

# Chair Report

**Assembly:** Junior General Assembly Three

**Topic:** The Question of Rights for Indigenous People

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**Position:** Head Chair

## Introduction:

In every region of the world, indigenous people are consistently defined and treated as insignificant or as victims of the society. As a result of that, it is a considerable and complicated problem, which leaves many difficulties and negative impacts for those people. Indigenous people have been keeping up with the world for centuries and have their own beautiful, distinguished culture, linguistics, traditions, histories, and political uniquenesses. As the society develops, discrimination, violations, exploitation, and other social ills start to disfigure their culture and traditions along with the abuse of their human rights.

## Definition of Key Terms:

### **Indigenous people**

The aboriginal or native people who are the ethnic group that originally inhabited a given region.

### **Discrimination**

Biased treatment towards a specific category of people based on their race, age, gender, nationality, etc..

### **Violation**

The action of treating someone with a lack of respect, usually resulting from the breaking of a rule.

### **Exploitation**

The action of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit themselves.

**Social ill**

A term synonymous with the phrase “social problem” or “social issue” -- something that exists as an unpleasant condition to some members in a community.

**Abuse**

Cruel and violent treatment or action from someone to others; can be verbally, physically, etc.

**Human right**

The right that belongs to every person regardless of their ethnicity, race, gender, etc.

**Basic human rights**

Basic human rights are the rights that include:

- 7.1 Right to life.
- 7.2 Freedom from torture.
- 7.3 Freedom from slavery.
- 7.4 Right to a fair trial.
- 7.5 Freedom of speech.
- 7.6 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- 7.7 Freedom of movement.
- 7.8 Rights debates.
  - 7.8.1 Right to keep and bear arms.
  - 7.8.2 Future generations.
  - 7.8.3 Sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Colonization**

The action of settling into other countries or territories and establishing control, often to manipulate the original people or citizens and benefit the colonizers

**Genocide**

A premeditated and systematic campaign to exterminate an entire people.

**Sanction**

A non-violent or non-aggressive way of punishing or penalizing a country.

**Extinction**

A process that leads to the disappearance of populations or a species; termination of species or population.

**Sovereignty (sov-rin-tee)**

The rights and power of authority to have control over itself with no interference from outside power or sources.

## Background Information:

Discrimination against indigenous peoples' rights started many centuries ago through the power of colonization. As the consequences, those tragedies led to many deaths, starvation, diseases, and extinction. In addition, much of these practices could be considered or called, "ethnic cleansing" or "genocide." Presently, the estimated population of indigenous people worldwide is 370 million; they are found in more than 70 countries and are divided into over 5,000 subgroups. However, these peoples constitute only 5% of the worldwide population.

Historically, the discrimination against indigenous peoples' rights began when the invasion of European domination started. An early example is in 1452, when Romanus Pontifex was asked by Pope Nicholas V of Portugal to declare war against all non-Christians around the world; they began to establish many sanctions and promoted the colonization and exploitation of those nations. Romanus Pontifex was extremely successful with all the accomplishments and there was much enslavement of those distinguished minorities and religious citizens.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, the journey of discovering the "New World" by a Portuguese man, Christopher Columbus, led to calamity for indigenous people, also known as the "Red Indians, "American Indians" or "Native Americans." Since the day of his new discovery, the Native Americans were forced to leave their homes. The "Trail of Tears" was also a tragic period for the Native Americans that left a significant amount of diseases and death. It was a serious situation in a period of time and there was the possibility of Native American extinction along with their culture, religion, and people.

Today, the discrimination and the abuse of human rights is still occurring in some regions. Indigenous people are a seriously small population that mostly depend on nature to survive. Treating these people in an unacceptable way has been a major conflict since the past, but somehow still makes way to reveal to the world's problems today. It is destroying all their rights, especially the basic human rights. Therefore, the need for discussion and solutions with immediate actions are required in order to reduce the acts of discrimination and the abuse against indigenous people.

## Countries and Organisations Involved:

### ***United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)***

The UNHRC works on promoting and protecting human rights around the world.

### ***The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)***

The OHCHR works to protect and promote human rights, and extend the United Nations peacekeeping missions in the world.

### ***United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)***

UNESCO works to correlate different nations and societies, so that citizens can have access to quality education, basic human rights, scientific advancement, exchanging culture, and communication.

### ***United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII or PFII)***

The UN's central coordinating body for concerns that are related to rights of the indigenous people around the world.

### ***Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)***

FAO works on its expertise in natural resources by protecting the environment for those who depend on it for survival.

### ***European Commission***

An institution of the European Union, responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the EU.

### ***The Commonwealth of Australia***

In 1975, the Commonwealth of Australia established the policy of non-discrimination with the enactment of the Race Discrimination Act. This was to ensure everybody would be treated with equality regardless of their race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin. As a result, over 3,500 aboriginal people received their rights once again with less discrimination.

### ***United States of America***

On the 15th of June in 2016, the United States of America, specifically, the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted and agreed on the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The declaration provides protection for the indigenous people in North America, Mexico, South and Central America, and the Caribbean. It was also stated in the Article VII of the declaration to ensure gender equality with a commitment that “States shall adopt the necessary measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination...”

## **Timeline of Events:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of the event</b>
June 1993	The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Austria, was the first human rights conference held since the end of the Cold War. The conference was ended with the result of the “Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.”
September 2007	United Nations Declaration on Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) declared the rights of the world’s indigenous peoples.

October 2015	The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), and the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (SPFII) implemented the “2030 Agenda” to solve indigenous issues with the participation of many indigenous experts.
24 April – 5 May 2017	The 16th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had the special theme of “Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: measures taken to implement the Declaration”.
9 August (annually)	The International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples is an event helping to promote and protect the indigenous peoples’ rights. It recognizes all the accomplishments and contributions that indigenous people make to solve all the issues that face them.

## UN Treaties and Events:

- [Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action](#). (25th June, 1993)
- [The sixteenth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues with the Special Theme: “Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: measures taken to implement the Declaration”](#) (24 April to 5 May, 2017)
- [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (25 September, 2015)
- [United Nations Declaration on Rights of the Indigenous Peoples](#) (13 September, 2007)

## Previous Attempts:

On May 27, 1967, Australia created a referendum in the government to vote in favor of changes to the Australian Constitution, to improve the services available to Indigenous Australians. In contrast, the sections of the document that they focused on during the meeting actually discriminated against Aboriginal people. As it stated, “In reckoning the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth, or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, Aboriginal natives should not be counted.” This caused Australia to provide limited resources including funds and services for the Aboriginal people. But still, the referendum did its job of drawing attention to the importance of Aboriginal communities.

In Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/22, the member states created a connected advisory body. On July 28th, 2000, the Permanent Forum on the Indigenous Issues (PFII) was created to advise the awareness of the issues of indigenous peoples in the United Nations. In addition to the work of the United Nations, various non-governmental organizations, such as Native Planet and Cultural Survival, supported developing and improving the rights of the

indigenous people. They targeted self-empowering indigenous peoples and preserving the ethnic culture.

## Possible Solutions:

The United Nations has been putting a lot of effort into improving the status of indigenous people. Therefore, indigenous people will be living with equality and equity with all the people in terms of political and social status. Discovering new solutions for putting an end to discrimination against indigenous people is a challenging task. But, in order to achieve such equality, all member states should focus on:

- **Political representation:** Indigenous peoples have their own unique political system, social structure and customs distinguished from the government. The governments and international community should enhance the representation of indigenous people in the majority political system. In detail, the national government should focus on the aim of allowing indigenous people to become visible in politics while respecting their cultural sovereignty and the country's sovereignty.
- **Empowering and increasing social tolerance:** Creating social media campaigns and implementing proper education should be able to address and teach civilians about the unique cultures of indigenous populations. Increasing the awareness, local and international communities also will be able to bridge the gap between various cultures in one country, including indigenous culture.
- **Economic system:** Providing more occupations and sufficient resources regardless of race, color, and ethnic origin is also a way to improve indigenous representation in a country's economy. Competitive salaries should be provided to indigenous workers the same as others in their job position. Therefore, indigenous people will be able to have more support in term of sustaining their family's livelihood and contributing towards the country's economy.

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