



United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), 20th Session
19 – 30 April, 2021

***Virtual Session**

Agenda Item 6: Thematic dialogue: Follow up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, April 23rd

Statement by the International Indian Treaty Council, presented by Rochelle Diver

Thank you, Madame Chair. The IITC notes the progress made in the creation of new bodies and mechanisms called for in the World Conference Outcome Document through the persistent advocacy of Indigenous Peoples within and outside the UN System.

Paragraph 27 of the outcome document reaffirmed Article 12 of the UN Declaration's call for a mechanism, developed in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, for international repatriation of their sacred items and human remains. The UN Human Rights Council endorsed the creation of this mechanism in its 2019 and 2020 resolutions on Indigenous Peoples. In a significant advance, in March 2020 the EMRIP and others organized the 1st Expert Seminar for the development of an international repatriation mechanism which included the participation of UN bodies, museums, universities, States and Indigenous Peoples. We eagerly await the next steps to realize the new mechanism, including achieving the active engagement of UNESCO.

Another major advance was the formal recognition by the UNFCCC of the vital role of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems, practices and formal participation in global efforts to combat climate change through the establishment of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform Facilitative Working Group in December 2018. The FWG consists of 7 representatives selected directly by Indigenous Peoples in each region, and 7 State representatives. We request that this example of participation through direct representation by Indigenous Peoples, advancing Goal 13 of the SDG's, paragraph 36 of the World Conference outcome document and Article 18 of the UN Declaration, be recognized and recommended as a model for other UN bodies in the Permanent Forum's report for this session. Thank you.