

# STATEMENT

27<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council



International  
Labour Office

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## STATEMENT BY

International Labour Organization

27<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council  
**Item 3: Indigenous peoples' rights**

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Chairperson,

Special Rapporteur, Chairperson of the EMRIP

Distinguished delegates and indigenous peoples representatives,

The ILO welcomes the appointment of Ms Tauli Corpuz as the new Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and thanks her for the report she has submitted to the Council. We also would like to congratulate Mr Deterville for his appointment as the new Chair of EMRIP and welcome EMRIP's reports, including the report summarizing best practices and appropriate measures to attain the goals of UNDRIP. The report includes a number of examples of how the implementation of the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) contributes to that goal.

The Special Rapporteur's report goes straight to a set of key issues that need to be tackled in order to make continuing progress in promoting indigenous peoples' rights, including as regards the recognition of indigenous peoples, discriminatory perceptions, and the operationalization of their rights.

We welcome the intention of the Special Rapporteur to promote the ILO Indigenous and tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), along with the UN Declaration and other relevant international instruments. Indeed, the Convention has played a constructive and positive role in the promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' rights since its adoption 25 years ago and the ILO looks forward to cooperating with the Special Rapporteur for its further promotion. Policy-makers and indigenous peoples in a number of countries in Europe, Africa and Asia are currently discussing or preparing for the ratification and implementation of the Convention, and the ILO stands ready to support these efforts.

We share the view of the Special Rapporteur that disadvantageous social and economic conditions need to be addressed as part of a comprehensive approach to indigenous and peoples' rights, that needs to include a focus on economic, social and cultural rights.

Indigenous peoples face enormous and rapid socio-economic changes to their livelihoods, often related to the loss of land and access to natural resources and the impact of climate change. Livelihoods include a combination of different activities. The practice of traditional occupation is increasingly combined with other economic activities. The position of indigenous women and men in national labour markets is often precarious and many are confined to jobs in the informal economy where they are highly vulnerable to violations of labour rights, and do not enjoy any social protection. Indigenous peoples continue to face barriers and disadvantages in the labour market. Limited access to education and vocational training is an important underlying factor in this regard. The UNDRIP, Convention No. 169 and other ILO Conventions provide a framework for addressing these issues more up-front in national policy framework, including recognizing indigenous peoples' right to engage in their traditional occupations and livelihood strategies (and support for economic activities within communities), and the follow-up to the World Conference provides a unique opportunity to do so.