



---

---

**MISION PERMANENTE DEL PERU ANTE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS**

**64th General Assembly of the United Nations  
Third Committee**

**Statement**

**by Ambassador Gonzalo Gutiérrez Reinel  
Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations  
Item 66: Indigenous Issues**

New York, 19 October 2009

(check against delivery)

Mr. President,

Peru is deeply committed to developing strategies and policies to reassert the value of ethnic plurality and multiculturalism, and to promote the development and full participation of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities in national life on a priority basis. Therefore, my country continues to make firm progress in defending and promoting the fundamental rights and liberties of indigenous peoples, in accordance with its international commitments, particularly international human-rights treaties, Convention 169 of the ILO and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the drafting of which Peru spearheaded without interruption for eleven years.

As stated by the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous People, the Declaration of the United Nations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples does not create special rights different from fundamental human rights, but rather it deepens those fundamental rights from the cultural, historical, social and economic circumstances that indigenous peoples experience. To that end, the Declaration becomes a decisive instrument for the development of indigenous peoples.

Mr. President,

In order to overcome the situation of poverty and exclusion that they are in, Peru is aware that a number of measures are needed to guarantee indigenous peoples access to education, health, and employment, on an equal-opportunity basis. To that end, we have institutional and legislative mechanisms to implement national programs for the full development of Andean, Amazonian and Afro-Peruvian peoples and to promote their economic, social, political and cultural inclusion.

Nevertheless, some challenges still remain in the field of access to identity records; the quality of bilingual education; access to health services as well as water and sanitation; and improving communication channels; among other measures to guarantee their social inclusion. All this requires political will, but international cooperation is also necessary to continue making progress in these areas that are of vital importance to guarantee respect for human rights and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. President,

We are thankful for the Report presented by the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples. We appreciate his effort to avoid a bureaucratic approach that would limit his function to sending communications to the Government involved and receiving answers.

Consequently, my Government invited the Special Rapporteur to visit Peru after the lamentable events that happened in Bagua province on June 5 of this year, which resulted in the deaths of 33 people: 23 police officers and 10 civilians. During that visit, which took place from June 17 to 19, the Rapporteur had the opportunity to enter into an open dialogue with the various parties involved and to gather trustworthy information about what had occurred. The extent of the contacts that he had provides a suitable basis for his conclusions, the foremost being the conclusion that refutes the accusations made against the Peruvian Government, ruling out any act of genocide, massacre or forced disappearance.

My delegation agrees with the Rapporteur's assessment as to the complexity of the basic issues that underlie the violence that occurred in Bagua. It was precisely for the purpose of confronting those situations that the Government of Peru took a series of initiatives to dialogue with indigenous peoples, before the events in Bagua occurred and after they had transpired.

I can say that a willingness to dialogue with the indigenous peoples was maintained at all times. For that purpose, the National Coordination Group for the Development of Amazonian Peoples, composed of four representatives of the Government, the regional presidents of the Amazonian departments and ten representatives of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon rainforest, was formed to reach sustainable agreements addressing regional issues, through the participation of all sectors concerned.

The Group seeks to foster a climate of trust between the State and the indigenous peoples, through the adoption of measures to promote their rights and to encourage their development. To that end, that group has established four working groups to form an independent commission to investigate the events in Bagua province; to discuss and propose solutions with respect to the laws questioned by the indigenous peoples; to improve the mechanisms of consultation with the indigenous peoples, pursuant to the international obligations that the State has assumed, particularly Convention 169 of the ILO; and to devise a national proposal for Amazonian development. Concurrently, the Government also formed a Roundtable for dialogue with Andean Peoples. We are sure that this process will have positive results.

Mr. President,

Recent experience has shown the will of the Peruvian State to maintain a steady and constructive dialogue with indigenous peoples as well as its compliance with the international instruments and mechanisms to protect them. The Government of Peru will continue taking all necessary measures to promote the participation of indigenous peoples in the life of the country, thereby contributing to governability and guaranteeing a solid and inclusive democracy.

Thank you very much.