

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 48th SESSION

Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples

27-28 October 2021

- **Indigenous peoples and coronavirus disease (COVID-19) recovery - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples (A/HRC/48/54)**

Mr. José Francisco Cali Tzay, Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples: received information from indigenous peoples from all over the world regarding the measures to recover from pandemic; in many countries there was a failure to consult with indigenous people on issue of fighting against pandemic; report focuses on the COVID-19 recovery phase and related plans, and the impact that the pandemic has had on the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples; concerned about the state of COVID-19 recovery measures on indigenous peoples as they are disproportionately negatively affected. State measures for economic recovery have prioritized and supported the expansion of business operations at the expense of indigenous peoples, their lands and the environment. Indigenous Peoples continue to be subjected to the force eviction, peaceful protests are restricted in the interest of public health while the expansion, construction and operation of commercial and extractive industries continues in order to promote economic recovery. Indigenous Peoples face higher risk of infection, vaccine rollout for them has not been prioritized in most countries, statistics does not accurately reflect the effects of virus on indigenous population; educational campaign about COVID-19 should be held in indigenous languages; recommend greater inclusion and participation of Indigenous People in planning and implementation of COVID-19 related measures.

Interactive dialogue

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (32 statements):

Mexico on behalf of A Group of Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú), European Union, Denmark of behalf of the Nordic-Baltic countries (Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and Denmark together with Greenland), Canada, Australia, UNICEF, Armenia, Indonesia, FAO, Venezuela, Holy See, Russia, United States, Peru, Malaysia, Nepal, Brazil, China, Cuba, Panama, Marshall Islands, Paraguay, UN Women, Cameroon, Cambodia, Ukraine, Guatemala, Philippines, Belarus, Organization of American States, Pakistan, Chad

Mexico on behalf of Latin American countries: COVID-19 response strategies must be the product of participatory processes, culturally appropriate and based on a human rights approach. **EU:** concerned that COVID-19 recovery efforts in many countries fail to reach indigenous peoples and even negatively affect them. **Denmark** in a joint statement shared the concern about attacks against the Yanomami and Mundurucu peoples by illegal miners in the Amazon. **Canada** works closely with Indigenous peoples in order to ensure a culturally appropriate recovery plan. **Australia:** *how the global response to COVID-19 should take into account the multiple and intersecting issues facing indigenous peoples, including as it relates to age, disability inclusion, gender equality, and sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status?* **UNICEF:** called for ensuring appropriate protection, assistance, and access to quality and culturally appropriate services to Indigenous children. **Armenia:** highlighted the issue of access to education for indigenous children, especially for girls. **Indonesia:** does not recognize the concept of indigenous peoples as reflected in the UNDRIP, remains a supporter of the Declaration. **FAO:** believes the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure constitute an avenue to ensure rights of Indigenous Peoples. **Venezuela:** implemented the Plan for the Prevention, Containment of Infection and Control of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Peoples and Communities Indigenous people of Venezuela. **Holy See:** the ongoing global health crisis should be an opportunity to work towards green economic policies, the cultural traditions of indigenous people are a valuable example to consider. **Russia:** organizations of the indigenous peoples of Russia have become actively involved in the volunteer movement, helping the needy representatives of the communities. **USA:** consulted Tribal Leaders and urban Indian organizations to coordinate a comprehensive public health response; *what are the success stories of the response to pandemic by*



Indigenous People? **Peru:** a network of intercultural managers has been established to contribute to combatting the pandemic, with a focus on serving indigenous peoples. **Malaysia:** demonstrated its commitment to ensure that the indigenous children's right to education is not compromised, despite lack of access to internet. **Nepal:** established Indigenous Nationalities Commission. **Brazil:** prioritized the vaccination of indigenous peoples, and vaccines have reached the farthest Amazon communities. **China:** expressed concern over the serious violations of the rights of indigenous peoples in the United States, Canada, and Australia. **Cuba:** it is urgent to recognize the equality and right to self-determination of indigenous peoples in the world. **Panama:** opportunities for the well-being of indigenous peoples as guardians of the environment and natural resources must be maximized. **Marshall Islands:** protecting the health of the indigenous populations by promoting a healthy environment and adequate healthcare is essential in protecting the traditional knowledge systems. **UN Women:** highlighted the recommendation to strengthen the transmission of indigenous languages and knowledge and promote the role of women as knowledge keepers. **Cameroon:** adopted the National Plan for the Development of Indigenous Peoples. **Cambodia:** informed about national policies related to indigenous population. **Ukraine:** Crimean Tatars are extremely affected by illegal occupation of Crimea by Russia; Ukraine has adopted a landmark law on indigenous population. **Guatemala:** coordinated a number of recovery measures, embodied intercultural approach into the vaccination scheme. **Brazil (Right of Reply):** is taking a series of measures to investigate illegal actions against indigenous communities to ensure accountability. **Philippines:** lessons from the Philippines should also inform on how the topic is exploited by political actors. **Belarus:** drew attention on systemic violations of indigenous peoples' rights in certain countries (Canada). **Organization of American States:** COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation with human rights of indigenous people. **Pakistan:** in many situations the pandemic had been exploited to infringe the indigenous peoples' human rights; drew attention to India's actions against Kashmiri Indigenous people's rights. **Chad:** regretted exponential regress on ensuring human rights of indigenous people during the pandemic.

NGOs that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (10):

Conectas Direitos Humanos, Minority Rights Group, Franciscans International, Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie Van Homoseksualiteit - COC Nederland, Conselho Indigenista Missionário (CIMI), Right Livelihood Award Foundation, International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEL), Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) Asociación Civil, Association pour la défense des droits de l'homme et des revendications démocratiques/culturelles du peuple Azerbaïdjanais-Iran - «ARC»

Conectas Direitos Humanos: drew attention to the human rights situation of indigenous peoples of Brazil. **Minority Rights Group:** governments must consult meaningfully with indigenous communities and fully respect indigenous peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent in recovery planning. **Franciscans International:** *how can it be ensured that consultations with indigenous peoples are carried out and respected in the context of recovery measures from the COVID-19 pandemic?* **COC Nederland:** important to engage in a sustained dialogue with indigenous peoples, including dialogue with religious leaders in terms of sexuality and gender. **CIMI:** asked to reinforce attention to the situation in Brazil, in view of the ongoing atrocity against indigenous peoples. **Right Livelihood Award Foundation:** *how can the Council ensure that indigenous peoples in Brazil and Nicaragua are protected from this incessant violence, and their territory effectively safeguarded?* **OIDEL:** education is a cornerstone of the realization of indigenous rights. **CEJIL:** called the attention of the Special Rapporteur to the situation of indigenous peoples of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast. **CELS:** in Argentina the pandemic worsened the situation of indigenous communities. **ARC:** ethnic minorities in Iran continue to face discrimination and harassment.

Concluding remarks by the Special Rapporteur: the report shows good measures taken by States as well as the criticism with respect to COVID-19 recovery policies; States must fulfil their obligations in respect of indigenous people according to their international commitments; engagement with indigenous people with regard the long-term strategies of overcoming consequences of the pandemic is essential; application of indigenous medicine and scientific knowledge is important in this respect.

Video recording of the interactive dialogue is available on the UN Web TV: [PART 1](#) and [PART 2](#)