

**UNDP Statement by Mr. Patrick Keuleers, Director a.i. of the Democratic Governance Group and
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Photo: UNDP Peru

The interests of the indigenous peoples must be part of the new development agenda in order for it to succeed. [...] Together, let us recognize and celebrate the valuable and distinctive identities of indigenous peoples around the world. Let us work even harder to empower them and support their aspirations.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
2014 message on the [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#)

On 09 August 2014 the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is commemorated to promote and endorse the rights enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and to honour diverse indigenous cultures and recognize the achievements and valuable contributions of indigenous peoples worldwide. With this year's theme, ***Bridging the gap: implementing the rights of indigenous peoples***, we aim to highlight the importance of implementing the rights of indigenous peoples through policies and programmes, at both the national and international level, by working together with member states, the United Nations system, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders.

2014 is an important year for indigenous peoples worldwide with both the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) and the UN Climate Summit taking place in New York this September. The Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2014) is also coming to an end and the international community is defining the vision for the future development framework. 2014 is therefore a time to reflect on the good practices, gaps and challenges ahead and to further strengthen

international cooperation to advance the implementation of the rights of indigenous peoples everywhere.

The integration of indigenous peoples' rights and needs into key development processes such as the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals remains very important and the upcoming WCIP will be an opportunity for indigenous peoples to continue to contribute to the shaping of the future development agenda. There is growing international advocacy for more credible and effective systems of governance and accountability and an expectation that the post-2015 development framework will be people-centered and human rights-based.

Tackling exclusion and inequalities, that affect the most marginalized peoples will require more attention to the respect for the rule of law and access to justice. Working in synergy, indigenous systems of governance can add value to decision-making processes, especially in matters of local governance and the delivery of services. Indigenous peoples and their institutions also play a vital role in the implementation and monitoring of development initiatives as proactive and positive actors in the overall socio-economic development of their communities and society.

For the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) success in furthering human development is inextricably linked with human rights; we cannot achieve either in exclusion of the other as they are in fact mutually reinforcing. Human development is not possible where discrimination, injustice, and social exclusion prevail, and where there is a lack of recognition of the value of different worldviews that groups and communities bring to society.

Indigenous peoples' collective and individual rights, livelihoods and world views must be recognized if development processes are to be inclusive and sustainable. UNDP is committed to creating spaces for and guaranteeing the effective participation of indigenous peoples at all levels to ensure that their voices are heard and that they contribute to policy-making and programme formulation and implementation. Thus, guaranteeing access to opportunities and supporting an enabling environment in which indigenous peoples are empowered and can develop their full potential to lead dignified lives in harmony with their world vision.

As we are commemorating the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, UNDP will continue to engage and support alliances and collaboration between different partners to put an end to exclusion and discrimination and to enable indigenous peoples to fully exercise their rights in free, diverse and inclusive societies.