

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

6F 1-7-1 IRIFUNE CHUO-KU
TOKYO 104-0042 JAPAN
TEL: +81-3-6280-3101 FAX: +81-3-6280-3102
EMAIL: imadr@imadr.org <https://www.imadr.org>

**UN OFFICE**

RM 228, 150 ROUTE DE FERNEY, C.P. 2100,
CH-1211 GENEVA 2, SWITZERLAND
TEL: +41-22-791-6263
EMAIL: geneva@imadr.org

THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT AGAINST ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM**Oral Statement: 45th session of the Human Rights Council
Annual half-day panel discussion on the rights of indigenous peoples**

23 September 2020

Thank you Madame President,

We welcome the decision of the Human Rights Council to dedicate the issue of indigenous human rights defenders to this annual panel.

We share concerns with the panellists about the prevalence of intimidation, harassment and violence against indigenous human rights defenders.

Indigenous human rights defenders' engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms including the treaty bodies is crucial at all stages: inter alia, they monitor and report on States' compliance with their obligations and take follow-up actions to implement recommendations. Their engagement is all the more pertinent where there is no robust regional human rights mechanism.

In this regard, we want to stress the important role played by the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples and the OHCHR Fellowship Programme. The fellowship empowers indigenous human rights defenders with the knowledge of the international human rights system, and the Voluntary Fund allows them to apply such knowledge into practice. IMADR has continuously assisted the beneficiaries to engage with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). We strongly encourage Member States to contribute to the fellowship and the Voluntary Fund.

However, when indigenous human rights defenders face reprisals for cooperating with the UN human rights bodies, the impact of these programmes is critically undermined as well as the protection of human rights in countries concerned, as we have seen from the case of indigenous human rights defenders from Russia who engaged with the CERD in 2017.

Against this backdrop, we would like to ask the panellists – What further actions can be taken by the Human Rights Council to ensure State accountability for reprisals against indigenous human rights defenders?

Thank you.