

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**REMARKS ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY  
OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES  
New York, 9 August 2013**

Mr. Paul Kanyinke Sena, Chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you on this International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Let me extend a special welcome to the rowers who arrived this morning in  
Manhattan.

More than 200-strong, you have travelled thousands of miles to honour the 1613 Two  
Row Wampum treaty.

This agreement was the first between Dutch immigrants and the six-nation  
Haudenosaunee confederacy, whose capital is in the Onondaga nation, in New York State.

On this Day, we highlight the importance of honouring treaties, agreements and other  
constructive arrangements between States, their citizens and indigenous peoples.

Such consensual arrangements enable better understanding of their views and values.

They are essential for protecting and promoting rights and establishing the political  
vision and necessary frameworks for different cultures to coexist in harmony.

Indigenous peoples represent remarkable diversity – more than 5,000 distinct groups  
in some 90 countries.

They make up more than 5 per cent of the world's population, some 370 million  
people.

It is important that we strive to strengthen partnerships that will help to preserve  
cultural vigour and traditional values while facilitating poverty eradication, social inclusion  
and sustainable development.

Above all, we must ensure participation – women and men – in decision-making at all  
levels.

This includes discussions on accelerating action towards achieving the Millennium  
Development Goals and defining the post-2015 development agenda.

Indigenous peoples have made clear that they want development – but development that takes into account culture and identity and the right to define their own priorities.

The post-2015 development agenda needs therefore to incorporate the rights, perspectives and needs of indigenous peoples.

Next year's World Conference on Indigenous Peoples offers an opportunity to advance the cause of indigenous peoples everywhere.

Today, I urge Member States to take concrete steps to address the challenges facing indigenous peoples, especially their marginalization and exclusion, by honouring all commitments and examining what more can be done.

Let us work together to strengthen indigenous peoples' rights and support their aspirations.

Let us create a world that values the wealth of human diversity and nurtures the potential it offers.

Thank you.