

Friends,

On September 8, the General Assembly adopted a compromise resolution ([*attached](#)), agreeing to extend consideration of its work to enable the participation of indigenous governments at the United Nations through its 75th session in 2020-2021. The resolution, which establishes a multi-year calendar of consultations, meetings, and production of a report, has been approved with the following activities:

1. Annual interactive hearings with indigenous peoples by the President of the General Assembly during the PFII's annual sessions (**April 2018, April 2019, and April 2020**)
2. Regional consultations with indigenous peoples by the Secretary-General (with the support of member states) before the Permanent Forum's 19th Session (**April 2020**)
3. Secretary-General's Report before the end of the GA's 74th Session (**September 2020**)
4. Continued consideration of measures to enhance participation during the GA's 75th Session (**September 2020-September 2021**)

This outcome is a great disappointment. It marks the failure of the United Nations General Assembly to take concrete action to enable the participation of indigenous governments at the United Nations, a commitment made by all member states in the Outcome Document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

Nevertheless, the resolution was adopted by consensus (it enjoys support by all 193 member states) and, beyond deciding to hold additional consultations, it includes two positive elements. First, it encourages existing indigenous mechanisms (the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII), Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), and the Special on the rights of indigenous peoples (SRRIP)) to enhance the participation of indigenous governments. Second, it encourages the UN system as a whole, in accordance with existing rules of procedure, to facilitate the participation of indigenous governments in relevant conferences, summits, and other meetings.

Tribal nations can seek participation under this rubric now. Toward this end, the Indian Law Resource Center, with the Ewiiaapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians, the National Congress of American Indians, and the Native American Rights Fund, recently submitted comments to the Human Rights Council urging the Council to adopt rules to accommodate the participation of indigenous governments and to consider the topic during its annual panel discussion in 2018 ([*attached](#)). I also addressed the Council on September 20 and urged them to do the same. More information is available [here](#).

We will continue to keep you apprised of any future meetings on the issue. Thank you for all of your good work and your support in this ongoing struggle to achieve a meaningful seat at the table for our tribal nations' governments.

Karla E. General, Attorney* | Indian Law Resource Center

601 E Street, SE | Washington, DC 20003

TEL: 202.547.2800 ext. 107 | FAX: 202.547.2803

kgeneral@indianlaw.org |  | www.indianlaw.org

*Admitted only in NY