

Joint Statement
On Behalf of Certain North American Indian Nations and Native Women's
Organizations, and Supporting Indian Organizations

(May 22, 2013)

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues –
Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and
the *Study on the extent of violence against indigenous women and girls*

This statement is made jointly by a number of North American Indian Nations and Native women's organizations, and supporting Indian organizations: the Citizen Potawatomi Nation; the Yurok Tribe; the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska; Quinault Indian Nation; the California Association of Tribal Governments; the National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Women; the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Inc.; Clan Star, Inc.; the Indian Law Resource Center; and the Native American Rights Fund.

We support critically-needed actions to stop the horrendous violence against indigenous peoples, including the pandemic of violence being inflicted on indigenous women as reported by the Permanent Forum's own *Study on the extent of violence against indigenous women and girls*.

We are grateful for the Permanent Forum's *Study*. It makes an important contribution by calling attention to this human rights crisis. And, greater attention and action simply must be focused on restoring safety to indigenous women. These are women who often suffer disproportionately high, multiple forms of discrimination, violence, and murder based not just on their gender, but also on the fact that they are indigenous.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is significant in affirming the rights and special needs of indigenous women and children. This is especially so with Article 22(2), which directs states, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to take measures to protect indigenous women and children against violence and discrimination. Sadly, there is no worldwide, state implementation of Article 22 to end violence against indigenous women.

United Nations action is critical to restore safety to indigenous women, children, and communities and to address indigenous rights in the Declaration. We offer three recommendations for action to combat violence against indigenous women that we hope can be adopted by the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples:

1. A decision to convene a high-level conference to examine challenges to the safety and well-being of indigenous women and children and to share perspectives and best practices on the rights of indigenous women and children under the Declaration with respect to protection against all forms of violence and discrimination.
2. A decision to require that a UN body for monitoring and implementing the Declaration give particular attention, on at least an annual basis, “to the rights and special needs of indigenous . . . women, youth, and children . . . in the implementing of the Declaration;” and
3. A decision to appoint a Special Rapporteur to focus exclusively on human rights issues of indigenous women and children, including but not limited to violence against them and on changing state laws that discriminate against them.

Thank you.