



Anglican Communion Office
at the United Nations

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples; August 9th, 2013

The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is a yearly event to help promote and endorse the rights enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It also presents an opportunity to honor diverse indigenous cultures and recognize the achievements and valuable contributions of Indigenous Peoples. This year the theme was "Indigenous peoples building alliances: Honoring treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements". The conference included a speech from the UN Secretary-General, speeches from prominent advocates, videos highlighting some of the challenges that indigenous people face, and an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples from all of the world to participate and speak their minds about relevant and current issues relating to the theme.

2013 Theme: "Indigenous peoples building alliances: Honoring treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements"

- The theme aims to highlight the importance of honoring arrangements between States, their citizens and indigenous people's that were designed to recognize Indigenous Peoples' rights to their lands and establish a framework for living in proximity and entering into economic relationships
- Legal documents, treaties, and agreements between indigenous peoples and others have sometimes resulted in good and positive relationships; however, when these agreements are not upheld it is often the indigenous peoples who suffer and are not able to reclaim land or natural resources that is rightfully theirs
- There needs to be a better system in place (that perhaps the UN should support/build) that ensures that effective remedies be available when there is a violation of treaties, especially when involving human rights issues

The UN Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, a delegate of Panama, a representative of the Office of the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights and an indigenous representative all spoke at the conference.

UN Secretary-General

- Short speech supporting Indigenous Peoples and celebrating them on this day
- Acknowledged the huge amount of indigenous peoples; more than 5,000 different groups in over 90 countries
- Need to focus on strengthening partnerships that will facilitate cultural identity and sustainable development
- Everybody needs to be included in discussions including indigenous men, women, youths, and those with disabilities

Oren Lyons

- Recognized advocate of indigenous rights
- Speech focused on the importance of mother nature and the necessity of protecting the environment
 - “We need to make our decisions on behalf of the 7th generation from now”
- Also highlighted that women form the basis of our civilization and without them we would not exist; for this reason and many others, women are fundamentally important in society and the world. Thus, there needs to be more women representatives in all levels of leadership and a more balanced relationship between men and women

Additional Notes

- Full room
- Very lively group and engaged group; cheering and clapping throughout the conference
- Many people wearing traditional clothing, jewelry and accessories
- Traditional blow horn was used several times
- Diverse group; came from all parts of the world