

33rd session of the Human Rights Council

Annual half-day discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples ***Theme: The causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, including those with disabilities***

Concept note (as of 14 September 2016)

- Date and venue:** 20 September 2016, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Palais des Nations, Room XX, Geneva
(will be broadcast live and archived on <http://webtv.un.org>)
- Objectives:** The panel discussion aims to:
- Examine structural, systemic, public forms of violence experienced by indigenous women and girls in contemporary society, including lack of access to justice for such violence,
 - Identify good practices and challenges in addressing structural forms of violence against indigenous women,
 - Assess the development of legal and policy responses to violence against indigenous women, based on article 22 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which requires States to take measures with Indigenous peoples, to ensure that women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.
- Chair:** H.E. Mr. Choi Kyonglim, President of the Human Rights Council
- Opening statement:** Mr. Adam Abdelmoula, Director, Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Moderator:** Mr. Albert Kwokwo Barume, Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Panellists:**
- Ms. Evelyn Curuchich Simón (Guatemala), Deputy Director of the Legal Unit, Ombudsperson Office for Indigenous Women
 - Ms. Aili Keskitalo (Norway), President, Sami Parliament of Norway
 - Ms. Hannah McGlade (Australia), OHCHR Senior Indigenous Fellow and Senior Indigenous Research Fellow at Curtin University
 - Ms. Olga Montúfar Contreras (Mexico), Director, Fundación Paso a Paso
 - Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (Philippines), Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples
- Outcome:** An informal summary of the discussion will be prepared including a set of recommendations on concrete measures to address the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women.
- Mandate:** The Human Rights Council decided to hold an annual half-day discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples in its resolution 18/8 of 29 September 2011. The theme of this year's discussion – the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, including those with disabilities – is mandated by Council resolution 30/4 of 1 October 2015.
- Format:** The opening statement and initial presentations by the panellists, the latter guided by the moderator, will be followed by an interactive discussion divided into two slots and chaired by the President of the Human Rights Council. The list of speakers for the discussion will be established at the beginning of the panel and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups will be moved to the beginning of the list. States and observers,

including representatives of civil society, take the floor for a 2-minute intervention each (total 45 minutes), followed by responses from panellists (15 minutes). A second round of interventions from the floor (45 minutes) will be followed by responses and concluding remarks from the panellists and the moderator (15 minutes).

To make the panel interactive, speakers are encouraged to focus their interventions on the themes of the panellists either by asking the panellists questions or sharing relevant national experience. The participation of representatives of indigenous peoples is encouraged. Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

Accessibility for persons with disabilities:

In an effort to render the Human Rights Council more accessible to persons with disabilities and to promote their full participation in the work of the Council on an equal basis with others, the panel will be made accessible to persons with disabilities. During the debate, international sign interpretation and real-time captioning will be provided and webcasted. In Room XX, four seats are reserved for participants with disabilities in the last (seventh) row. Hearing loops are available for collection from the Accessibility Focal Point at the secretariat desk in Room XX. Oral statements can be embossed in Braille from any of the six official United Nations languages by following the procedure described in the *Accessibility guide to the Human Rights Council for persons with disabilities* (available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/AboutCouncil.aspx>).

Background:

The panel discussion will be based on a holistic approach to the issue of violence against indigenous women and girls, recognizing that such violence is deeply influenced by ethnicity, gender, and historical factors, and that addressing such violence requires an intersectional approach to human rights. Violence against indigenous women and girls is intrinsically linked to indigenous peoples' histories of discrimination and marginalization. It is part of a continuum that spans interpersonal and structural forms of violence and inequality.

There has been significant recent commitment within the United Nations to address the issue of violence against indigenous women and girls. This includes the 2014 Outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples which invited the Council to examine the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples. And further, to intensify efforts to prevent such violence. Also, the 2015 report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples (A/HRC/30/41) considered the situation of indigenous women globally, finding that there are endemic violations of Indigenous women and girls' civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights. This structural violence is 'interlinked with and mutually enforcing' sexual violence, gender-based killings, violence in armed conflict, domestic violence, violence in the name of tradition and trafficking of women and girls. The Special Rapporteur urged the United Nations to support its Member States as they make the paradigm shift required to increase attention to the needs of indigenous women.

Additionally, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) undertook in 2014 a thematic study on access to justice and including justice for indigenous women, children and youth and persons with disabilities (A/HRC/27/65).

The 32nd session of the Human Rights Council included a panel discussion on violence against indigenous women and girls and its root causes (held on 16 June 2016). The discussion at this session focussed largely on interpersonal forms of violence. The present panel will complement the discussions held at the 32nd session through its focus on systemic and structural forms of violence which unaddressed have the effect of impeding justice, entrenching violence, encouraging impunity and feeding a negative cycle of human rights violations.

Background documents:

- [Human Rights Council resolutions 18/8](#) (29 September 2011) and [30/4](#) (1 October 2015), "Human rights and indigenous peoples"

- [General Assembly resolution 69/2](#) (22 September 2014), “Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples”
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), General Assembly resolution 61/295 (13 September 2007)
- [Human Rights Council resolution 29/14](#) (2 July 2015), “Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: eliminating domestic violence”
- Report of the Special Rapporteur of the rights of indigenous peoples (2015) ([A/HRC/30/41](#))
- Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Study on access to justice in the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples: restorative justice, indigenous juridical systems and access to justice for indigenous women, children and youth, and persons with disabilities (2014) ([A/HRC/27/65](#))
- [Human Rights Council resolution 32/19](#) (1 July 2016), “Accelerating efforts to eliminate violence against women: preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, including indigenous women and girls”