

Thank you Madame Chair

Madame Special Rapporteur,

Aaniin, Boozhoo, Shanese Ndizhnaakaz, Indoowaaboo Digoo Anishnabemong, Jijaak ndoodem, Afro-Indigenous Niindaw, Toronto dongeba, Dibenjige-Ni-Naakwiiya Lene Lenape miinwaa Onondaga.

My is **Shanese Steele**. I would like to start off by **acknowledging the traditional territory of the Lenape and Onondaga Haudenosaunee peoples**.

As an **Afro-Anishnaabe Métis Kwe** I make this intervention for other **Indigenous peoples living within and under illegally recognized colonial states**.

I would like to address the **inadequacy of the United Nations** in relation to the **Indigenous peoples** who have **gathered** here today as well as those who are not able to be in the room. The **United Nations' refusal to legally and officially acknowledge the Indigenous nations** who have been **historically, and are currently oppressed, as independent and sovereign entities showcases the inaction of this organization**. Its **willingness to however publicly acknowledge and support illegal colonial states such as Canada and the United States** makes this ever **more evident**.

The **creation of this organization in 1945**, was done through a **colonial and anti-Indigenous framework**, comprised of **states committing atrocities against the original peoples of the lands in which they illegally established nationhoods**.

- **How can an institution protect and support Indigenous peoples in an unbiased manner when its membership is made up of states in which their sole existence is due to the genocide of these Indigenous peoples?**
- **How can Indigenous peoples recognize these same states who used murder and starvation to force the hands of Indigenous peoples?**
- **Is Genocide now the marker for statehood recognition?**

We, as **Indigenous peoples**, have **never ceded our sovereignty**, but instead chose to create **legally binding agreements to share the stewardship of our traditional lands through our own laws and governance**. The **Haudenosaunee two row wampum** illustrates this, a **treaty that settlers who arrived on turtle island willingly chose to agree with**. **Colonial powers choice to break these agreements is not at the fault of Indigenous peoples and these states should be held accountable by global organizations such as the United Nations**. **Indigenous rights ARE human rights, they are not mutually exclusive despite numerous colonial states attempting to separate the two as a way to continue their genocide and eventual assimilation of the Indigenous peoples of the globe**. A lack of an **international tribunal to bring justice against powers who have committed violent crimes against Indigenous bodies historically and today shows that the UN is not ready to truly stand up for Indigenous peoples**.

The choice to allow **Article 46** into the **UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)**, which is essentially creating a legal loophole for the current illegal colonial states to infringe on the inherent human and traditional rights of Indigenous peoples, makes it decisively clear that the **United Nations** is in itself a supporter of colonialism and the continued cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples. This has been shown to us time and time again when this organization has been deafeningly absent during crises such as *Standing Rock, Muskrat Falls, Caledonia, Elsipogtog and Mauna Kea*.

- Where was our humanitarian intervention?
- Where was the water, food and ground support for our communities?
- Where was the united nations when our children were, no are dying?

Today **Madame Special Rapporteur** I recommend that **Article 46** of **UNDRIP** be either removed entirely or amended in a way that does not tie the hands of Indigenous peoples who are seeking to assert their sovereignty and human rights in illegal colonial states.

If not, then when will the United Nations stop giving Indigenous Peoples lip service and begin to put their money where their UNDRIP is?

Thank you for listening to this intervention.