

# PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Indigenous Peoples Partnership



*For Immediate Release  
20 July 2011*

## **United Nations-Indigenous Peoples Partnership makes key decisions at its inaugural Policy Board Meeting**

(GENEVA) – The first global inter-agency initiative to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples concluded its inaugural Policy Board meeting today. The United Nations-Indigenous Peoples Partnership is a commitment to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and calls for its full realisation through the mobilisation of financial and technical assistance.



UNIPP Policy Board Meets at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva.

“This is an important milestone following the UN Declaration” said, Mr. Adelfo Regino Montes, an indigenous expert member of the Board. “With the adoption of the UN Declaration and ratification of ILO 169, the challenge now is in their implementation” said Mr. Montes.

In its deliberations, the Policy Board adopted governance and operational documents, along with strategic priorities to move the joint rights-based initiative to the next level of implementation through the UN multi-donor trust fund mechanism.

The Board identified focus countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America for the start-up phase based on where the ground is fertile, and indigenous peoples’ organisations are working together with UN partners. Key thematic priorities were identified: legislative review and reform; access to justice and strengthening of indigenous customary law and justice systems; access to land and ancestral territories; the impact of extractive industries on indigenous peoples; the right to education and health, and the rights of indigenous women, children and youth.

“As an academic I have been very concerned about the detachment between research and actual implementation on the ground. The Partnership is an opportunity to translate research into implementation” said Angela Riley, an indigenous expert member of the Board.

Some additional global priorities would look at aid effectiveness, and traditional conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms of indigenous peoples.

Policy Board member Raja Devasish Roy stated that “the Partnership is unique because it will contribute to making indigenous peoples rights a priority in national contexts, especially in laws and policies”

The United Nations - Indigenous Peoples Partnership was formally launched in New York with support from the United Nations Secretary General on 20 May 2011 who called upon member states to lend their financial and political commitment to the Partnership. Members of the Policy Board include indigenous experts, and the International Labour Organisation, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Development Program, United Nations Children's Fund, and United Nations Population Fund.

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The International Labour Organisation currently serves as the Interim Technical Secretariat of UNIPP. Administration of UNIPP Trust Fund is entrusted to the UNDP MDTF Office.

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