



Human Rights Council
Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
16th session
July 17-21, 2023
Agenda Item 3
"Study and advice on the impact of militarization on the rights of Indigenous Peoples."
Statement of the International Indian Treaty Council
Presented by: Juan León

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

We thank EMRIP for recognizing in its report the serious impacts, including a series of violations of Indigenous Peoples' rights by official and private militarization for the establishment and maintenance of Protected Areas in the name of conservation and/or climate mitigation, including World Heritage Sites created by UNESCO and National Parks that impose dispossession of Peoples' lands, territories and resources in various regions of the world.

Our organization submitted several cases for inclusion in the study, for which we are grateful.

We have received reports of other serious cases recently. For example, in Santiago Atitlán, Sololá, Guatemala, the official municipality has published 12 regulations, most notably the militarization of the Tz'tujil territory. The regulations recognize the Office of the Commander and Captain of Lake Atitlán from the Ministry of Defense as the maximum authority for the supervision of compliance with the regulations to create a state ecological area. This puts in crisis the food sovereignty of the Tzutuhil inhabitants, who have managed and cared for their lands for millennia.

We therefore request the EMRIP to advise the Human Rights Council to adopt a resolution to ensure that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent, the demarcation for legal recognition of their territories, and that all military force is withdrawn from such areas, and that control over their territories is returned to the authorities or Indigenous Peoples.

Geneve, July 17th 2023

+++++