



# INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL

## SUBMITTING COMPLAINTS AND TESTIMONIES TO UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS BODIES AND MECHANISMS

**Providing testimonies and statements about human rights violations to the United Nations (UN) is vital so that the voices of the victims can be heard. Complaints and allegations about human rights violations or imminent threats for submission to UN Treaty Monitoring Bodies and Special Procedures (Rapporteurs and Working Groups) should contain the following information:**

**The date, time and precise location of the incident/s** (Country, region, municipality, and/or community). Name(s), number and location of the individual(s), People, Tribe, community and/or family that has been or will be affected or is at risk as result of alleged violations.

**Victims(s)' and witness(es)' testimonies** should state if the event happened to them or if they witnessed it. Direct information from either victims or eyewitnesses is strongly preferred rather than secondhand reports. If you are interviewing victims or assisting them to write down their testimonies, include your name and identity as well as their name, address and contact information. Have them sign and date their statements. Video testimonies are also accepted. ***This information is kept in the strictest confidence and is not given to the State.***

**Victims' testimonies should include the detailed circumstances and impacts of the alleged violation(s).** If an initial event led to others, describe them chronologically. In the case of general situations such as national legislation or policies, indicate their stage of development and how Indigenous Peoples/individuals have or may be affected. If maps, historical documents, photos or videos are available, include them with the sources, dates, locations and situations or incidents depicted. Expert testimonies, including from traditional knowledge holders, are also accepted. **If known, include information on who allegedly committed the violation.** Explain the reasons why they are suspected of being responsible and whether they have any relation with government authorities.

**Actions submitted to or taken by international bodies:** Have any submissions already been made on this issue to an international or regional human rights mechanism? When and to which body? What were the outcomes?

**Source of Information:** Name, address and contact information for the person, Indigenous governing authority or organization submitting the information is required in case follow up and further information on the case is needed.

**Study the mandate (focus area and process) of the body or mechanism you plan to approach.** Explain in your submission how the situation you are addressing violates the specific human rights they are charged to monitor. Cite articles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other human rights standards to support your case.

**Some Special Procedures and Treaty Monitoring Bodies also request information as to whether "domestic remedies" have been utilized and/or exhausted before international remedies were sought.** This includes steps that were taken by or on behalf of the victims to obtain redress or resolution within the State (Country) concerned including through local, provincial and/or national courts, judicial processes and/or public authorities. Provide dates and outcomes if any. If these remedies have not been utilized, or if the victims are unwilling to use them due to perceived or demonstrated bias or possible endangerment that could result, provide the reason and circumstances. *Some UN complaint procedures have their own formats and timelines for making submissions. Check the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights web site for information about specific Treaty bodies and Special Procedures, <http://www.ohchr.org/>.*

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