



Combating Violence Against Indigenous Women By Implementing Decisions of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

A Joint Oral Statement Offered at the 29th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
by the Indian Law Resource Center, National Congress of American Indians, and Native American Rights Fund
Item 3 – Panel for Annual Full-Day Discussion on Women’s Rights (June 19, 2015)

The Indian Law Resource Center, National Congress of American Indians, and Native American Rights Fund offer this statement on combating violence against indigenous women by implementing decisions of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples calls on States to ensure that indigenous women enjoy full protection against all forms of violence and discrimination. Even so, indigenous women and girls continue to suffer from multiple forms of discrimination and disproportionate violence and murder. To address this dire situation, special measures are urgently needed.

The outcome document of the World Conference contains decisions that are clear and emphatic that strong action is needed to end this violence.¹ It calls for the UN to develop a system-wide action plan to realize the ends of the Declaration.² We recommend that the plan pay particular attention to the rights of indigenous women and children.

In the outcome document, States commit to consider an implementing body for the Declaration.³ The focus of this body should include indigenous women’s rights. It should be composed of independent experts selected by States and indigenous peoples’ representatives and institutions, and it should enhance, not duplicate, the work of the Permanent Forum and Special Rapporteurs.

States commit to consider ways to enable participation of indigenous peoples’ representatives in relevant UN meetings on issues affecting them, such as women’s rights.⁴ We recommend new rules granting them greater participation rights and a new status that respects them as governments and global actors.

¹ A/RES/69/2.

² *Id.* Paragraphs 28, 31, and 40.

³ *Id.* Para. 28.

⁴ *Id.* Para. 33.

States also requested that this Council consider examining the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls.⁵ We recommend that the Council:

- a. Hold a panel on the topic during its annual discussion on the rights of women; and
- b. Request a report from the Secretary-General that includes recommendations to enhance the mandates of existing special procedures to request regular joint reports on the issue.

These recommendations are supported by over 90 indigenous nations and 23 organizations in the Americas. We urge your support of these actions that will provide lasting improvements in the lives of indigenous peoples.

⁵ *Id.* Para. 19.