

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Fifteenth session

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Agenda Item 8: Panel discussion on the impact of development projects on indigenous women

Statement on behalf of Asia Indigenous Peoples Caucus

Presented by Beverly Longid

Respected Chair,

State-adopted economic “growth” programs threaten Indigenous Peoples’ ancestral land, territories, and resources through trade and investment liberalization, deregulation, and privatization. [Military and other repressive schemes protect the operations of destructive projects and programs on Indigenous Peoples’ ancestral lands.](#) The state denies our collective rights and self-determination, and these have negatively impacted our traditional livelihood and cultural practices. It has pushed Indigenous Peoples, specifically Indigenous Women, further to the edge of poverty, marginalization, exclusion, and violence.

The rise in the capture of ancestral lands forced Indigenous Peoples to relocate and migrate. It has enhanced their vulnerability, especially Indigenous Women, to trafficking, sex work, sexual harassment, violence, and bonded labor.

Militarization and armed conflicts are evident in Indigenous Peoples areas in the name of national security and terrorism. It has been the state’s response to Indigenous Peoples’ claims for their rights and self-determination and also to suppress the protests of Indigenous communities against land grabbing by development projects. There are increasing rights violations like harassment, threats, sexual assaults, vilification, red-tagging, illegal arrest and detention, false charges, and extrajudicial killings against Indigenous Women. Indigenous Women in conflict zones and militarization have experienced a high level of sexual and physical violence. Specifically, state security forces use rape to threaten and terrorize indigenous communities as the militaries enjoy impunity.

Indigenous Women endure violence and subordination to their cultural beliefs and patriarchal settings. In some Asian countries, Indigenous communities face structural violence with no legal recognition and rights to citizenship, limiting their access to social services, justice, and political rights.

Recommendations to the States, Non-state actors, UN mechanisms, and Civil Society:

- With the recognition of Indigenous Peoples, implement and endorse the United Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other human rights instruments to

protect and acknowledge the collective rights and self-determination of Indigenous communities.

- States who have endorsed the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women should work towards eliminating violence against Indigenous Women arising from specific circumstances and situations.
- State and non-state actors should develop and strengthen disaggregated data collection systems to reflect on the situation of violence against Indigenous Women and girls.
- State and UN mechanisms should collectively end serious human rights violations arising from conflicts and militarization.
- The State and non-state bodies should adopt a human rights-based approach in implementing development projects.
- State and the development projects should fully implement Free Prior and Informed Consent in Indigenous Territories.

Question to the panel

what other collaborative measures can we employ to end repression to address intensifying attacks on Indigenous women in the context of development projects and national security?