



FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Secretariat
CONVENTION - CADRE SUR LES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES - Secrétariat

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Richard Kinley
Officer-in-Charge

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On the occasion of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, I would like to congratulate indigenous peoples on their continued progress with strengthening international cooperation on issues of concern to them. Now in the second year of the new International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, much momentum has been gained with the historic adoption of the Draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the United Nations Human Rights Council. On this achievement we offer hearty congratulations and look forward to continued progress.

Indigenous peoples organizations have created a place for themselves in the climate change process over the past several years. At the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, strong statements were made by Arctic peoples and by States on behalf of Arctic peoples regarding the immediacy of climate change impacts on the Arctic region and its inhabitants. These statements were in response to the four-year international study leading to the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). This scientific report, which took into account indigenous knowledge, will help inform governments as they make critical decisions regarding the global climate change process. The overwhelming message was: Climate change is happening **now**, people and ecosystems are being affected **now**, socio-cultural mores are being disrupted **now**. **Now** is the time for action and for action by all.

Nairobi 2006: The United Nations Climate Change Conference, will take place in November in Kenya. Key issues, including further development of a work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries and the clean development mechanism, will be discussed. These particular issues would benefit from coordinated input by indigenous peoples organizations. Indigenous peoples and local communities possess a wealth of expertise and local knowledge, often gained as a result of exposure to natural or man made phenomena in some of the world's most vulnerable areas. As such the indigenous peoples have an important role to play in creating a better understanding of the complex issues relating to climate change and helping to identify global priorities. The secretariat encourages the involvement and active participation of indigenous organizations, and specifically African indigenous organizations in the upcoming conference and related workshops

Let me take this opportunity to wish all indigenous peoples success in their international endeavours over the coming year and I look forward to a continuation of the collegial and cooperative working arrangements between the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the UNFCCC secretariat.

Mailing Address: CLIMATE CHANGE SECRETARIAT (UNFCCC), P.O. Box 260 124, D-53153 Bonn, Germany
Office Location: Haus Carstanjen, Martin-Luther-King-Strasse 8, D-53175 Bonn, Germany
Tel.: (49-228) 815-1000 (Switchboard, Mon.-Fri. 9:00-17:00) *Fax:* (49-228) 815-1999
Email: secretariat@unfccc.int *Web:* <http://www.unfccc.int>