

## UNITED NATIONS



## OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



# OHCHR FACT SHEET

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## THE OHCHR AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Indigenous peoples have been identified as special groups within the key areas of focus of the OHCHR's work. That is why the High Commissioner and her office are instrumental in building capacities for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide. OHCHR organizes inter-agency meetings, workshops and seminars as well as human rights' trainings; it implements activities at the country level to assist States in addressing indigenous issues and carries out research and analysis on contemporary issues and pressing concerns of indigenous peoples.

The OHCHR also facilitates standard-setting efforts. It served as the Secretariat to the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on the draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the Human Rights Council in June 2006. It also provides constant support to the UN human rights mechanisms for the protection of indigenous peoples of the former Commission on Human Rights which are now within the mandate of the Human Rights Council.

### ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND MINORITIES UNIT OF THE OHCHR

The OHCHR established in 1994 the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit (IPMU) to ensure that all issues concerning indigenous peoples and national and/or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities are fully addressed in all activities of promotion, protection and technical cooperation. The IPMU serves as an entry point for indigenous peoples and NGOs to the work of the OHCHR and to the mechanisms of the former Commission on Human Rights which now fall into the mandate of the Human Rights Council namely the work of treaty bodies and special procedures. Within the OHCHR organizational structure, the IPMU is part of the Research and Right to Development Division and works in close cooperation with other units and divisions on the preparation of the strategies for the protection of indigenous peoples and the promotion of their rights worldwide. For more information please visit <http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/>

*Opportunities for the promotion and protection of Indigenous Peoples  
within OHCHR*

*Indigenous Fellowship Programme*

The aim of the programme is to give indigenous peoples the opportunity to gain knowledge on the UN system and mechanisms dealing with human rights in general and indigenous issues in particular so they can assist their organizations and communities in protecting and promoting the rights of their people. The IFP is accessible in four different languages English, French, Spanish and Russian and is only open to indigenous representatives. For further information please visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/fellowship.htm> or contact: [fellowship@ohchr.org](mailto:fellowship@ohchr.org)

*Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations:*

The Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (VFIP) is aimed at ensuring indigenous peoples' participation in policy and decision-making meetings of their specific concern. Over the years it has been instrumental in assisting more than 1200 representatives of indigenous communities and/or indigenous organizations to participate, as observers, in the sessions of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. For further information on travel grants available for indigenous peoples please visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/about/funds/indigenous/> or contact: [indigenousfunds@ohchr.org](mailto:indigenousfunds@ohchr.org)

*Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of  
indigenous people:*

This is a “special procedure” of the Human Rights Council which names an independent expert responsible for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. The mandate of the Special rapporteur includes (a) to gather information and communications from all relevant sources on violations of indigenous peoples' human rights; (b) to formulate recommendations on measures to prevent and remedy violations of the human rights of indigenous peoples; and to (c) work in close relation with other special procedures and other human rights bodies. In carrying out his mandate, the Special Rapporteur presents annual reports to the Human Rights Council, conduct country visits upon States' invitation and exchange communications with governments concerning allegations of violations of the human rights of indigenous peoples worldwide. For further information please visit: [www.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/rapporteur/](http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/rapporteur/) or contact: [indigenous@ohchr.org](mailto:indigenous@ohchr.org)

*For general inquiries, technical cooperation and/or assistance please contact:*



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