



PERMANENT MISSION OF EL SALVADOR
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement by the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), 16th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous People "Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: measures taken to implement the Declaration"

New York, 24th April 2017



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Madame Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the member states of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

We highlight the valuable work undertaken by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and its Secretariat, by the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and by the Mechanism of Experts on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

CELAC welcomes the Human Rights Council resolution 33/25 which amended the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous People in order to provide the Council with expertise and advice on the rights of indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and assist Member States in achieving the ends of the Declaration. CELAC also welcomes the human Rights Council resolution 33/12 which extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

CELAC reaffirms its commitment with the implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. And in this regard welcomes the General Assembly Resolution 71/178 which urges Governments and the United Nations system, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples to develop and implement, appropriate measures, to realize the commitments made in the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

As a follow up to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, CELAC would also like to recognize the efforts of the United Nations system to develop of the System Wide Action Plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, guaranteeing that the United Nations advocates with one voice for indigenous peoples rights and implement programs in a coordinated way.

Madame Chair,

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes and reaffirms that indigenous individuals are entitled without discrimination to all human rights recognized in international law, and that the indigenous peoples possess collective rights for their existence, well-being and integral development as peoples.



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Furthermore, CELAC Member States recall that this Declaration recognizes and reaffirms that indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions to provide education in their own languages, in line with their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

In this regard, we highlight the importance of preserving the linguistic rights of the indigenous peoples throughout the world, while, welcoming the decision of the General Assembly through resolution 71/178, to proclaim 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages, which aims to draw attention to the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote them. We invite all governments, representatives of Indigenous Peoples and regional and international organizations, to provide support to the success of the celebration of the international Year of Indigenous Languages.

Our Countries recognize that in the region there are millions of people who speak some native language, and we commit to develop initiatives and activities which increase public awareness of the importance of indigenous languages and interculturality, promoting the exchange of experiences and good practices on public policies.

Madame Chair,

We reaffirm our commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economical, social and environmental, in a balanced and integrated way, as agreed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We believe that the eradication of poverty and sustainable development with social, economic and financial inclusion are challenges that require global, regional and national efforts, as well as that of our local governments and our communities. The eradication of poverty is a prerequisite for sustainable development and to ensure prosperity for our societies. Sustainable development cannot be attained without the inclusion of groups and people in vulnerable situations such as, indigenous peoples, and afro-descendants, including women, elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants, children and adolescents.

Equity, social and financial inclusion and access to fair credit are central to ensure overall access to justice, participation, well-being, and living-well with a dignified life for Indigenous Peoples and for all. The promotion of culture of peace and non-violence are also fundamental elements for the attainment of sustainable development.

CELAC recognizes that Indigenous Peoples play a significant role in sustainable development and recognizes also the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, the preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and resources, their right to access to drinking and suitable water for irrigation, in keeping with the legislation of each country, and their traditional systems of land tenure, seed supply systems and access to financing and markets.



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In the "Addis Ababa Action Agenda", we encouraged knowledge-sharing and promotion of cooperation and partnership between stakeholders. At the same time, we recognized that traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities can support social well-being and sustainable livelihoods and we reaffirmed that indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

We decided to strengthen, in a comprehensive manner, the productive basis, placing emphasis on sustainable local and cultural practices of indigenous peoples and local communities for integrated management with a view to optimizing the use of and access to water for irrigation purposes by proper management of basins, the recovery of soil fertility by replenishing green cover, compost production, terrace cropping, and the preservation and increase of biodiversity through the recovery and production of native seeds and improved seed production, according to the legislation of each country.

We recognize the importance of strengthening mitigation and adaptation actions, in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, which includes best practices of local communities and indigenous peoples, to face the adverse effects of climate change, in accordance with the principle of common yet differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Our Member States are committed to the promotion, protection and respect of all Human Rights, without any discrimination, as a fundamental basis for sustaining the democratic life of our nations. We underline the importance of implementing measures aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of vulnerable people, including indigenous and African descent peoples, migrants, persons with disabilities and women.

We support the empowerment and capacity-building of indigenous women and youth, including their participation in decision-making processes in matters that affect them, in particular in the areas of health, education, employment, the protection of their territories and natural resources and the transmission of traditional knowledge, languages and practices. In this sense, we welcome the fact that the issue of the empowerment of indigenous women was the focus area of the past 61th Session of the CSW.

Madame Chair,

CELAC countries reaffirm the commitment made at the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to consider ways to enable the participation of indigenous people's representatives and institutions in meeting of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them. We express our support to the consultation process that is currently being conducted and we encourage all relevant stakeholders to actively participate in it.



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Finally, CELAC countries welcomes the high-level event to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; document which recognizes the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples and constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.

Thank you