

International Seminar

Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Unreported Struggles: Conflict and Peace

14-15 May 2016, Columbia University, New York

Organized and sponsored by

The Institute for the Study of Human Rights

and co-sponsored by

The Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race
 The Human Rights Institute of Columbia Law School
 Heyman Center for the Humanities
 The Columbia University Seminar on Indigenous Studies
 The Department of Anthropology
 at Columbia University

Gáldu Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Norway)
 The International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs (Denmark)
 Tebtebba Foundation (The Philippines)
 Universidad Indígena Intercultural de America Latina y el Caribe

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From the beginning of their interface with the United Nations in the early 1980s, Indigenous peoples have recounted numerous stories about contemporary conflicts that ravage their lands and communities, resulting in massacres, rape and other gross violations of human rights, including forced conscription to the army and militia, heavy militarization of their areas, destruction of their cultural heritage, outright settlement of their lands, displacement and deprivation of their means of livelihood. Many of those situations often go unreported, ignored by mainstream media and pushed into political invisibility or trivialized by states and non-state actors, such as corporations. The uniqueness of the historical experience of Indigenous peoples creates many blind spots in the mainstream and areas of urgent investigation for scholars and advocates. In other situations efforts towards peace agreements or similar arrangements have been made, but the gaps of implementation remain.

What are the forms of violence specific to indigenous peoples? Are there forms that do not express themselves in physical violence? Are there specific causes for conflicts affecting Indigenous peoples? What can we learn from case studies?

Can existing norms and policies for dealing with conflict apply to Indigenous peoples?

What is the international normative framework applicable to conflict affecting Indigenous peoples and its resolution? Has the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples had an impact on conflict resolution and peace solutions?

Should Indigenous peoples-related conflicts be handled differently from other so-called “ethnic conflicts”?

What gaps must be addressed in terms of national and international mechanisms for the prevention of atrocities and the promotion of peace in cases where Indigenous peoples are involved?

What is the human rights approach and response to the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples?

How could existing mechanisms of conflict resolution, national and international, be improved as regards Indigenous peoples?

What can be learned from efforts of conflict resolution involving Indigenous peoples, including peace agreements and a gender perspective, in different parts of the world? Case studies and regional perspectives will address these questions.

What are the opportunities we can seize to make progress in this area and what recommendations can we make to various parties?

PROGRAM

SATURDAY, 14TH MAY 2016,

Heyman Center Common Room in East Campus Residential Center¹

8:30 am REGISTRATION

9:00 am Ceremonial Opening of the International Seminar

Mr. Kevin Tarrant, Director, American Indian Community House

Welcoming of participants and Introduction to the Seminar

Prof. Elazar Barkan, Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR),
Columbia University

Prof. Elsa Stamatopoulou, Director, Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Program,
ISHR, Columbia University

¹ Enter the Wien Hall Gate on 116th Street between Amsterdam Avenue and Morningside Drive (through the gate next to Columbia Law School, 435 W 116th). Walk past Wien Hall, then turn right and make a sharp turn up the staircase to the left, which leads to East Campus. Check in with the guard and follow the sign to the Heyman Center. **Second Floor Common Room:** Upon entering the Heyman Center, turn left and take the stairs or elevator one flight up. The Common Room is the first right in the second floor hallway. Please see also the Heyman Center’s [“visit” page](#) to get a sense of how we give guests directions to the Center.

9:30-10:15 am

KEYNOTE 1: Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Conflict, peace and the human rights of Indigenous Peoples

Chair: Prof. Elazar Barkan, Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR), Columbia University

10:15-10:30 am Coffee break

10:30-11:45 am

PANEL 1: Conflict and peace: overview of legal and policy frameworks

Chair: Prof. Elazar Barkan, Director, Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR), Columbia University

Prof. Sarah Cleveland, Louis Henkin Professor of Human and Constitutional Rights
Faculty Co-Director, Human Rights Institute, Columbia Law School,
Member of the Human Rights Committee

Legal challenges in contemporary non-international armed conflicts

Prof. Hurst Hannum, Professor of International Law, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy
Human rights and conflict resolution, especially regarding ethnic conflict, from the practitioners' perspective

Ms Joan Carling, General Secretary, Asian Indigenous Peoples' Pact, and Member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, *Perspectives from Asia*

11:45 am-1:00 pm

PANEL 2: The Case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh: implementing a peace agreement

Chair: Prof. Elsa Stamatopoulou, Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program, ISHR, Columbia University, and Co-Chair, International Commission on the Chittagong Hill Tracts

Raja Devasish Roy, Member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Mr Sanjeeb Drong, Gen Secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum

Mr Pallab Chakma, Kapeeng Foundation

1:00-2:00 pm Light lunch will be served

2:00-2:05 pm

Ambassador May-Elin Stener, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway to the UN
Welcoming remarks

2:10-3:15pm

PANEL 3: Strengthening tools for peace sustainability and indigenous peoples

Chair: Dr Laila Susanne Vars, Director of GALDU (Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples),

Mr. Tony Wilson, Director, Security Force Monitor Project, Human Rights Institute
Columbia University Law School

Security force monitor

Prof. Neal B. Keating, Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Coordinator of Museum Studies/Public History Program Department of Anthropology, State University of New York

Peace sustainability and Indigenous Peoples' rights

Mr. Phrang Roy, Coordinator, Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty

Food as a tool for peace sustainability

3:15-3:30 pm Coffee break

3:30-5:00 pm

PANEL 4: Experiences from the North

Chair: Ms Lola Garcia-Alix, International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs

Grand Chief Ed John, (Akile Ch'oh) Tl'azt'en Nation , British Columbia, Canada, Member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Words from Nay Yun Ti -Words from Our Ancient Lands

Dr Laila Susanne Vars, Director of GALDU (Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), Member of the Sami Parliament, Member of the Norwegian National UNESCO-Commission

The implementation of the Sámi People's right to self-determination as a contribution to conflict prevention and resolution

Mr Rodion Sulyandziga, Director of the Center for support of indigenous peoples of the North/Russian Indigenous Training Center (CSIPN/RITC)

Experiences of Indigenous peoples in Russia look relevant

Dr. Ulia Gosart (Popova), American Indian Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles

Forms of Structural Violence Against Indigenous Persons Living in Sakha Republic and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug of Russian Federation

SUNDAY, 15TH MAY 2016

Jerome Greene Annex (The Annex)²

9:00-10:15 am

PANEL 5: Experiences from Latin America

Chair: Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Dr. Myrna Cunningham, Executive Director, CADPI, Universidad Indígena Intercultural

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The Case of Nicaragua

Mr. Francisco Cali, Member, Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

The experience of the Mayan Peoples in the peace process of Guatemala

Prof. Jose Aylwin, Co Director, Observatorio Ciudadano, Chile

Intercultural conflict and peace building: The experience of Chile

10:15-11:15 am

PANEL 6: Experiences from Africa

Chair: Ms Antonella Cordone, Senior Technical Specialist, Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Issues Policy and Technical Advisory Division, International Fund for Agricultural Development

Dr. Naomi Kipuri, Executive Director, Arid Lands Institute, Kenya

Experiences in Kenya and Tanzania

Dr. Albert Barume, Member, UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Unaccounted for: Indigenous peoples victims of conflicts in Africa

11:15-11:30 am Coffee break

11:30 am -12:45 pm

PANEL 7: United Nations and regional intergovernmental actions applicable to conflicts affecting Indigenous peoples and their resolution: challenges and opportunities

Chair: Dr Myrna Cunningham

Mr. Emilio Alvarez Icaza, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Violence against indigenous peoples in the Americas: Experiences, Legal Standards, and Recommendations

Dr. Antti Korkeakivi, Chief, Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Section, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Experiences of OHCHR, including from the field

Mr. Pedro Santiago Posada Arango, President, Fondo Indígena de America Latina y el Caribe, Director of Indigenous, Roma, and Minorities Affairs, Colombia

Social and Political dialogue as peacemaker. Peace as a tool of inclusion

12:45-1:30 pm

KEYNOTE 2: The human rights approach and response to the intentional destruction of cultural heritage.

Prof. Karima Bennoune, UN Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights

The human rights approach and response to the intentional destruction of cultural heritage

Chair: Prof. Elsa Stamatopoulou, Director, Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program, ISHR, Columbia University

1:30-2:30 pm Light lunch will be served

2:30-3:45 pm

PANEL 8: Indigenous women and experiences in dealing with peace-making and conflict

Chair: Prof. Yasmine Ergas, Director of Women and Gender Program at SIPA (School of International Public Affairs, Columbia University)

Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram, Founder, Manipour Women Gun Survivors Network
Secretary General, Control Arms Foundation of India

Indigenous Women in India's Northeast Region at the Forefront of a Strong Non-Violent Peace Movement

Ms. Andrea Carmen, Executive Director, International Indian Treaty Council (IITC)

Environmental Violence against Indigenous women and girls: The UN Declaration as a Framework for Conflict Resolution

Ms Danika Littlechild, IITC Legal Counsel

Criminalization of Indigenous human rights defenders

3:45-4:00 Coffee break

4:00-5:15 pm

PANEL 9: Perspectives from the Pacific

Chair: Prof. Sarah Knuckey, Director of the Human Rights Clinic, Columbia Law School

Mr. Santi Hitorangi Atamu, Member Mata Hitorangi, Advocate for the Rapa Nui Peoples Right to Self-Determination and **Mr. Rinko Tuki Tepano**, Consejero National Indigena
The case of Rapa Nui

Mr. Les Malezer, Chairperson of the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action
Conflict and peace in Australia and the broader Pacific

CLOSING REMARKS