

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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H.E. The Permanent Representative

28 July 2014

Open Letter: Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

Dear Ambassador,

Amnesty International and the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) have for many years been working in collaboration with representatives of Indigenous Peoples to further the respect, protection and fulfilment of Indigenous Peoples' rights, to promote the implementation of the full range of human rights.

Amnesty International recalls that the process of drafting of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was one that afforded full and effective participation of representatives of the peoples concerned. This process established the principle of the participation of representatives of rights-holders in the taking of decisions and the development of standards concerning them, one which should now be considered to be a minimum standard.

Amnesty International and the CFSC are concerned at developments in the run-up to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to be held in New York in September - in the organising of the Conference and the drafting of the Outcome Document agreed by the President of the General Assembly in his statement to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on 19 May 2014 - that appear to run against this principle of participation of representatives of Indigenous Peoples. We are also concerned at statements by member states during consultations around the document, that appear to be aimed at weakening the rights contained in the Declaration, and the status of the Declaration itself. The Declaration reflects a solemn commitment by member states to implement the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Amnesty International and the CFSC therefore recommends that:

- A paragraph be included in the Outcome Document stating: "Consistent with the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we reaffirm that nothing in this outcome document may be construed as diminishing or extinguishing the rights that Indigenous peoples have now or may acquire in the future. Similarly, nothing may be construed as diminishing or extinguishing the related obligations of States."
- The Outcome Document should not include anything that falls below the standards set in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- The negotiation process around the Outcome Document should continue to include the full and effective participation of representatives of Indigenous Peoples,
- Member States do not negotiate and approve an outcome document without the support of Indigenous Peoples;

Amnesty International hopes that the information and recommendations contained in the enclosed document will be useful for your work. We would be happy to provide you with any additional information.

Yours sincerely,

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Amnesty International Representative
at the United Nations

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