

A Global statement by FIMI and Regional Networks of Indigenous Women.
Agenda Item 4. Implementation of the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum

This statement is submitted by the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI) with the close collaboration and contributions of Indigenous Women's Networks representative from North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, Arctic, and Pacific.

We highlight our contributions to sustainable development, the conservation and preservation of biodiversity and natural resources, the resilience building against global crisis like COVID-19, based on our cosmovision, wisdom, spirituality, knowledge, innovations and practices as agents of change. We also acknowledge some of the international and national legal and political recognitions regarding our individual and collective rights, as well as our organizational advancements such as our common agendas put into action to achieve gender equality and wellbeing.

However, we continue facing challenges that limit us from exercising our full and effective rights. In particular, we are still experiencing multiple levels of structural and systemic violence and discrimination, increasing aggressive appropriation of our territories by the States and transnational corporations, the contamination of soils and water sources with chemicals that affect health and the biodiversity, the impact of colonization, globalization, militarization of territories, the forced displacement and migration, the criminalization and repression of social protest, including gender-based attacks, the exploitation and trafficking of Indigenous Women in border areas.

Therefore, we urge the States, United Nations Agencies, development partners, private sector and the civil society to reinforce actions focused on the following priorities for Indigenous Women, Indigenous Women with disabilities, Youth and Girls:

Human Rights

1. Ratify all human rights legal instruments and effectively implement the UNDRIP at the national level prioritizing technical and financial resources within national budgets in order to take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Women to protect, promote and fulfill our human rights and fundamental freedoms with cultural relevance.
2. Promote the adoption of the new General Recommendation on Indigenous Women and Girls by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
3. Strengthen policies and holistic programs to counteract the economic, social and environmental impacts that COVID-19 has had on our Peoples and communities, with a greater impact on Indigenous Women and Girls as well as Indigenous Women with disabilities.

Education and Health

4. Eliminate barriers to education and sexual and reproductive health services for Indigenous Women. These services must be designed considering the customary and traditional medicine with Indigenous Women's perspective. It is crucial to adopt decisive actions on issues of maternal mortality, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, abortion, female genital mutilation, discrimination, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV/AIDS.
5. Ensure access to quality education and health culturally and linguistically appropriate with the full participation of Indigenous Women, and incorporate new responsive technologies. Quality education involves a horizontal and complementary intersection between Indigenous traditional knowledge and universal learning strategies. States should also guarantee inclusive education with attention to Indigenous Women, Youth and Girls with disabilities.

6. Guarantee the right of Indigenous Peoples to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems, and indigenous art.

7. Facilitate access to technology for indigenous children and youth in remote urban and rural areas, so that they have access to education within the current context.

Violence against Women

8. Design and implement policies and programs with unified and consolidated approaches to prevent, investigate and sanction all forms of individual and collective violence committed against Indigenous Women and Girls, including those with disabilities.

9. Strengthen measures, systems and resources to effectively address all forms of violence against Indigenous Women such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, sexual abuse, forced labor, modern slavery, domestic, institutional and political violence, environmental violence and its impact to the health, economic displacement, exploitation, trafficking, armed conflicts, militarization of Indigenous lands and territories, among others.

10. States should create mechanisms to guarantee access to justice for Indigenous Women and Girls, both in State-operated and in Indigenous judicial institutions.

Thank you.