

Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

Joint Statement of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues

The theme for 2018 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, "Indigenous peoples' migration and movement" is an opportunity to explore the challenges and rapid responses to protect indigenous peoples' rights within and outside of their traditional territories and to revitalize indigenous identities and cultures.

The UN Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (IASG), consisting of over 42 United Nations system entities and other international organizations, wishes to highlight the sociopolitical and demographic realities of indigenous peoples in the context of international, regional and national borders. Indigenous peoples who migrate maintain social and economic connections within their communities, often through information communication technologies. They also continue socio-cultural traditions in their communities of destination, sustained by family networks and participation in organizations that uphold ethnic identity (ECLAC, 2007).

Despite existing normative and institutional measures to prevent discrimination against indigenous peoples and to recognize and respect their rights, the consequences of colonization persist in all regions of the world. Many indigenous peoples, custodians of almost one-quarter of Earth's land and ecosystems, and who embody invaluable knowledge and cultural diversity, are displaced and/or have been forced to migrate from their ancestral lands. This is often due to factors such as the increasing impacts of climate change and the establishment of national borders that divide their territories. As a result, indigenous peoples face challenges in obtaining state authorization and documentation to be recognized as citizens.

Indigenous peoples have distinct cultures, identities, languages and traditional ways of life. Indigenous elders are repositories and transmitters of traditional knowledge; it is also important to recognize the vital role that indigenous women play in sustaining indigenous cultures, food production and ecosystems in their own communities as well as those to which they migrate.

The values and practices of indigenous peoples are aligned with Article 36 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which states: *Indigenous peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with*

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their own members as well as other peoples across borders. States should take effective measure to ensure the implementation of this right.

The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants and the Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers have unequivocally stated that, although States have the right to determine conditions of entry and residence in their territories, they also have an obligation to respect, protect and comply with the human rights of all persons under their jurisdiction. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development as a multidimensional reality that is significant to the development of their countries of origin, transit and destination.

Globalization, while providing a more open environment for financial, commercial and investment exchanges, tends to increase the barriers, limitations and sanctions for migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers. A response of the global community is the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration agreed in July 2018 to address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration through the establishment of comprehensive policies and partnerships that provide migrants, in vulnerable situations, including indigenous peoples, regardless of their migration status, support through all stages of the process and protection of their human rights.

It is important to highlight the need to protect indigenous migrants against all forms of violence and economic exploitation as a potential cause and consequence of migration.

The UN Inter-Agency Support Group is ready to support States in implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly at the country level, in their efforts to respond to the needs and challenges of indigenous peoples living or migrating within and beyond national borders.

On this year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, we must not lose sight of the situation of many indigenous migrants. It is imperative to strengthen our resolve, cooperation and partnerships to sustain and extend the gains achieved by and with indigenous peoples in realizing their aspirations for peace, development, security, a safe climate, and human rights.

For more information about the IASG, please see:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us/inter-agency-support-group.html>