



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10 April 2017

Excellency,

Pursuant to my letter dated 7 March, I have the honour to share herewith the concept note of the High-Level Event to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to be held on Tuesday 25 April 2017 at 10:00 a.m., in the General Assembly Hall at United Nations Headquarters, New York. The programme will be circulated in due course.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson', written in a cursive style.

Peter Thomson

All Permanent Representatives  
and Permanent Observers  
to the United Nations  
New York

## CONCEPT NOTE

### **Tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples High-Level Event of the General Assembly 25 April 2017 @10:00 AM**

On Tuesday 25 April, 2017 the President of the General Assembly will organize a high-level event to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

#### ***Background***

Over the last two decades, the international community has made significant progress to improve the rights of indigenous peoples and raise awareness to their issues. In September 2007, the General Assembly, through its resolution A/RES/61/295, adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration establishes a comprehensive framework of minimum standards for economic, social and cultural well-being and rights of the world's indigenous peoples.

*In the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, held in New York in September 2014, Member States reiterate the important and continuing role of the United Nations in promoting and the protecting the rights of indigenous peoples and reaffirmed their support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and their commitments to consult and cooperate in good faith with indigenous peoples through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent, before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them, in accordance with the applicable principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*

The General Assembly in its resolutions A/RES/69/159, A/RES/70/232 and A/RES/71/178 decided to convene a high-level event to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to be held during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, in 2017. This event will take stock of the achievements of the preceding 10 years and assess the remaining challenges for the rights of indigenous peoples, and also consider the further follow-up to the Declaration, including the consideration of a third International Decade.

In December 2016 the General Assembly (A/RES/71/178), requested the President to make the arrangements necessary for the high-level event that will be held during the sixteenth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Furthermore, the resolution encourages the participation of Member States, the United Nations system, in particular the Permanent Forum, the Expert Mechanism and the Special Rapporteur, as well as indigenous peoples' representatives, institutions and organizations, in accordance with the established practice for their accreditation.

#### ***Objective***

Participants will have the opportunity to take stock of achievements made since the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, to identify ongoing persistent challenges and obstacles and to consider good practices. The event will also provide an opportunity to review the commitments made by Member States in the outcome document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. Participants will have an opportunity to make concrete

commitments to further increase their efforts to implement the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

*Format*

The high-level event will be convened by the President of the General Assembly on 25 April, 2017 General Assembly Hall, one day after the opening session of the 2017 annual session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) in order to take advantage of the presence of high level dignitaries from Member States and high number of indigenous peoples representatives from across the globe. In a view to facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples, the session of the forum will be temporarily suspended during the organization of the high-level event.

The high-level event will consist of an opening segment and high-level plenary meeting. In the opening segment the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and Key Note Speakers will deliver remarks. The three UN relevant mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples' will also be invited to speak. During the high level plenary meeting the list of speaker will rotate between Member States and the representatives of the seven socio-cultural regions of indigenous peoples. Member States speaking on behalf of regional group will have 5 minutes and Member States speaking on their national capacity will have 3 minutes. Indigenous Peoples Representative of the seven socio-cultural regions will have 3 minutes. The CR-4 will be used as the over floor room. The draft provisional program will be made available in due course. The event will not have formal outcome. Delegations wishing to take the floor are requested to approach Mr. Carlos Galindo ([galindo@un.org](mailto:galindo@un.org)) to inscribe to the list of speakers.