

Dialogue Meeting on Enhanced Indigenous Peoples' Participation at the United Nations

Ecuador, Quito, Latin-America

January 5-10, 2020

Co-hosts:

The Sámi Parliament in Finland
Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA)
The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC)
The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

Concept Note

Background

Building on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and various studies and proposals from Indigenous peoples, the 2014 high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, committed to “consider ways to enable the participation of indigenous peoples’ representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them” (A/RES/69/2, paragraph 33). There have been several notable and important steps taken before and after the resolution was adopted in September 2017, including:

- In May 2015, the UN Secretary General outlined considerations to be addressed to enhancing Indigenous Peoples’ participation at the UN: *Progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples* (A/70/84–E/2015/76).
- In December 2015, the UN General Assembly requested the President of the General Assembly (PGA) to conduct consultations “on the possible measures necessary, including procedural and institutional steps and selection criteria, to enable the participation of indigenous peoples’ representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them, and also requests the President to prepare a compilation of the views presented during the consultations, including good practices within the United Nations regarding indigenous peoples’ participation, which will form the basis for a draft text to be finalized and adopted by the Assembly during its seventy-first session.” (A/70/84–E/2015/76).
- In February 2016, the PGA appointed four advisors to assist him in carrying out consultations on the possible measures necessary, including procedural and institutional steps and selection criteria, to enable the participation of indigenous peoples’ representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them; two representatives of UN

Member States, Ambassador Kai Sauer (Finland) and Ambassador Martha Ama Akyaa Pobbee (Ghana), and two representatives of Indigenous Peoples, Dr. Claire Winfield Ngamihi Charters (Pacific region) and Professor James Anaya (North American region). (http://www.un.org/pga/70/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2015/08/18-Feb_Rights-of-Indigenous-Peoples-18-February-2016.pdf)

- With the support of four advisors, the PGA conducted one electronic consultation and three face-to-face consultations with Indigenous peoples' organizations and member states between March and July 2016, publishing the compilation of views in mid-July 2016. The PGA's compilation includes an addendum outlining the "Potential Elements for Discussion During the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly", which might form the basis of negotiations on a General Assembly resolution to enhance Indigenous peoples' participation at the UN.¹ (PGA's compilation A/70/990).
- In September 2016, the PGA of the 71st session of the General Assembly, reappointed the four advisors to lead consultations on improving indigenous peoples' participation at the UN.
- A Dialogue Meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2016 to provide Indigenous representatives the opportunity to consider and consolidate their positions and strategies with respect to the specific issues raised in the PGA's compilation of views and elements for discussion.
- Consultations to develop a resolution text were held from December 2016 to May 2017. Following the briefing of the PGA's Advisers on the process of the participation of Indigenous Peoples at the UN on 3 October 2016, the consultations were conducted in December 2016, January and February 2017 and during the 16th session of the Permanent Forum in 2017. After these discussions, a draft resolution was finalized.
- On 8 September 2017, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution titled, "enhancing the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them" (document A/RES/71/321). By its terms, the Assembly welcomed recent discussions on indigenous participation, and encouraged the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the rights of indigenous peoples to continue to address the issue of indigenous participation. It further requested the Secretary-General to report, by the end of the Assembly's seventy-fourth session, on achievements, analysis and recommendations on ways to enable such participation.
- In April 2018, the President of the General Assembly conducted the first of three (2018, 2019, 2020) informal interactive hearings on the enhanced participation of indigenous peoples at the United Nations. This hearing was requested by the General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/71/321 and was open to indigenous participants accredited to attend the 2018 session of the Permanent Forum.

¹ The 71st session of the UN General Assembly was from 13 September 2016 – 12 September 2017.

- During its Eleventh session in July 2018, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples proposed that the Human Rights Council makes further efforts to facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives, and their representative institutions in its work, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- In September 2018, The Human Right council, in its resolution A/HRC/39/L.18/Rev.1, decided to hold a half-day intersessional interactive dialogue on ways to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of the Human Rights Council on issues affecting them and encouraged states and the relevant agencies and entities of the United Nations system to support the Secretary-General in holding timely regional consultations, including through the regional commissions, as appropriate, in order to seek input from indigenous peoples from all regions of the world on the measures necessary to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of the relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them.
- In September 2019, The Human Rights Council gave the resolution A/HRC/42/L.24 in which it was decided that the discussion regarding the facilitation of the participation of Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institution in the work of the Human Rights Council will be continued (para.11). It was also decided that an intersessional round table will be held "on possible steps to be taken to enhance the participation of Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of the Human Rights Council on issues affecting them" (para.12). In the resolution the President of the Human Rights Council or a representative is requested to co-chair the round table together with the co-chair nominated by the participating representatvies of Indigenous Peoples. In addition co-chairs are asked to prepare a summary report on the round table together with the Office of the High Commissioner and to present it in the Human Rights Councils 45th session (para.13).

Documentation

For more detail and to access relevant documentation, please see the website associated with this process: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/participation-of-indigenous-peoples-at-the-united-nations.html>.

Purpose of the Dialogue Meeting

The purpose of the Dialogue Meeting, to be held 5-10 January, 2020 in Ecuador is to provide Indigenous representatives and experts the opportunity to consider and consolidate their positions and strategies on the current process and processes to come. The decision of the process of enhanced participation to be continued during the 75th session of the GA builds the need for Indigenous Peoples globally discuss, re-think different approaches and have a dialogue with a member states identifying themselves as the friendly group. The meeting is considered to work as a continuation of the process and there is also a provided space to Indigenous representatives from all regions to have a full picture on what has happened with the process until today.

Indigenous representatives are expected to consult within their communities, organizations and institutions on the issues raised.

The Dialogue Meeting is initiated and co-hosted by the Sámi Parliament in Finland, The International Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA), Indian Treaty Council (ITC) and The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP). Regional host organization is planned to be Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA). This is an open-ended dialogue meeting, open to all interested indigenous peoples' representatives.

Due to financial limitations, the meeting will be conducted in English and Spanish only. The funding raised for this meeting will cover four indigenous representatives from each of the seven indigenous socio-cultural regions to the meeting; selection of these funded positions will be made by the co-hosts taking into account the participant's experience and prior participation in the topic under discussion, their English or Spanish proficiency and gender balance. Participation by self-funded indigenous representatives is welcomed.

Self-funded participants need to register by emailing Tuomas Aslak Juuso (Sámi Parliament in Finland) at tuomas.juuso@samediggi.fi and Laura Olsén-Ljetoff (Sámi Parliament in Finland) at laura.olsen-ljetoff@samediggi.fi. Self-funded participants should take care of all financial and practical matters regarding their participation, including visa, travel, accommodation, subsistence and travel insurance.

The co-hosts will invite and fund the participation of the PGA's former two indigenous co-advisors, Professor Anaya and Dr. Charter and an expert from the WCIP process to give a presentation on the outcome document and his expertise on the topic, Ms. Tracey Whare, to attend the Dialogue Meeting. In addition, UNPFII and EMRIP would be invited to participate as self-funded participants.

The first two days of the meeting is set aside for indigenous peoples' internal discussions on matters related to the process. During the last two days a dialogue between indigenous representatives and friendly states representatives will be conducted. To conclude, Indigenous Peoples would have an afternoon session for finalization of their discussions.

PROGRAM

Day one

Participants arriving

Day two

Opening ceremony

Introduction to the topic of the meeting and background of the process

Discussion with every region about their views on the process

Day three

Discussion on GA level: How to move forward?

Discussion on HRC level and possibilities

Discussion on other relevant issues, including the development of the current indigenous peoples' engagement at the UN and its different fora

Day four

Conclusions and emerging views of Indigenous Peoples

Dialogue with member states including GA level, HRC and overall analyze

Day five

Conclusions with the dialogue together with member states

Final words among Indigenous peoples; Way to move forward

Day six

Participants leaving home

Key Issues

The focus of the Dialogue Meeting will be on the “elements for discussion” as they set out the specific issues that will need to be resolved for the future process. The questions include:

- *Find a common ground to restart the process:* There could be two parallel processes: Restart the Enhanced Participation Process and Apply for the status of Permanent Observer. Restarting the Enhanced Participation Process should follow the GA Resolution and start with different UN Bodies, e.g. the Human Right Council.
- *Consider and consolidate a unified positions and strategy:* Engage with Indigenous Peoples from all seven socio-cultural regions to further participate in the process. Identify if there is a possibility to establish global working group of Indigenous peoples to facilitate dialogue between each region.
- *Dialogue with member states.* Discussion and analysis on the current situation and the meaning of enhanced participation.

Expected outcome

1. More comprehensive understanding between indigenous peoples
2. More coordinated actions and positions
3. More unified understanding with member states about the current situation
4. Systematic roadmap for the way forward
5. Evaluation of the current indigenous peoples’ engagement at the UN and its fora. (EMRIP, UNPFII, FAO, UNFCCC, SDG etc.)

Practical Information

Co-hosts:

The Sámi Parliament in Finland, Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA), The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

Regional and technical hosts:

The Sámi Parliament in Finland

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