



INTERNATIONAL
INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES'
FORUM ON
CLIMATE CHANGE

OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTERS

WHY EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ARTICLE 2 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT IS IMPERATIVE?

The International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) expresses its strong support for Parties to commit to ambitious carbon reduction targets to limit global warming below 1.5 C. This is critical for mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change and for the continuing survival and development of all peoples and nations, including those living in small islands and vulnerable areas.

At the same time, measures and policies in achieving the objectives of the Climate Change Convention should be anchored to the respect, protection and fulfillment of human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples.

This is a necessary prerequisite to ensure the effectiveness of such measures especially in upholding the integrity of people and the environment by preventing further harm and violation of human rights especially as regards to mitigation and adaptation. Furthermore, the respect and fulfillment of the rights of indigenous peoples will also provide the means to protect and enhance the positive roles and contributions of indigenous peoples to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Scientific evidence shows that indigenous peoples sustainable management and conservation of their lands and resources offer invaluable contributions in the protection of Mother Earth since time immemorial. Thus, the respect and protection of our rights, especially to our lands, territories and resources is a critical element in order to further the maximum potential of indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge, innovations and sustainable livelihoods. This is in fact consistent with and is key to achieving the purposes and tenets of the Convention. Therefore, the explicit reference to the respect of the rights of indigenous peoples in article 2 must be read as a vital global contribution in meeting the targets of limiting global warming as originally intended in the Convention, when the COP process was first launched.

In conclusion, we anticipate the full support of Parties to remove the brackets in the current draft text in article 2 and to add "including the rights of indigenous peoples" to read as follows:

*This Agreement shall be implemented on the basis of equity and science, and in accordance with the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances, and on the basis of respect for human rights, **INCLUDING THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**, and the promotion of gender equality [and the right of peoples under occupation].*

This action by Ministers will demonstrate the commitment of Parties to achieve the objectives of the Convention.