the Fund have contributed to significant achievements concerning the rights of indigenous peoples, including the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and of the Outcome Document of the World Conference on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the development of international human rights jurisprudence on the rights of indigenous peoples by human rights mechanisms.

In the past 30 years, the Fund has contributed to increases in:

- The **participation** of representatives of indigenous communities and organizations at sessions and deliberations of UN human rights bodies and indigenous-specific mechanisms;
- The **use** of UN human rights and indigenous-specific mechanisms by representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to advance the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples and pursue the objectives of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- The **impact of recommendations** adopted by UN human rights and indigenous-specific mechanisms in the countries of the beneficiaries of the Fund; and
- The **international standards** set with respect to the interpretation and implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



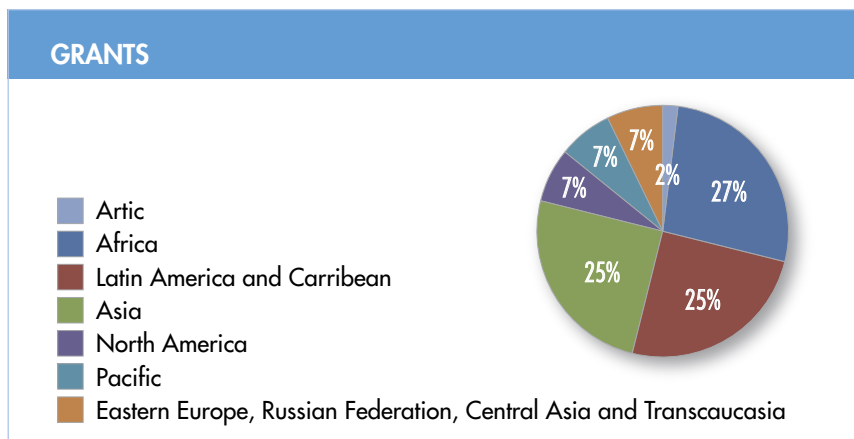
Who are the grantees of the Fund?

GRANTEES OF THE FUND INCLUDE:

- Indigenous peoples' representatives who are victims of human rights abuses
- Indigenous peoples' representatives who are actively promoting positive change in policies or actions of government or relevant non-state actors in the area of human rights
- Indigenous human rights defenders
- Indigenous peoples' representatives who would not be able to attend meetings without the assistance provided by the Fund
- Indigenous peoples' representatives who are able to contribute to a deeper understanding in international forums of the problems affecting indigenous populations.

DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

Since its establishment, the Fund has assisted approximately 2,000 indigenous peoples' representatives from all regions of the world. The distribution of grants per region is roughly as follows:







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Africa: Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim's story

I am from the Mbororo community of Chad. Mbororos are cattle herders and we have a very particular way of life that is closely related to the land and its natural resources. Many of us do not have the chance to go to school and still struggle for recognition of our indigenous identity. A new challenge we face is climate change, which makes us more vulnerable. The human rights violations that my community has faced encouraged me to bring the voice of my community to the United Nations. At the UN we discuss our problems with the hope of solving them.



I became involved in the United Nations in 2007 while participating in the OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship Programme. Since then, I have attended various sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, and international negotiations on climate change, desertification and biological diversity.

Most recently, I participated in the Human Rights Committee's review of Chad, where I lobbied the State to adopt new legislation concerning the rights of indigenous peoples (the Pastoral Code), which was adopted in November 2014. My organization, in collaboration with human rights civil society organizations in Chad set a road map to follow-up the recommendations of the Committee with the help of OHCHR. In 2010 I was a consultant for a study on nomadic schools, and two years later the government created a nomadic school directive under the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, in 2014 the Minister of Public Health established a health programme for nomadic people. The Government has also recognized indigenous traditional knowledge as important in the protection of the environment through the Cancun agreement.

Participation in the UN is the only way I can engage with the representatives of my government and speak to them freely. I have also been able to build relationships with people from other organizations that share the same perspective on issues and that could help me to find solutions for my own people back home.

I encourage all other indigenous peoples to engage with the UN and hope my experience can serve as a guide. I support the UN as a platform because it gives a voice to indigenous peoples and facilitates relationships between governments, organizations and indigenous peoples. This contributes to indigenous people being able to promote and protect our rights.

The Arctic: Tuomas Aslak Juuso's story

I was born in Finland and have been an active member of various Saami organizations throughout my life including the Finnish Saami Youth Organization, the Saami Council and the Finnish Saami Parliament.

The Saami people traditionally inhabit a territory known as Sápmi, which spans the northern parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland, and the Russian Kola Peninsula. Although the Saami are divided by the formal boundaries of these four States, we continue to exist as one people, united by cultural and linguistic bonds and a common identity. The Saami have the oldest languages and cultures of these countries, long pre-dating the present-day States. Today, there are nine language groups divided across the national borders of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Federation.

The Saami still face challenges, in particular to the right to self-determination and land and resource rights. We are also fighting to preserve our languages, cultures and identities. Living as one people across four state borders poses a challenge to ensure that all Saami have the same rights.

Having observed the role of the UN in advancing the rights of indigenous peoples, from 2007 I was motivated to engage with international processes. I believe that UN engagement is important to raise awareness of indigenous peoples' issues. The United Nations offers a space for dialogue with governments and indigenous peoples' representatives, which we find extremely important for the protection of our rights.

Most people have little to no knowledge of the difficulties that indigenous peoples face, even those who live in countries with one or more indigenous peoples. As no one can be a better advocate for indigenous peoples than indigenous people themselves, direct participation of our representatives in the UN is essential for protecting and promoting our rights.

The UN also provides a useful forum for indigenous peoples to interact with each other and share information.



Asia: Sochea Pheap's story

My name in the Bunong language is N'crot N'crôc. I belong to the Bunong peoples of the Mondulkiri region in eastern Cambodia. The Bunong people are found in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. We have inhabited this area for over 2000 years and have a close connection with our natural environment. From long ago, we have lived in harmony and peace with nature. Our ancestors protected our natural resources, our land and our





territories, guaranteeing the livelihood of our people for generations. Natural resources have also connected us with spirituality, guiding our traditional beliefs and practices. Our ancestors taught us the ways we plant, the ways we cultivate and the ways we harvest.

I am the President of the Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association (CIYA) and have on numerous occasions represented my organization at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York. In Cambodia, I have engaged with local communities through my role as Programme Officer for Development Issues with the Southeast Asia Development Program.

Preservation of our traditional lands and territories is integral to the Bunong way of life. Today our livelihood and survival are being threatened by extractive industries and other development projects taking place on our lands without their free, prior and informed consent.

Access to public services and education are also challenging for the Bunong, and, to date, fewer than 60 indigenous Bunong have graduated from tertiary education in Cambodia.

By voicing the concerns of the Bunong people at the United Nations, I hope to bring attention to my people's concerns and advocate for the government to engage with indigenous peoples in Cambodia. My time at the UN has also allowed me to initiate contact with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples.

Without financial support from the Voluntary Fund, my organization would not have the resources to allow me to bring the concerns of the Bunong people to the attention of the international community. The Fund does more than simply allow participation in the UN—it has also allowed representatives of my organization to establish useful contacts for future advocacy efforts, particularly among key NGOs.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Olga Montúfar Contreras' story





I am a descendent of the Nahua people, who originate in southern Mexico. I am currently the President of Fundación Paso a Paso, which aims to give a voice to indigenous persons with disabilities. With almost 2 million people identifying as Nahua, we represent the largest Indigenous people in Mexico.

As an indigenous person, a woman, and a person with a disability, I am at the crossroads of multiple forms of discrimination based on different aspects of my identity. Indigenous persons with disabilities lack a true form of “citizenship,” which is critical in order to enjoy the same rights, and to live our own lives in social and political coexistence with the rest of the community.

My engagement in United Nations processes and mechanisms has led to the direct involvement of my organization with the National Council on Disabilities in Mexico. This invaluable connection forged with the government has contributed to the integration of indigenous perspectives when formulating policy on the welfare of persons with disabilities.

The Fund has not only helped indigenous persons with disabilities to attend UN meetings; it has also provided participants with information to help them get the most out of their time at the UN. Indigenous persons with disabilities are also given priority for funding. The Voluntary Fund stands out as a mechanism that empowers indigenous peoples to participate at the highest levels of international policy-making. This is a way of pressuring states to respond to demands of groups who might otherwise be ignored or overlooked by governments. The Fund itself has also undergone some changes as a result of the insights of grantees with disabilities. I suggested that the Fund could do more for indigenous persons with disabilities. For example, the Fund did not think about the fact that some representatives may need to have a personal assistant. In response to this suggestion, the Fund completely transformed to accommodate our needs.

My time at the UN has been overwhelmingly positive and has signalled significant change for the indigenous persons with disabilities movement both in Mexico and internationally. I encourage other indigenous persons, particularly those living with a disability, to engage with the

UN international framework. You might think something is a small issue, but believe me, it is important. Today I am an outspoken person, but when I first came here, people could not understand me. I struggled, I repeated myself, but people understood what I was saying because it came from my heart. I feel that I am an example of what indigenous persons with disabilities can achieve when given the chance to participate in the UN system, rather than simply being “offered a wheelchair.”



North America: June Lorenzo's story

My people are the Laguna Pueblo and Diné (Navajo). I live and work in my home community, Paguete Village, one of the six villages of Laguna Pueblo. We are located roughly an hour east of Albuquerque, New Mexico. I currently represent the Indigenous World Association and the Laguna-Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment in my UN advocacy.

Our story of colonization is much like that of other native nations in North America: loss of land and attempts to eradicate our ways of life, and even our existence at some points in history. In modern history we have experienced numerous challenges to assimilate us through government policies and practices. One of the results of land loss is that many of our sacred places are now under the control of government entities and private landowners, including thousands of acres of national forest lands. A renewed interest in uranium mining in these areas, which presents a threat to cultural resources, causes our people great concern.



I have participated in United Nations meetings since 1999, including the negotiations leading to the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Attending these meetings while in the midst of litigating land rights in the United States compelled me to look at larger systems of oppression that indigenous peoples have faced, and the impacts of colonialism on our lands, territories and resources.

The majority of my work is voluntary. Laguna Pueblo does not have resources dedicated to international advocacy. The Laguna Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment does not have any paid staff and thus voluntary work has been a key driver for these organisations. My ability to participate in international human rights advocacy at critical times has been in large part due to the support of the UN Voluntary Fund and other human rights organisations. I witnessed that the Voluntary Fund brings important voices to the table that might not otherwise be able to attend these meetings. With the assistance of the Voluntary Fund, indigenous peoples are involved in holding states to account for indigenous rights abuses and promoting the protection of indigenous peoples' cultures and ways of life.



The Pacific: Catherine Murupaenga-Ikenn's story



I am of Māori descent, hailing from the iwi (indigenous peoples) of Te Rarawa and Ngāti Kuri. Both iwi are located in Te Hiku o Te Ika (the tail of the fish) otherwise known as the Far North of Aotearoa (New Zealand).

Iwi from all corners of Aotearoa have suffered the consequences of the colonial period following the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the English version of which is known as the Treaty of Waitangi) by our rangatira (chiefs) and the British Crown in 1840. The historical displacement from our traditional lands has had negative intergenerational impacts, trapping Māori in conditions of poverty, unemployment, low educational achievement, ill health, and loss of language and cultural practices. Contemporary issues continue to significantly affect Māori such as the climate crisis and deficient constitutional arrangements.

I have had extensive experience in iwi governance and indigenous human rights advocacy. My experience with the United Nations began in 2005 when I took part in the OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship Programme, and I have continued to work with the United Nations ever since.

The UN provides an international stage that enables indigenous peoples to put pressure on domestic governments to address violations that have historically occurred and are still occurring to this day. Engagement with the UN therefore allows indigenous representatives to adequately advocate on behalf of their constituent communities, ensuring that their peoples' voices can be heard. It also allows for valuable networking opportunities among the many indigenous peoples who participate. This is important for knowledge sharing and understanding the high-level issues that affect all indigenous peoples, as well as sharing of best practices. Further, it enables Indigenous peoples to learn about how to effectively advocate on issues that affect them and to learn different campaign strategies so that they can achieve greater success.



The more people who are exposed to the internationally recognized human rights standards and useful UN mechanisms the better. The more who know about them, the more they're normalized in society, the greater their acceptance, the easier it becomes to integrate them into domestic institutions, legislation, regulations, policy and procedure. It helps keep Governments, business and industry, the media and other sectors, influential actors and decision-makers in society generally accountable to We, The People.

Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia: Irina Kurilova's story

I am the international representative of the Yukaghir people, representing our Council of Elders in many international meetings. I also work in the Support Centre for Small Indigenous Peoples of the North *Batani*. Today, there are approximately 1500 Yukaghir people. We are one of the indigenous peoples in Russia in danger of extinction and our language is about to disappear. Only 20 people fluently speak our mother tongue. The traditional lifestyle and traditional food supply activities which Yukaghirs have been practicing for centuries no longer allow families to sufficiently support themselves in today's market conditions. As a consequence, young people are moving to big cities and losing their roots.





During the Soviet era, a concerted effort was made to assimilate the Yukaghir people into the general population. The effect of these policies has been devastating and long lasting. Forced assimilation policies have resulted in most people of Yukaghir descent alive today having little to no knowledge of or contact with our heritage.

I and other indigenous representatives have found the United Nations to be a vital source of resources and support. The possibility to participate in UN meetings lets us feel that we are not alone; we feel the support of our brothers and sisters. Despite being a disparate collection of cultures, the indigenous peoples of Russia have found support among each other. Similarly, the global indigenous community has allowed me to work with representatives from around the world and receive their advice and support. It can often be easier to communicate with governments in international fora than at home.

Since participating in the UN framework, I have seen some notable successes for my people. The government has taken note of our warnings about the imminent extinction of the Yukaghir language and has recently allocated resources for preserving it. It has also taken steps to preserve the traditional Yukaghir food supply and Indigenous peoples' rights are being enshrined in legislation.

For smaller peoples like the Yukaghir, the Fund is absolutely essential. Many indigenous peoples simply do not have the resources to send representatives to the United Nations. A people that is not physically present to plead their case is a people that is easily ignored.

Support the un voluntary fund for indigenous peoples

WHY SUPPORT THE FUND?

The Fund is the oldest UN mechanism still in place dedicated to promoting the rights of indigenous peoples. Over its 3 decades of existence, the Fund has assisted approximately 2,000 indigenous peoples' representatives, and currently is one of the few sources of funding that supports indigenous participation at UN meetings.

HOW MUCH DOES THE FUND NEED?

Every year, the Fund receives hundreds of applications from indigenous peoples' representatives requesting support to participate at UN meetings where issues affecting their lives are being discussed.

The numerous expansions of the mandate of the Fund created new opportunities for indigenous peoples to voice their concerns at the international level, which is extremely positive; but it also means increasing demands for support. Currently, the Fund is able to fund less than 1/3 of the applications received.

In order to meet these demands meaningfully and effectively, the Fund requires at least US\$700,000 every year in voluntary contributions to support the expanding mandate of the Fund.

Financial support includes a round-trip air ticket by economy class via the most direct route from the beneficiary's home to Geneva or New York at the least costly fare, and a daily subsistence allowance for the days of the session.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUND?

All of work of the Fund is supported by and dependent upon voluntary contributions. Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities can contribute to the Fund. Any contribution, large or small, can make a dramatic difference for indigenous peoples



and will ultimately contribute to the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

OHCHR receives pledges on behalf of the Fund. Contributions should be earmarked for the **UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples**.



The Fund needs your support. Your donation to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples had an important impact in the lives of thousands of indigenous peoples and their communities. Since 1985, the Fund has been supporting indigenous participation at the United Nations. Help us continue for the next 30 years.

Act now! Donate!

Visit us at: www.ohchr.org

Email us on: indigenousfunds@ohchr.org



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UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples:
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