

**HEXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (EMRIP)
11TH SESSION, JULY 09 – 13, 2018
UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA SWITZERLAND**

Item 7: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: good practices and lessons learned

Joint Statement of the 2018 Indigenous Fellowship Programme

Háfa adai, greetings, and thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of the **Indigenous Fellowship Programme** through OHCHR.

Article 41 of the UNDRIP ensures the participation of indigenous peoples on issues affecting them by committing funds and resources to programmes like this fellowship; which aims to empower indigenous representatives and their communities by building their capacities and knowledge of the UN system and human rights mechanisms.

The Fellowship is exemplary of inter-agency cooperation as it involves several UN agencies, like the ILO, UNESCO, UNITAR, UNICEF, and UNHCR. Other partners include the University of Deusto, and the Peoples Friendship University of Russia; Geneva based international non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations.

Since 1997, over 400 indigenous individuals from over 70 countries have benefitted the programme which helped advanced the participation of indigenous peoples and ensuring their access to the UN system.

On this Mechanism alone, we are inspired to see in action, two former Fellows as current members: Ms. Megan Davis and Mr. Alexsy Tsykarev. Moreover, we are also pleased that two former fellows are currently serving as members on the Permanent Forum and another two former fellows are currently serving as members of the Board of Trustees of the UN Voluntary Fund.

This year, a total of 36 Indigenous Fellows from 29 countries are participating in the Programme, which has afforded each of us an in-depth and experiential learning on the UN system through rigorous and interactive training sessions.

In light of this, we recommend that this Programme should grow along with the mounting interest by indigenous peoples, and that national and regional components of the Programme be strengthened to better meet the capacity building needs of indigenous peoples.

At the same time, the programme should ensure that the content is closer to the realities of indigenous peoples on the ground.

We also recommend to the UN system, and particularly UN Country Teams, to tap former fellows as resources in their activities on indigenous issues at all levels, while considering former fellows as intermediaries between the UN and indigenous organizations.

Lastly, we recommend to OHCHR to ensure and facilitate the meeting of former fellows, in order to take stock and review the progress of the Programme.

I will conclude by extending our gratitude to all the institutions and partners that contributed financially and technically to our Fellowship: The Governments of the Russian Federation,

Australia, Mexico and the Basque Government of Spain; the UN agencies, civil society organizations, including the Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI) and OHCHR officials and staff.