

United Nations Human Rights Council 24th Session, September 9 – 27, 2013
Half-day Discussion on Indigenous Peoples, the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples
Intervention by the International Indian Treaty Council,
presented by Ronald Lameman September 17th, 2013

Thank you Mr. Chairman and respectful greetings to all delegations. The International Indian Treaty Council considers that the High-level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples can provide States, Indigenous Peoples and the UN System with an historic opportunity for dialogue and implementation. We remain hopeful that its outcomes will include mechanisms and processes for the full and effective implementation of the inherent rights affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UN Conventions and Covenants, and Nation-to-Nation Treaties concluded between States and Indigenous Peoples.

We call upon the Human Rights Council to recognize the Outcome document from the Indigenous Peoples Preparatory Meeting in Alta Norway in June 2013 and agree that it will be the basis for the action-oriented outcome document adopted at the World Conference. We also call upon the UN Human Rights Council to stand with Indigenous Peoples to ensure that the World Conference not be used to diminish, qualify or redefine the rights affirmed as the minimum standard by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Alta Document reflects a broad consensus of Indigenous Peoples from all regions and calls for the full and non-discriminatory implementation of the right to Self-Determination. IITC also highlights its recommendation that ***“the General Assembly call for the establishment, in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, of an international mechanism to provide oversight, redress, restitution and the implementation of Treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between Indigenous Nations and States and successor States;”***

The need for an international mechanism to provide oversight and redress for violations of Nation-to-Nation Treaties when disputes cannot be resolved between the Parties was underscored in the United Nations Study on Treaties, Agreements and Other Constructive Arrangements and was affirmed at the three subsequent UN Treaty Seminars. It was also agreed to by consensus of the States and Indigenous Peoples at the Organization of American States negotiations for an American Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2012.

The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples will provide an historic opportunity to implement this recommendation. Treaties, if honoured and respected, can be the basis for conflict resolution, environmental and social justice, and the restoration of peaceful relations between Indigenous Peoples and States. Treaties, as the UN Declaration recognizes in its preamble, are matters of international concern, interest, responsibility and character. Ay Hy.