

*Inviting Indigenous Peoples and State delegations, UN Experts,
Bodies and Agencies to participate in a*

**CONSULTATION ON INTERNATIONAL
REPATRIATION**

*On the occasion of the 15th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on
Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), UN Headquarters, New York*

Friday May 13, 2016

3 – 6 PM, Conference Room 4 (main UNPFII meeting room)



Background and Framework: At its 14th session in 2015, the UNPFII recommended that States and Indigenous Peoples “establish a working group to prepare a manual of good practice with regard to the repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains, with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other United Nations entities, and submit a progress report to the Forum at its fifteenth session.”

Paragraph 27 of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples Outcome Document adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 22, 2014 also included the following commitment by States: “*We commit ourselves to developing, in conjunction with the indigenous peoples concerned, fair, transparent and effective mechanisms for access to and repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains at the national and international levels.*”

The framework for this discussion includes Indigenous Peoples’ cultural protocols and the rights affirmed in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These include Article 12, paragraph 2 which affirms that “*States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned*”.

The purpose of this Consultation is to bring interested parties together in the spirit of respect and partnership to share progress made in the last year, including the establishment of an ad-hoc Working Group on International Repatriation with participation of Indigenous Peoples, States, UN agencies and mandate holders. It will present recent recommendations from UN bodies and Indigenous Peoples for the establishment of this new process or mechanism. An opening panel will provide updates from UN bodies, Indigenous Peoples and States on progress to date, examples of successful outcomes and well as ongoing challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples in their efforts to repatriate sacred objects and ancestors from counties around the world.

Participants will be invited to share their views about the principles and working methods as well as next steps for implementation of this new process.

Consultation Agenda and Schedule

Panel: Perspectives and Updates on International Repatriation: 3 – 4:30 PM

Moderator: Alexey Tsykarev Chair, UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Opening Invocation: Frank Ettawageshik, Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians

Opening Comments:

- UN Permanent Forum members Grand Chief Edward John and Oliver Loode
- UN Assistant Secretary General Lenni Montiel (invited)

Overview of Progress to Date: Andrea Carmen, International Indian Treaty Council

Updates from EMRIP: Recommendations from the EMRIP's 2015 Study on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with respect to their Cultural Heritage

Experiences of Indigenous Peoples from 3 regions:

- Navajo Nation (North America)
- United Confederation of Taino People (Latin America/Caribbean)
- National Congress of Australia's First Peoples (Pacific)

Perspectives from UNESCO: Marie Paule Roudil, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York

Role and Contributions of States:

- United States of America
- Plurinational State of Bolivia

Open Discussion: Proposals and Next Steps: 4:30 – 5:55 PM

Discussion questions:

- *What are the core principles and working methods for this new process?*
- *How can it be practical and participatory?*
- *What elements are required to assure positive, mutually agreeable outcomes?*
- *What current/ongoing challenges and obstacles should be addressed?*
- *Where should this new process or mechanism be placed in the UN System?*
- *What are the next steps moving forward?*

Closing Invocation: 5:55 – 6:00 PM

Translation will be provided in Spanish, French and English by DoCIP. Many thanks to the members and Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for their assistance.

For more information contact the International Indian Treaty Council via email to

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