

Friends –

We have just returned from a very successful United Nations World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in New York. A good number of our indigenous governments attended, as well as a strong showing of indigenous women's advocates. Hundreds of other indigenous participants attended from all over the world. Thanks to all your support, hard work, and participation, the outcome document of the World Conference was adopted by consensus as a UN General Assembly Resolution the morning of Monday, September 22 ([attached](#)). This is the highest action we can get from the UN and it was supported by all 193 member states of the UN.

Importantly, the outcome document included all four of our proposed action items, including:

- Initiating a process to create a permanent body in the UN system that will monitor and encourage implementation of the Declaration;
- Considering options for a General Assembly decision to make it possible for Indian tribal governments and other indigenous governments to participate in UN meetings on a permanent basis;
- Giving particular attention to the epidemic of violence against indigenous women, including Indian and Alaska Native women in the United States; and
- Measures to respect and protect places sacred to Indian and other indigenous nations and peoples.

The outcome document, among many other things, also calls for a system-wide action plan to be developed for the UN system to bring greater coherence and effectiveness to the UN's work relating to indigenous peoples. Lt. Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, Jefferson Keel, delivered remarks to the World Conference on behalf of 159 supporting indigenous nations and organizations, emphasizing the intent of indigenous governments to rejoin the world community and to realize the commitments made in the outcome document. His statement can be viewed here:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPqjhbqF4Hw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPqjhbqF4Hw).

After many long months of work, it was heartening to see so many states speak in support of our recommendations. United States Ambassador to the UN Human Rights Council, Keith Harper, leading the United States delegation, made many supporting comments toward an implementation body for the UN Declaration and increasing the participation of indigenous peoples and their governments in the UN, as well as the need to empower indigenous women and end violence against them, noting the World Conference is not an end in itself, but a call for more decisive action.

This is just the beginning of our work. We now have concrete commitments by the UN and member states that protect and promote the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In short, we have reached another milestone in the movement to achieve and realize our rights. Yet, we are just as responsible as states to see to it that the commitments in the outcome document are carried into effect in the months to come.

We thank you for all of your support and good work, and we look forward to working with you to bring the commitments into reality for our peoples. Please see our website for more information:

[www.indianlaw.org/worldconference](http://www.indianlaw.org/worldconference).

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