



United Nations Human Rights Council, 45th Session`

14 September to 6 October 2020

Agenda Items 3 and 5: Interactive dialogue with the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 24 September 2020

Intervention by the International Indian Treaty Council, presented by Andrea Carmen

The IITC, Yaqui Nation Cultural leaders and Traditional Authorities thank the EMRIP for its very significant and successful country engagement which brought us together with the Swedish Museums of World Culture to achieve their commitment for the return our sacred Maaso Kova to its rightful caretakers. Although the pandemic has delayed the actual repatriation, it will be carried out very soon. We also thank the Swedish, Mexican and Sami governments for their understanding and support for this long-awaited spiritual healing.

The EMRIP's engagement produced historic advances to benefit all Indigenous Peoples working for the return of their sacred items and human remains. One was the EMRIP's recognition of Indigenous Peoples' own laws governing the use and treatment of their sacred items in accordance with Article 11 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, on an equal basis with the laws of States. Another was the organization in British Columbia Canada in March 2020 of the 1st Expert Seminar for the development of an international repatriation mechanism, which has also been supported by this body.

We dedicate this to the memory of Mariano Ochoa Millan, IITC Board member, leader and esteemed member of the Maaso Kova Committee who recently passed away from COVID-19 in Sonora Mexico. May the blessings of our sacred Maaso accompany him on his journey to the Sewa Ania.

Choque Utesia.