

For the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

Saturday 9 August 2014

**Justice still remains elusive for many indigenous peoples in
many parts of the world**

GENEVA (9 August 2014) – *The new United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli Corpuz, urges indigenous peoples around the world to remain steadfast in asserting and claiming their individual and collective rights.*

On the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, Ms. Tauli Corpuz calls on States to address human rights violations and to ensure indigenous the peoples' participation in formulating and implementing their national and local development strategies and plans:

“Today, the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, is a day to celebrate the gains and victories achieved by indigenous peoples in their bid to claim their rights and realize their life plans or development visions.

However, for many indigenous peoples in many parts of the world, there is not much to celebrate. Countless violations of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights continue on a daily basis. Justice still remains elusive for many of them.

Indigenous peoples' key demand is for States to effectively implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries and all other relevant human rights treaties and instruments.

This is a very historic year for indigenous peoples. The first ever World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, a high level meeting of the General Assembly, will be held on 22 and 23 September 2014. It is also the year in which negotiations for the post-2015 development agenda and a new agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place.

On this International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, I urge Member-States to ensure that human rights and development priorities of indigenous peoples will be integrated in the final outcomes of these processes.

I wish to echo the remarks of the UN Secretary-General made this year for the International Day. He stated that, “The interests of the indigenous peoples must be part of the new development agenda in order for it to succeed.” Yet, during the recent closing session of the Open-ended Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the indigenous peoples stated their great disappointment over the inadequate reflection of their proposals in the final outcome document.

Furthermore, I call on States to take decisive steps to decisively address the cases of human rights violations and to ensure the effective participation of indigenous peoples in formulating and implementing their national and local development strategies and plans.

Indigenous peoples have made and will continue to make significant contributions in solving the environmental, economic and social crises confronting our world. Studies have shown that respecting the rights of indigenous peoples, especially their rights to own and to conserve and sustainably use their lands, territories and resources, contributes to climate change mitigation.

Finally, I would like to call on indigenous peoples to remain steadfast in asserting and claiming their individual and collective rights enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant human rights treaties and instruments.”

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The new Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (Philippines), is a human rights activist working on indigenous peoples’ rights. Her work for more than three decades has been focused on movement building among indigenous peoples and also among women, and she has worked as an educator-trainer on human rights, development and indigenous peoples in various contexts. She is a member of the Kankana-ey, Igorot indigenous peoples in the Cordillera Region in the Philippines. As Special Rapporteur, she is independent from any government or organization and serves in his individual capacity. Learn more, log on to:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/SRIndigenousPeoples/Pages/SRIoplesIndex.aspx>

Check the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

<http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples/DeclarationontheRightsofIndigenousPeoples.aspx>



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