
Geneva, 1977

There are 3 UN Bodies/Mandates specifically established to address Indigenous Peoples’ Rights, Situations and Issues

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 8th Session, 2009
Photos by Ben Powless
The Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People

(a) **Examines ways and means** of overcoming existing obstacles to the full protection of Indigenous Peoples’ human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(b) **Gathers, requests, receives and exchanges information** and communications from all relevant sources (States and Indigenous Peoples), on alleged human rights violations;

(c) **Makes recommendations and proposals** to prevent and remedy violations of Indigenous Peoples’ human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(d) **Works in close cooperation** with other relevant UN and regional bodies

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The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007

- Assists the UN Human Rights Council in the implementation of its mandate;
- Provides the HRC with thematic expertise on the rights of indigenous peoples in the manner and form requested by the HRC (mainly via studies and research-based advice);
- May suggest proposals to the HRC for its consideration and approval (but shall not adopt resolutions or decisions)
The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2000

“The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues shall serve as an advisory body to the Council [ECOSOC] with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues within the mandate of the Council relating to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights;…”

In so doing the Permanent Forum shall:

(a) Provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations, through the Council; (underline added);

(b) Raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues within the United Nations system;

(c) Prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues;
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<th><strong>What is the UNPFII:</strong></th>
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<td>1. An advisory body within &amp; for the UN system, made up of 16 Independent Experts (8 &amp; 8)</td>
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<td>2. An opportunity for Networking with Indigenous Peoples, UN agencies, funders, states, NGO’s</td>
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<td>3. A way to build awareness, get your issue “out there” and known</td>
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<td>4. A place to begin to learn about and impact the UN system</td>
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<td>5. A place to learn about and support other struggles</td>
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<td>6. A place to make short (3 min) joint statements about issues of common concern as per the agenda</td>
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<th><strong>What It’s Not:</strong></th>
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<td>1. A Human Rights complaint body or mechanism!</td>
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<td>2. A chance to address your specific struggle, except as an example (usually)</td>
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<td>3. A chance to denounce specific State actions (usually)</td>
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<td>4. A place to get quick results/ responses to specific situations</td>
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Chief Wilton Littlechild, Rapporteur UNPFII, 2007
Promoting and Applying the UNDRIP: the role of the UNPFII

“The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.”
-- Article 42

Effective Participation in UNPFII

• Understand the agenda and the schedule for UNPFII9
• Make Statements (“Oral interventions”), usually joint, 3 minutes @: select agenda item, tie in UNDRIP, draft text w/ recommendations, get co-signers, copy, practice, read!
• Attend IPs Caucuses: global, regional & constituency
• Select Side Events, and…

Monitor the report

North America Region Caucus preparatory meeting for UNPFII7, 2008, and Youth Caucus, UNPFII8
Photos by Ben Powless
Cheoque Utesia

Dancers in Oaxaca, Mexico and Six Nations Pow Wow, 2008
Photos by Ben Powless

Mayo youth representative, Potam, Sonora Mexico, 2006
Photo by Jeff Conant