

**Human Rights Council****Forty-fifth session**

14 September–7 October 2020

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development****Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council  
on 6 October 2020****45/12. Human rights and indigenous peoples***The Human Rights Council,**Recalling* all relevant General Assembly, Commission on Human Rights and Human Rights Council resolutions on human rights and indigenous peoples,*Reaffirming* its support for achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007,*Recognizing* that, since its adoption, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has positively influenced the drafting of several constitutions and statutes at the national and local levels and contributed to the progressive development of international and national legal frameworks and policies as the Declaration applies to indigenous peoples,*Appreciating* the current efforts being made to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of indigenous peoples, recalling the commitment made at the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to consider ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them, and welcoming Assembly resolution 71/321 of 8 September 2017,*Acknowledging* the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in the meetings of various United Nations organs and their subsidiary bodies, in particular the Human Rights Council and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,*Taking note* of the outcome document of the Dialogue Meeting on Enhanced Indigenous Peoples' Participation at the United Nations organized by indigenous organizations and institutions and held in Quito from 27 to 30 January 2020,*Acknowledging* the importance of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples for supporting the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings concerning them,

*Taking note* of the report of the Expert Mechanism on the repatriation of ceremonial objects, human remains and intangible resources under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,<sup>1</sup> and encouraging all parties to consider the recommendations made in the report,

*Taking note also* of the study of the Expert Mechanism on the right to land under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,<sup>2</sup> and encouraging States to consider implementing the advice therein,

*Taking note further* of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples highlighting the impact of the work carried out during the period of her mandate,<sup>3</sup> and calling upon all States to consider the recommendations contained in the report,

*Stressing* the need to pay particular attention to the rights and needs of indigenous women, children, young persons, elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate violence and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in this regard, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by consensus by the Assembly in 2014,<sup>4</sup>

*Recognizing* that indigenous peoples are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change owing to their dependence upon and close relationship with the environment and its resources, and welcoming the role of indigenous peoples in achieving the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the targets and goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Recognizing also* the increasing impact of climate change on human rights and the specific impact on the rights and ways of life of indigenous peoples around the world, and recalling the preamble to the Paris Agreement and to decision 1/CP.21 on the adoption of the Paris Agreement<sup>5</sup> acknowledging that States should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on the rights of indigenous peoples, paragraph 135 of decision 1/CP.21 recognizing the need to strengthen the role of indigenous peoples' knowledge systems relating to mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and paragraph 36 of the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples,

*Taking note with appreciation* of the establishment, by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-fourth session, of the Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, with equal participation of representatives of indigenous peoples and of parties to the Framework Convention, to advance the objectives and implementation of its functions,

*Bearing in mind* the importance of empowering and building the capacity of indigenous women and young persons, including for their full and effective participation in decision-making processes in matters that affect them directly, including policies, programmes and resources, where relevant, that target the well-being of indigenous women, children and young persons, in particular in the areas of universal and equitable access to quality health services, mental health, adequate nutrition, including through family farming, education, employment and the transmission of traditional knowledge, languages and practices, and also the importance of taking measures to promote awareness and understanding of their rights,

*Noting* that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is having a serious impact on the health, education, food security, safety, well-being and livelihoods of people across the world, with a disproportionately negative effect on indigenous peoples, their ancestral territories and sacred sites, and the need to take immediate and appropriate measures to

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/45/35.

<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/45/38.

<sup>3</sup> A/HRC/45/34.

<sup>4</sup> Resolution 69/2.

<sup>5</sup> FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1.

address these effects, including the elimination of barriers, such as language barriers, to the effective participation of indigenous peoples in matters affecting their rights,

1. *Acknowledges* the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of indigenous peoples,<sup>6</sup> and requests the High Commissioner to continue to submit to the Human Rights Council an annual report on the rights of indigenous peoples containing information on the relevant developments in human rights bodies and mechanisms and the activities undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner at headquarters and in the field that contribute to the promotion of, respect for and the full application of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and follow up on the effectiveness of the Declaration;

2. *Welcomes* the work of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, and encourages all Governments to respond favourably to the requests of the mandate holder for visits and to respond to communications;

3. *Also welcomes* the work of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,<sup>7</sup> including its intersessional activities, and requests the Office of the High Commissioner to ensure timely translation in all official languages of the United Nations and distribution of its reports to the Council and pre-session translation of the studies and reports of the Expert Mechanism, in accordance with Council resolution 33/25 of 30 September 2016;

4. *Strongly encourages* States to participate actively in the sessions of the Expert Mechanism and to engage in dialogue with it, including during its intersessional activities;

5. *Urges* States and other potential donors to contribute to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, and notes with satisfaction the expansion of its mandate in order to support the participation of indigenous peoples, including indigenous women, youth and persons with disabilities, in United Nations business and human rights and climate change processes;

6. *Acknowledges* the efforts of States, indigenous peoples and United Nations agencies to engage with the Expert Mechanism under its current mandate to facilitate dialogue, when agreeable to all parties, to provide technical assistance and coordination in order to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, encourages all parties to consider the Expert Mechanism's initiation of country engagements upon the request of States and indigenous peoples, and acknowledges the engagement of those States that have already collaborated with the Expert Mechanism under its current mandate;

7. *Notes* that the next study of the Expert Mechanism, to be finalized by 2021, will focus on the rights of indigenous children, and acknowledges the efforts made to improve complementarity and to avoid duplication among the reports prepared by the Expert Mechanism, the Special Rapporteur and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues;

8. *Acknowledges* the progress and outcomes of and lessons learned from the International Year of Indigenous Languages in 2019 through the activities led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

9. *Welcomes* the proclamation of the period 2022–2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, to draw attention to the critical loss of indigenous languages and the urgent need to preserve, revitalize and promote indigenous languages and to take urgent steps at the national and international levels;<sup>8</sup>

10. *Takes note* of the outcome document of the high-level event held in February 2020 on the occasion of the closing of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, entitled “Los Pinos Declaration [Chapoltepek] – Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages”, to inspire a global plan of action for the Decade;

<sup>6</sup> A/HRC/45/22.

<sup>7</sup> A/HRC/45/61.

<sup>8</sup> General Assembly resolution 74/135.

11. *Decides* that the theme of the annual half-day panel discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples, to be held during the forty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council, will be the situation of human rights of indigenous peoples facing the COVID-19 pandemic, and will have a special focus on the right to participation, and requests the Office of the High Commissioner to encourage and facilitate the participation of indigenous women and to make the discussion fully accessible to persons with disabilities, and to prepare a summary report on the discussion and to submit it to the Council prior to its fiftieth session;

12. *Encourages* all stakeholders, in their responses to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, to work in collaboration with indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions, guided by the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to refer to the guidelines of the Office of the High Commissioner on this matter;<sup>9</sup>

13. *Welcomes* the summary report prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner on the half-day intersessional interactive dialogue held on 15 July 2019 on ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of the Human Rights Council on issues affecting them;

14. *Decides* to continue to discuss further steps to facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in the work of the Human Rights Council, in particular in dialogues with the Expert Mechanism and the Special Rapporteur and in the annual half-day discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples;

15. *Acknowledges* that, owing to the public health emergency, it has not been possible to hold the intersessional round table mandated in Human Rights Council resolution 42/19 on possible steps to be taken to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of the Council on issues affecting them, and looks forward to holding that round table in 2021, in accordance with the agreed modalities, to allow for the broadest participation of Member States and indigenous peoples, and with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions from the seven indigenous sociocultural regions;

16. *Encourages* the Expert Mechanism to continue its discussions on the issue of enhancing the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in the relevant meetings of the Human Rights Council on issues affecting them;

17. *Encourages* States to give due consideration to the rights of indigenous peoples and the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by indigenous peoples and individuals, including potential setbacks and aggravated barriers caused by COVID-19, in fulfilling the commitments undertaken in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the formulation of relevant international and regional programmes, as well as national action plans, strategies and programmes, applying the principle of leaving no one behind;

18. *Encourages* the Special Rapporteur, the Expert Mechanism and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to strengthen their ongoing cooperation and coordination and ongoing efforts to promote the rights of indigenous peoples, including in treaties and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the follow-up to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, and invites them to continue to work in close cooperation with all Human Rights Council mechanisms and the human rights treaty bodies, within their respective mandates;

19. *Encourages* the development of a process to facilitate the international repatriation of indigenous peoples' sacred items and human remains through the continued engagement of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Expert Mechanism, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, States, indigenous peoples and all other relevant parties in accordance with their mandates;

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<sup>9</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/OHCHRGuidance\\_COVID19\\_IndigenouspeoplesRights.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/OHCHRGuidance_COVID19_IndigenouspeoplesRights.pdf).

20. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations treaty bodies are important mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights, and encourages States to give serious consideration to their recommendations, including those regarding indigenous peoples, in the application of treaties;

21. *Welcomes* the contribution of the universal periodic review to the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, encourages effective follow-up to accepted review recommendations concerning indigenous peoples, and invites States to include, as appropriate, information on the situation of the rights of indigenous peoples, including measures taken to pursue the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples during the review;

22. *Calls upon* States to achieve the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by adopting measures, including national action plans, legislation or other frameworks, as required, to pursue its objectives in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, taking into account the use of their languages;

23. *Calls upon* States in all regions that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization to consider doing so, taking into account its contribution to the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples;

24. *Welcomes* the role of national human rights institutions established in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) in advancing indigenous issues, and recognizes the importance for such institutions of developing and strengthening their capacities, as appropriate, to fulfil that role effectively;

25. *Encourages* States, according to their relevant national context and characteristics, to collect and disseminate data disaggregated by ethnicity, income, gender, age, race, migratory status, disability, geographic location or other factors, as appropriate, in order to monitor and improve the impact of development policies, strategies and programmes aimed at improving the well-being of indigenous peoples and individuals, to combat and eliminate violence and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against them, to include the specific needs and priorities of indigenous peoples in addressing the global COVID-19 outbreak and to support work towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda;

26. *Also encourages* States to work with indigenous peoples to strengthen technologies, practices and efforts related to addressing and responding to climate change, and recognizes the importance of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform for the exchange of experience and the sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner;

27. *Reaffirms* the importance of promoting the political, social and economic empowerment of indigenous women, including by ensuring access to quality and inclusive education and through meaningful participation in the economy by addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and barriers they face, including violence, and of promoting their participation in relevant decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas while respecting and protecting their traditional and ancestral knowledge, noting the importance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for indigenous women and girls, and encourages States to give serious consideration to the above-mentioned recommendations, as appropriate;

28. *Notes with great concern* the increase in cases of reprisal against indigenous human rights defenders, indigenous peoples' representatives attending United Nations meetings and United Nations mandate holders working on the rights of indigenous peoples, and expresses its concern at the practice of some countries hosting meetings on indigenous issues of intentionally delaying or denying entry visas to United Nations mandate holders;

29. *Urges* States to take all measures necessary to ensure the rights, protection and safety of indigenous peoples and indigenous human rights defenders, including indigenous women human rights defenders, and that all human rights violations and abuses against them are prevented and investigated and that the perpetrators are held accountable;

30. *Invites* States and potential donors to support the work of the United Nations Indigenous Peoples Partnership and the system-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

31. *Urges* States and invites other public and/or private actors or institutions to contribute to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples as an important means of promoting the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide and within the United Nations system;

32. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this question at a future session, in conformity with its annual programme of work.

*36th meeting  
6 October 2020*

[Adopted without a vote.]

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