



Global statement by Indigenous Women for the Generation Equality Forum and beyond

We, Indigenous Women from North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, Arctic, and Pacific, reaffirm the progress made in the last twenty-five years within the framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In 1995, we adopted and signed the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women that establishes the basis of our claims as Indigenous Women worldwide.

We highlight our contributions to sustainable development, the conservation and preservation of biodiversity and natural resources, the resilience building against global crisis like COVID-19, based on our cosmovision, wisdom, spirituality, knowledge, innovations and practices as agents of change. We also acknowledge some of the international and national legal and political recognitions regarding our individual and collective rights, as well as our organizational advancements such as our common agendas put into action to achieve gender equality and wellbeing.

However, we continue facing challenges that limit us from exercising our full and effective rights. In particular, we are still experiencing multiple levels of structural and systemic violence and discrimination, increasing aggressive appropriation of our territories by the States and transnational corporations, the contamination of soils and water sources with chemicals that affect health and the biodiversity, the impact of colonization, globalization, militarization of territories, the forced displacement and migration, the criminalization and repression of social protest, including gender-based attacks, the exploitation and trafficking of Indigenous Women in border areas.

Therefore, we urge the States, United Nations Agencies, development partners, private sector and the civil society to reinforce actions focused on the following priorities for Indigenous Women, Youth and Girls:

Human Rights

1. Ratify all human rights legal instruments and effectively implement the UNDRIP at the national level prioritizing technical and financial resources within national budgets in order to take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Women to protect, promote and fulfill our human rights and fundamental freedoms with cultural relevance.
2. Promote the adoption of the new General Recommendation on Indigenous Women and Girls by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
3. Strengthen policies and holistic programs to counteract the economic, social and environmental impacts that COVID-19 has had on our Peoples and communities, with a greater impact on Indigenous Women and Girls.



4. To ensure that Indigenous Women exercise their inalienable right to self-determination, autonomy, free mobility, ownership of the ancestral lands and territories, decolonization and depatriarchalizing of national policies, cooperation and development agencies.
5. Guarantee access to water as a primary action to protect the existence of Indigenous communities living in arid and desert areas as a result of climate change.
6. Guarantee inclusive public policies that promote Indigenous economies to overcome the subsistence category and break with paradigms of “vulnerable groups”.

Education and Health

7. Eliminate barriers to education and sexual and reproductive health services for Indigenous Women. These services must be designed considering the customary and traditional medicine with Indigenous Women’s perspective. It is crucial to adopt decisive actions on issues of maternal mortality, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, abortion, female genital mutilation, discrimination, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV/AIDS.
8. Ensure access to quality education and health culturally and linguistically appropriate with the full participation of Indigenous Women, and incorporate new responsive technologies. Quality education involves a horizontal and complementary intersection between Indigenous traditional knowledge and universal learning strategies. States should also guarantee inclusive education with attention to Indigenous Women, Youth and Girls with disabilities.
9. Guarantee the right of Indigenous Peoples to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems, and indigenous art.
10. Facilitate access to technology for indigenous children and youth in remote urban and rural areas, so that they have access to education within the current context.

Violence against Women

11. Design and implement policies and programs with unified and consolidated approaches to prevent, investigate and sanction all forms of individual and collective violence committed against Indigenous Women and Girls, including those with disabilities.
12. Strengthen measures, systems and resources to effectively address all forms of violence against Indigenous Women such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, sexual abuse, forced labor, modern slavery, domestic, institutional and political violence, environmental violence and its impact to the health, economic displacement, exploitation, trafficking, armed conflicts, militarization of Indigenous lands and territories, among others.



13. States should create mechanisms to guarantee access to justice for Indigenous Women and Girls, both in State-operated and in Indigenous judicial institutions. These mechanisms must combat impunity in cases of violence and discrimination against Indigenous women, through effective criminal investigations that bring perpetrators to justice and ensure that crimes are duly sanctioned.
14. Stop criminalization of Indigenous traditional knowledge, skills, technologies and practices.
15. To effectively address the aggressive economic development approaches resulting in further poverty of indigenous women and girls, making them more vulnerable to all kinds of exploitation and trafficking. States and development agencies should desist from ecologically and socially destructive development initiatives in indigenous territories.

Indigenous Women in power and decision making

16. There is an urgent need to improve the political, social, economic and health conditions of Indigenous Women and their families. This requires parity with racial-ethnic approach as part of substantive equality in the power structures of States and in all policy discussions on issues concerning them directly. Particularly, on priorities related to political participation in decision making, policy formulation, and implementation and monitoring, as well as large-scale development projects that have a direct impact on land and territories.
17. States should ensure the full and meaningful participation of Indigenous Women, Youth and Girls during the national, regional and international processes with free, prior and informed consent in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This includes decision-making on mechanisms, action plans and budgetary allocations.
18. States, regional intergovernmental bodies, the international community and the Indigenous Peoples' self-government institutions, should provide technical assistance and sufficient funding to Indigenous Women's organizations at the local, national and international levels and involve them in meaningful political decision-making processes.