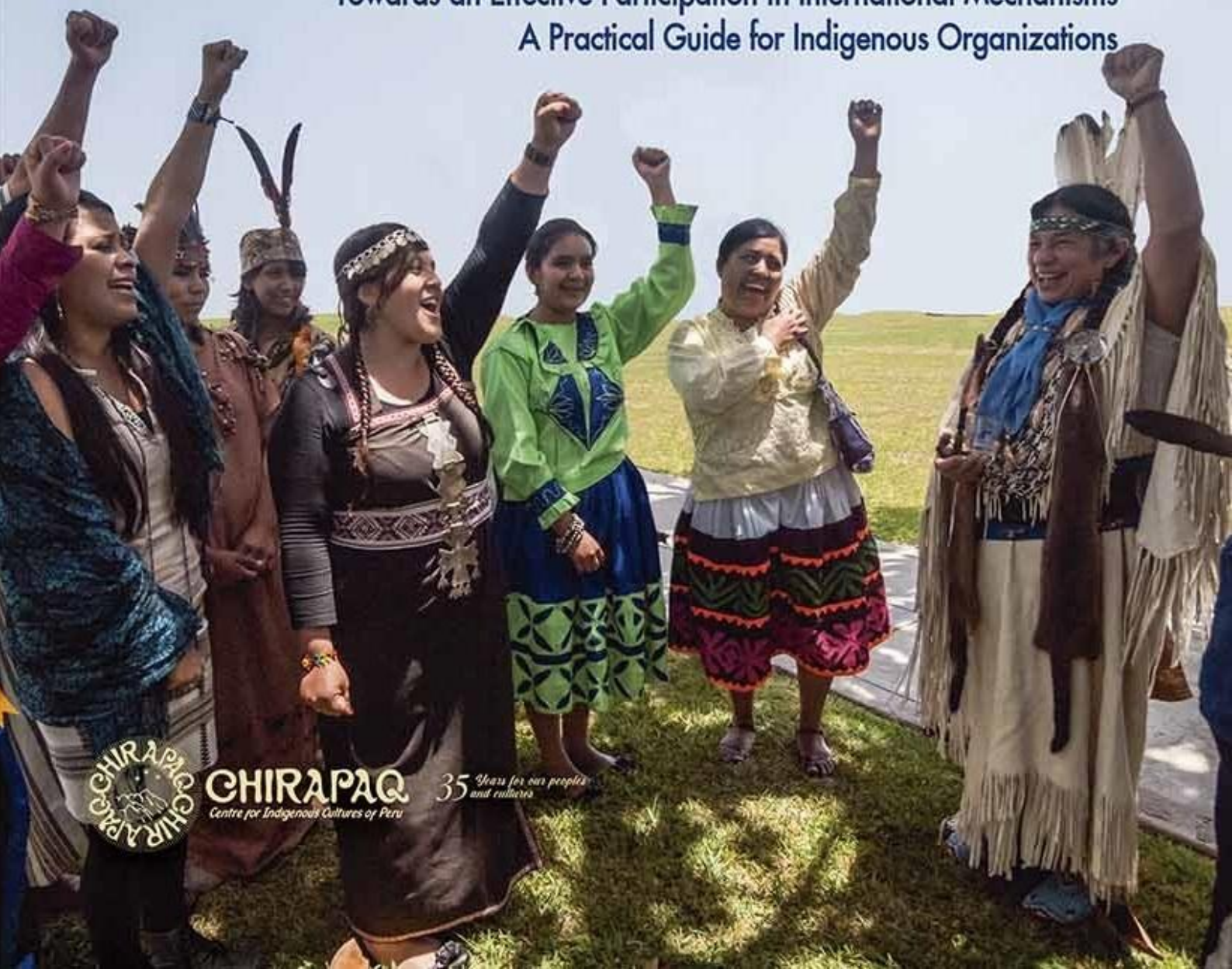


WALKING TOGETHER

Towards an Effective Participation in International Mechanisms
A Practical Guide for Indigenous Organizations



CHIRAPAQ
Centre for Indigenous Cultures of Peru

35 Years for our peoples
and cultures

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Series: Training Notebooks / 26

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Towards an Effective Participation in International Mechanisms. A Practical Guide for Indigenous Organizations

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INTRODUCTION

This is a guide for indigenous organizations in the Americas that includes thematic and practical information on international mechanisms related to indigenous women's individual and collective rights.

It is aimed at enabling and strengthening the participation of their representatives, particularly that of young indigenous women, in international spaces of the United Nations system at the global and regional level where the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA, in Spanish) has been advocating for decades.

A group of young and adult women from ECMIA's Commission on Childhood and Youth recently participated in some of these spaces during a capacity-building process on international mechanisms that took place between November 2018 and February 2020.¹

The first part of the guide contains information on the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. The most relevant data from these spaces, the details on how to participate and the most recent topics are described here.

¹ A process promoted by CHIRAPAQ, funded by UN Women and Plan International.

The second part explains the most frequent difficulties in participating in these spaces, as well as some recommendations to ensure an **effective participation** as organized indigenous women.

These recommendations were developed mainly based on the lessons learned during the capacity-building process with ECMIA's Youth, mentioned above, gathering the reflections and experiences of participants during preparatory, feedback, and assessment meetings. Some recommendations considering the observations and experiences of the CHIRAPAQ team were also included.

In addition, a glossary with some frequently used terms –in red– and an annex including resources to learn more about the issues in this guide can be found at the end of this document.

A common feature shared by all three spaces is their relevance to guide a global development agenda concerning indigenous women and peoples. These spaces, together with other mechanisms, form a consistent legal framework that can be used to support claims and proposals at the international, regional, domestic, and local levels.

It should be noted that Member States are a priority within these spaces and that, as organized indigenous women, we participate as part of the civil society; consequently, preparing to enable spaces and form alliances with other actors is crucial to ensure a smoother advocacy.

Effective participation requires a process of preparation and organized action during these events and after they take place, which is framed in a broader planned process of **political advocacy**.

A large, multi-tiered assembly hall filled with people, likely delegates, seated at long tables. The room has a high ceiling with recessed lighting and a large abstract mural on the left wall. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES



UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

WHAT IS IT?

The Permanent Forum is one of the three mechanisms that specifically addresses the rights and development of indigenous peoples within the UN system; its first meeting was held in May 2002. The Permanent Forum is an advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which means that it is framed within the system's area that focusses on economic and social development and the environment.² The other two mechanisms are the **Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** and the **Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, which are part of the Human Rights Council.

The Forum is a global space of dialogue where the **situation, priorities, and proposals** of indigenous peoples can be rendered visible within an interstate system. It is a space where negotiations between indigenous organizations, representatives of Member States, and UN organs can take place in order to promote the rights of indigenous peoples.

The Forum's main tasks include **advising and formulating recommendations** to Member States and the United Nations system on the rights and development of indigenous peoples around the world.

² Anaya, James (2008). "Los pueblos indígenas en el derecho internacional: La cuestión de la libre determinación".

Another task is that of **promoting the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**.

Furthermore, the Permanent Forum is a space where **discussions** on the main theme of the year are held, resulting in a **conceptual analysis** framework that is used as a reference worldwide. On the other hand, regional debates that tackle human rights matters and violations at the regional level are also held.

The six **mandated areas** of the Permanent Forum are culture, health, education, human rights, the environment, and economic and social development. The Forum has also incorporated cross-cutting issues into its work, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, indigenous women, children, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Watch a video about the Permanent Forum recorded during an event held in Lima: **First Gathering of Indigenous People of the Americas for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXgKMC1_dsE

As with other UN spaces, a group of experts holds a meeting before every session to elaborate a document with specialized information on the main theme of the session or other defined theme. The review of these documents prior to every session is key.

WHEN AND WHERE IS THE PERMANENT FORUM HELD?

An annual session that runs for two weeks is held at the UN Headquarters in New York, usually between the months of April and May.

WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS?

Unlike other UN bodies, the Permanent Forum allows **direct participation of indigenous organizations**, whether they enjoy **consultative status with ECOSOC** or not. Other participants are the following:

- Representatives of Member States.
- Representatives of UN agencies, funds, and programmes.
- Members of NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status.
- Representatives of the academic community.

HOW CAN INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATE?

Prior registration and accreditation

Indigenous organizations may register their representatives at the registration website, which is available at least two months before the beginning of every annual session. As registration usually takes longer for organizations or representatives participating for the first time, please avoid waiting until the last minute to do it.

Once the registration process is completed, organizations must wait to receive the official approval. Once in New York, the accreditation pass must be collected in person at the relevant office. Participants must provide their passport and a copy of their confirmation letter that was previously received via email; otherwise, collecting the accreditation pass will be difficult.

Side events

Before a session, the **Secretariat** of the Permanent Forum issues a list of scheduled side events held by indigenous organizations, governments, UN agencies, etc. Participants are encouraged to read it carefully to select the events they wish to take part in and to distribute them among the members of their delegation. Side events are typically held at noon and, occasionally, in the afternoon, after official sessions.

Organizations who wish to hold a side event must send their application in advance. These events can be strategically held in articulation with various organizations or networks or even jointly with a UN agency or the **UN Permanent Mission** of their country.

If the application is eventually approved, we recommend promoting the side event on social networks before it is held. Posters may also be made and passed around at the UN Headquarters and attendees

may be invited to other events taking place before those held by your organization. If the topics discussed during the events are relevant, they may be considered when drafting the final report of the session.

See some examples of side events

<http://chirapaq.org.pe/en/online-platform-that-closes-the-gap-between-un-and-indigenous-peoples-to-be-launched>

Indigenous Caucus

Indigenous caucuses are open to indigenous delegations participating in the Permanent Forum. Some types of caucuses are the following: global, regional, and thematic (women, youth, etc.). They are strategic spaces aiming at building networks and sharing experiences with other organizations, although some internal disagreements may occur.

Meetings are carried out on the weekend prior to the Permanent Forum and during the first week of the session. During these meetings, participants draft joint statements and take a stance on issues related to the agenda of the session or on other ones deemed relevant.³

Global Indigenous Youth Caucus (GIYC)

The GIYC is a global joint space for indigenous youth from the seven sociocultural indigenous regions. Participants gather together to develop statements and positions that express the concerns indigenous youth in various international bodies, mechanisms, and processes.

The Youth Caucus has two or three co-chairs whose duty is organizing, coordinating, and communicating with Caucus members. They also have two or three regional focal points corresponding to each of the seven sociocultural regions, who keep permanent communication with indigenous youth in their region.⁴ During the 19th Session of the Permanent Forum, one of the three people who were

³ https://www.docip.org/fileadmin/documents/Docip/Fiches_pratiques/Fiches_UNPFII/ES/Docip-Factsheet-UNPFII-2019-es.pdf

⁴ <https://www.iwgia.org/en/ip-i-iw/3651-iw-2020-global-indigenous-youth-caucus.html>

appointed as focal points in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean was a young indigenous woman from ECMIA.⁵

Reading of statements

Oral statements presented during plenary sessions should not last more than three minutes. This applies equally to Member States, indigenous peoples, UN agencies, caucuses, joint statements, etc. Once the time is up the microphone is turned off and no one will be able to hear you.

Overall, these three minutes should not exceed a page and a half, with a font size of 12 and double spacing (400-450 words approximately).

It is better to read clearly by highlighting key aspects than reading a lengthy text quickly, as people will not understand what you are saying and interpreters will have difficulties when translating simultaneously into the UN's official languages.

Participants from indigenous organizations who are accredited to attend the session, which is usually held in Conference Room 4, must register in the **Speakers' List**,⁶ Different lists are arranged according to the agenda's theme that is related to the statement that will be read. Participants must stay vigilant and arrive early to register; otherwise, they run the risk of not being able to read the statement for which they worked so hard for and stayed up long hours without sleep.

Bear in mind that participants are usually given the floor alternately by following the sequence Member State – United Nations – Indigenous Organizations.

The statement may be read in one of the UN's official languages. Spanish is one of them. However, having an English version is always advisable so that it can be distributed in both languages and reach more people.

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/GlobalIndigenousYouthCaucus/photos/a.2192919804156464/2192932180821893/?type=3&theater>

⁶ It is important to know in advance which sessions use a "speakers' list" and which are "interactive dialogues".

More information to be considered at the time of registering and reading statements:

- The person who is going to read the statement must register in the list under the name of the organization that accredited him/her;
- Each organization can only speak once during each agenda item;
- Fifteen copies of your presentation must be provided to the Conference Official prior to your turn to speak;
- A good strategy is to have the entire delegation stand behind the person reading the statement to show support as well as the diversity representing the delegation.

Suggestions at the time of writing an oral statement

While statements don't have a fixed preset structure beyond length restrictions due to the short amount of time given per person, here are some guidelines to be considered when writing the statement document:

- Be straightforward by avoiding non-strategic descriptions that lack focus and could lead to a poor use of the short three minutes given to participants to say everything that they want to say.
- Begin the statement with a short official greeting and by mentioning the organization or articulation on behalf of which you are reading the statement. A strategic move would be to get multiple articulations to endorse the statement in order to show a wide range and diversity of voices.

Watch and listen:

Statement read by the delegation participating in the 18th Session of the UN Permanent Forum (2019):

<https://www.facebook.com/633614366708859/videos/1038596533001015>

- Mention the international legal framework supporting the claims and demands listed in the statement.
- Mention concrete data on the status of indigenous people living in the region and, especially, that of indigenous women, young women, and girls, regarding the key issues mentioned in the statement.
- Issue SMART recommendations that bring something new to the table instead of merely repeating previous recommendations. The latter may be mentioned by highlighting their lack of compliance, if that were the case.

What is a SMART recommendation?				
S	M	A	R	T
Specific	Measurable	Actionable	Relevant	Time-bound
What? Who?	What?	How?	Why?	When?

The SMARTer the recommendations, the more likely they are to be considered in the final report of the session and implemented afterwards. We include two recommendations that meet the SMART criteria, which were mentioned during the 17th session, for reference:

UNPFII17: 40. *The Permanent Forum recommends that the Commission on the Status of Women organize a high-level interactive dialogue on the rights of indigenous women, to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, in 2020, to review progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on linkages with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Forum invites Member States, in cooperation with indigenous peoples' organizations and with the support of the United Nations System, to conduct preparatory processes, with the full and effective participation of indigenous women of all ages.*

UNPFII17: 41. *The Permanent Forum expresses considerable concern with the disparity between indigenous and national maternal mortality rates in many countries and encourages Member States to incorporate an intercultural approach to sexual and reproductive health services and promote the inclusion of indigenous health workers. The Permanent Forum invites*

Member States to seek the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other relevant agencies, funds, and programmes of the United Nations System in taking forward this recommendation and in strengthening the disaggregation of data by ethnicity, in the area of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, in the 2020 census round to strengthen the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Visit ECMA's Official Website and the Commission for Children and Youth Facebook Page for more examples of declarations.

To learn more, visit **Yanapaq.info/en/**, a browser and database where you can find Permanent Forum recommendations.

WHAT IS THE DOCIP AND HOW CAN IT HELP US IN RELATION TO THE FORUM?

The ***Indigenous Peoples' Center for Documentation, Research, and Information*** (DOCIP) is a documentation, research, and information center created in 1978 by initiative of indigenous delegations who attended the first international United Nations conference on Indigenous Peoples' Rights (Geneva, 1977). DOCIP is a Swiss non-profit organization whose main objective is to support indigenous peoples as they defend their rights, particularly within the framework of the United Nations and European institutions.

Regarding the Permanent Forum sessions, DOCIP can be helpful in various ways:

- Translation of texts from and into Spanish, French, English, and Russian.
- Interpretation of Caucuses, side events, and informal conversations (in Spanish, French, English, and Russian).
- Photocopies and access to Internet, computers, and printers.
- Publication of our intervention on their website.

Visit their Official Website for more information.

WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF THE PERMANENT FORUM?

After each session, the Permanent Forum issues a report including a series of recommendations to Member States, UN agencies, funds and programmes, regional organizations, civil society actors, and indigenous organizations, among others.

Up until now, after eighteen sessions, the Permanent Forum has formulated more than 1500 recommendations to date, including 200 specific recommendations on the situation of indigenous women. Although recommendations are not legally binding, they are important for demanding rights as they are approved by Member States.

Here are some purposes of the recommendations:

- To guide the design and review of public policies in Member States and institutional policies of UN bodies.
- To promote specific measures and good practices to make progress in the exercise of indigenous peoples' rights, within the framework of the Declaration and 2030 Agenda.
- To strengthen the political argument of indigenous organizations and other actors at the national and local level by providing international support for local demands.
- To draw attention to setbacks and violations to indigenous peoples' rights (although the Permanent Forum itself is not a complaint mechanism for human rights violations).

HOW IS THIS SPACE RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN?

The Permanent Forum is a space that brings together (mixed-gender, women, and young women, among others) indigenous organizations and networks from around the world. It is a strategic space to render visible the collective demands of the indigenous movement, in articulation with the demands of indigenous women.

Sometimes the demands of indigenous women, young women, and girls run the risk of being absent or not visible enough during this type of events, thus the importance of our effective participation.

WHAT ISSUES ARE ADDRESSED THAT ARE RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN?

All issues discussed during the Permanent Forum are important to indigenous women, beyond

cross-cutting matters such as indigenous women, youth, and children, given the complementary and indivisible nature of collective and individual rights.

The Forum usually addresses one theme during each session, along with other agenda items as thematic priorities. Below you will find the main themes of the last two sessions as well as some thought-provoking questions.

Theme of the 18th Session: “Traditional knowledge: Generation, transmission, and protection” (2019).⁷

- What roles do indigenous women and young women fulfil in the generation, transmission, and protection of traditional knowledge? What barriers prevent us from fulfilling these roles?
- What actions are we taking in our towns and communities to prevent the disappearance of traditional knowledge? What good practices can we share about these actions? Have specific and effective measures been taken in our countries to acknowledge, protect, and transmit traditional indigenous knowledge?
- Within the field of healthcare, is the traditional knowledge of indigenous health system actors taken into account? (e.g. midwives, bonesetters, etc.)
- What regulatory instruments can be used to protect this knowledge? How can we ensure the existence of strong mechanisms?
- What role do indigenous languages play in the generation, transmission, and protection of traditional knowledge? What is their current situation, what normative frameworks protect them, and what measures can be taken?

Theme of the 17th Session: “Indigenous peoples’ collective rights to lands, territories, and resources” (2018).⁸

- In what way is the violation of collective rights to lands, territories, and resources affecting indigenous women (adult, elderly, young women, and girls)? How is this affecting our lives (health, physical, spiritual and psychological integrity, education, etc.)? How should these issues be addressed?

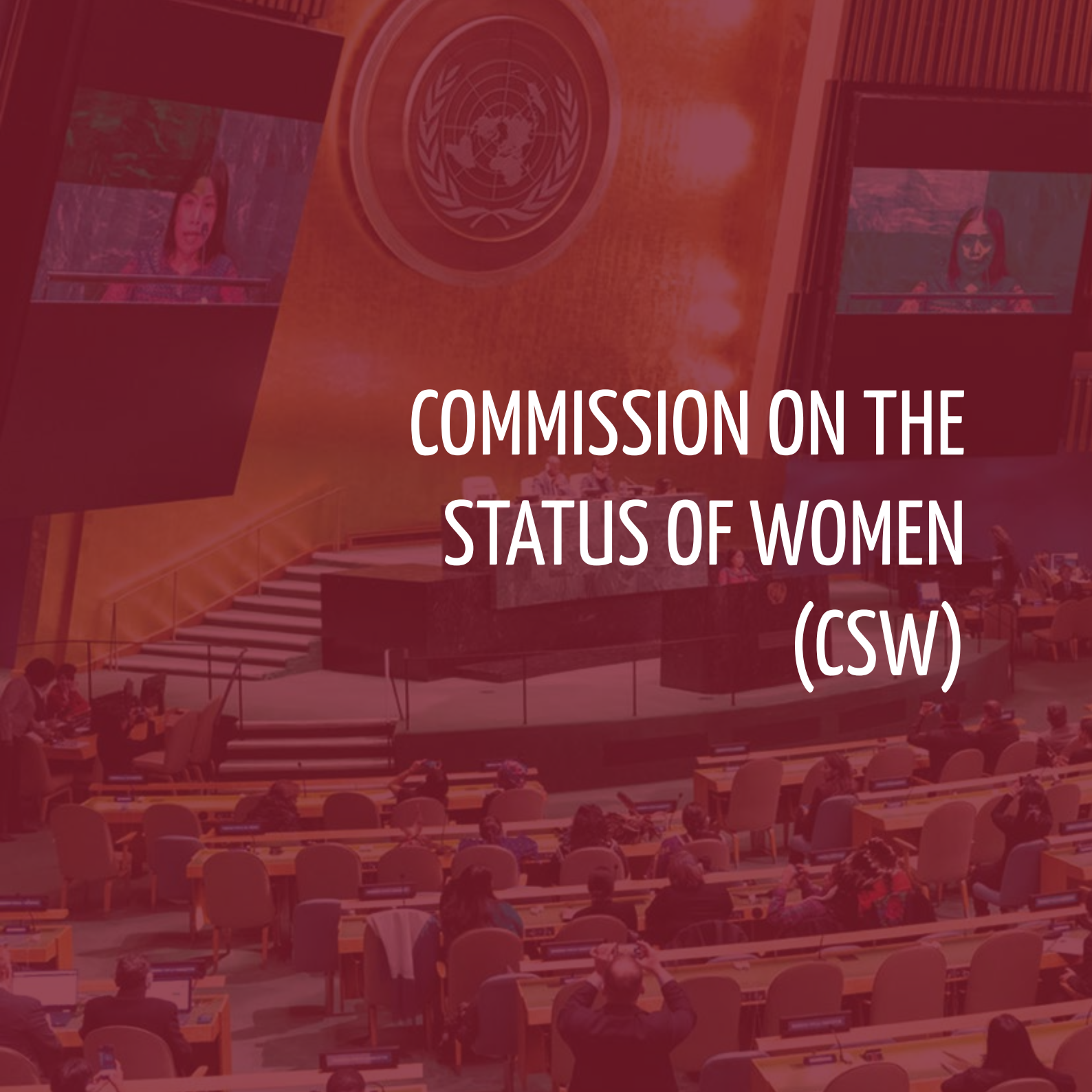
⁷ Economic and Social Council (2019). “Report on the 18th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues” at <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=es/E/2019/43>.

⁸ Economic and Social Council (2018). “Report on the 17th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues” at <https://undocs.org/es/E/2018/43>.

- What risks do indigenous women (adult, elderly, and young women) defending their territories run by challenging the authorities and extractivism? How do we protect ourselves?
- What mechanisms protect these rights today and what legal vacuums are there?
- How do land and territory demarcation processes take place and what role do indigenous women play in these processes?

WHAT MECHANISMS OR INSTRUMENTS ARE RELATED TO THE PERMANENT FORUM?

- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).
- Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples.
- Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965).
- ILO Convention No. 169 on indigenous and tribal peoples (1989).
- American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2016).
- Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (2014).
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (2013).
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979).
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

A wide-angle photograph of a large, modern conference hall during a session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The room is filled with delegates seated at long wooden tables arranged in a semi-circle. In the background, a large circular United Nations emblem is mounted on the wall. Two large video screens on either side of the stage display a woman speaking. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)

WHAT IS IT?

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the main **global intergovernmental body** exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission is dependent upon the **Economic and Social Council**, which means it is part of UN system's **deliberative bodies** on development.

The role of the CSW is to **lead the debate** and **develop global standards** on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as to **document the reality of women's lives** throughout the world. In addition, the CSW is in charge of monitoring progress in the **implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and mainstreaming a gender perspective** in UN activities

The Commission consists of one representative from each of the 45 Member States elected by ECOSOC for a period of 4 years on the basis of equitable geographical distribution: Latin America and the Caribbean holds 9 members out of the 45.⁹

⁹ Find updated information on representing States for each period here:: <https://www.unwomen.org/es/csw>

WHEN AND WHERE IS THE CSW HELD?

An annual session that runs for two weeks is held at the UN Headquarters in New York in March (usually during the second week).

Regional Consultations in Latin America and the Caribbean, which convene ministers of women and the highest gender authorities, are held prior to the annual session with the purpose of building the regional position of authorities. Such was the case of CSW63 in Buenos Aires, CSW62 in Santo Domingo, and CSW61 in Panama. Outcomes resulting from these consultations are usually more advanced than global agreements themselves.¹⁰

WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS?

- Representatives of Member States (usually, ministers for women, and official delegations to the UN).
- UN Funds, programmes, and agencies.
- ECOSOC accredited NGOs.

HOW CAN INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATE?

Civil society's active participation is a fundamental element in the work of the Commission. Civil society fulfills a regulatory role by demanding accountability from national and international leaders regarding commitments made during the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In addition, civil society has a greater understanding of the realities experienced at the grassroots, as well as a specialized knowledge in their fields of work.

As indigenous organizations, there are several ways in which we can directly and indirectly take part in the discussion. Below are the main modalities.

An NGO with **ECOSOC consultative status** may submit a written declaration in advance through a virtual platform created especially by the CSW. This document will serve to draw attention to specific realities regarding the theme of discussion and to issue recommendations to promote reflection and dialogue.

¹⁰ <https://lac.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2018/12/consultas-regionales-csw63>

Similarly, ECOSOC accredited NGOs may send representatives to participate officially during the CSW annual session. On the one hand, they will be able to make an oral statement of 3 minutes during the general debate. In addition, NGOs will be able to participate during interactive meetings with experts and take part in the high-level interactive dialogue among ministers on the priority theme.

On the other hand, every year the **NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW)** organizes the NGO Consultation Day in preparation for the official session. Here, participants are also able to contribute to the civil society statement which is read in plenary session before Member States.

Likewise, NGO CSW comprises regional committees: the committee for the region of Latin America and the Caribbean is known as the NGO Committee on the Status of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (**CoNGO CSW LAC**). Typically, CoNGO CSW LAC articulates beforehand with member civil society organizations to develop a political position document of the region, which is used for reference to draft a statement during the appropriate CSW session.

Organizations who do not enjoy consultative status with ECOSOC can still participate as they can hold and take part in side activities. Representatives of Member States, UN agencies, civil society, members of the academic community, among others, are usually invited to these activities. Inputs are also collected from every discussion and attention is drawn to issues that many times do not make it into the official debate.

See the alternative document developed by CoNGO LAC regarding the assessment 25 years after the Conference in Beijing during CSW64

The **International Indigenous Women's Forum (IIWF)** also holds coordination meetings with indigenous women attending the CSW session in order to articulate the actions and strategies of indigenous women from different regions. Taking part in these meetings is crucial as we get to be more and better articulated.

As in other conferences and events held by the UN system, there are Caucus meetings. It is essential to attend and express the position agreed among delegation members. At events such as the Women's Rights Caucus, first-hand information on the progress of negotiations between Member States is usually discussed.

Another way to participate is through Member States' **official delegations**. Some civil society representatives can be members of official delegations and have access to all meetings held for Member States only. This scenario depends on whether a State makes an invitation, and it is also more complicated for indigenous organizations. This can be achieved, however, by approaching the authorities of said country.

Watch and listen to two interventions by the delegation representing the Commission for Children and Youth at CSW63:

"Teenagers in early and forced marriages and child unions in Latin America and the Caribbean"

<https://web.facebook.com/juventudecmia/videos/vb.633614366708859/2669236576482431/?type=2&theater>

High-level intergenerational Policy Dialogue "No girl left behind". Legislating to achieve the Economic Empowerment of Indigenous Women .

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1993518520953138>

WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF THE COMMISSION?

The main outcome is the **Agreed Conclusions**¹¹ on priority themes, which are published in an official document. Conclusions have two parts. First, they contain a series of reflections on the priority theme and a list of matters that are brought to the attention of the Commission, which are listed in numbered paragraphs. Then there is a set of practical recommendations for governments and other actors, listed in lettered paragraphs.

¹¹ Find all conclusions agreed so far at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/outcomes>.
UN Women. "Results." UN Women, www.unwomen.org/es/csw/outcomes.

The CSW also adopts **Resolutions** of greater legal value than that of recommendations. Some resolutions have become norms that all Member States acknowledge and comply with without questioning. There are many other factors involved, but as with recommendations, resolutions contribute to a set of texts in which Member States express their will and commitment to ensure that certain rights and processes are enforced.

HOW IS THIS SPACE RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN?

Since Beijing 95, as indigenous women, we became more significantly involved in development processes seeking to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, when we participated in the Fourth Global Conference on Women. Since then, and before that, we have been building the complementarity and **intersectionality** of our collective and individual rights as indigenous women.

As a follow-up to the process started in Beijing and with the commitment to fight for our rights, as indigenous women of Latin America and the Caribbean, we take part in the CSW annual sessions, where we have achieved two specific resolutions: **resolution 49/7**, entitled “Indigenous women beyond the 10-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action”,¹² and **resolution 56/4**, entitled “Indigenous women: key agents in the eradication of poverty and hunger”.¹³

In addition to this, references have been included in the recommendations of the 57th, 58th, 61st, 62nd, and 63rd sessions. Issues related to the status of indigenous women have also been addressed at exclusive panel discussions during various sessions such as CSW59, CSW60, and CSW61.

On the other hand, in the CSW61 session in 2017, the Commission considered the **empowerment of indigenous women** as the main theme of a half-day session, where indigenous women’s organizations had the opportunity to participate and express their concerns within the context of the 10th Anniversary Commemoration of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

¹² CSW Resolution 49/7. “Indigenous women: beyond the 10-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action”. Report on the 49th Session at <https://undocs.org/en/E/CN.6/2005/11>

¹³ CSW Resolution 56/4. “Indigenous women: key agents in the eradication of poverty and hunger” at <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/resolution-56-4-ind-women.pdf>.

Over the years, as indigenous women, we have also been involved in the periodical reviews of the progress made in the implementation of the Platform every five years. We have joined together, and we have raised our voices in order to have them be included specifically in every review.

Notably, in 2015, 20 years after the Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted, ECMA conducted a review of the progress and set challenges from the standpoint of indigenous women. This review covered 7 areas of the Beijing Platform for Action that were identified as priorities. Furthermore, the study proposed indicators to measure the progress of the situation of indigenous women regarding the implementation of this instrument.

More recently, as indigenous adult and young women, we have also carried out an analysis of the 25 years of Beijing+25, within the framework of several events that include the 8th Continental Meeting of Indigenous Women of the Americas in 2020.

WHAT ISSUES ARE ADDRESSED THAT ARE RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN?

Overall, the issues addressed by CSW are relevant to indigenous women because the main focus is women's rights in economic, political, and social areas, which include issues such as work, public services, political participation, and gender-based violence. However, as mentioned above, there were also instances where the issue of indigenous women was directly addressed.

To learn more about the participation of indigenous women in this process, you can read the following three publications:

Del Silencio a la palabra (From Silence to Words) Trajectory of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas – 1993-2013 (<http://chirapaq.org.pe/es/del-silencio-a-la-palabra>), *NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US. Beijing+20 and the Indigenous Women of the Americas: Progress, Gaps, and Challenges* (<http://chirapaq.org.pe/es/nada-sobre-nosotras-sin-nosotras>), and *Indigenous Women of the Americas 25 Years After Beijing: Progress, Gaps, and Challenges* (<http://chirapaq.org.pe/es/mujeres-indigenas-de-las-americas-a-25-anos-de-beijing>).

In recent years, the CSW has addressed the following themes:

CSW63 “Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.”¹⁴

Some questions to reflect on:

- Are public services adequate for us? What is the coverage and quality level of public services for indigenous peoples, especially for indigenous women (adult, elderly, young women, and girls)? Are these services culturally relevant? Which would be the main barriers to access? Do attention records contain data disaggregated by ethnicity, sex, etc.?
- What are the main social protection programs in our countries? To what extent do these programs respect the right to free, prior, and informed consultation? Do these programs have a gender and intercultural approach? Are they culturally relevant?
- When these programs are implemented in our communities, are indigenous organizations considered? Do they promote organizational strengthening in communities?
- How do these programs help reduce poverty and gender and ethnic gaps?
- Do indigenous women migrants (adult, elderly, young women, and girls) living in urban areas benefit from social protection programs?
- What kind of social protection systems, public services and infrastructure do indigenous women (adult, elderly, young women, and girls) need?

CSW62 “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Economic and Social Councils (2019). *“Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls: Agreed Conclusions”* at <https://undocs.org/en/E/CN.6/2019/L.3>.

¹⁵ UN Women (2018). *“Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. 2018 Commission on the Status of Women: Agreed Conclusions”* at <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/62/csw-conclusions-62-sp.pdf?la=es&vs=4712>

Some questions to reflect on:

- What is the specific situation of indigenous women (adult, elderly, young women, and girls) living in rural settings? How is this situation different from that of non-indigenous rural women? What are the main barriers we face in achieving gender equality?
- How do we understand gender equality in our rural communities?
- What is the current situation of gender-based violence in our communities and how is it exercised? What is access to justice like, both in the mainstream system and in our own systems, when gender-based violence cases occur?
- What is our situation with regard to the access, use, and control over land and territories?
- Are free, prior, and informed consultation processes respected in our territories in the event of extractivist initiatives? Can indigenous women participate actively and effectively in these processes when they take place?
- What is our role in preserving and transmitting ancestral knowledge and practices related to the management and use of our natural and intangible resources? Does the government protect and acknowledge this role and this knowledge?
- To what extent do governmental social policies and programs promote or discourage the food sovereignty of our peoples?
- What consequences do indigenous women (adult, elderly, young women, and girls) experience, both in rural and urban settings, due to forced migration processes?

WHAT MECHANISMS OR INSTRUMENTS ARE RELATED TO THIS SPACE?

- The Beijing Platform and Plan for Action (1994).
- The Convention and the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979).
- The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, “Convention of Belém do Pará” (1994).

- The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, particularly, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Gender equality, although all Goals are interconnected.
- The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo Programme of Action) (1994).
- The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (2013).
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
- The Montevideo Strategy for implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development framework by 2030 (2016).

A large group of women are seated at long tables in a conference room, attending a regional conference. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The women are engaged in various activities, some looking towards the front, others looking down at papers or devices. The text "REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN" is prominently displayed in white, bold, uppercase letters across the center of the image.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

WHAT IS IT?

The Regional Conference is an intergovernmental forum and subsidiary body of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) focused on addressing issues related to women's rights and gender equality in the Latin American and Caribbean region. The first conference took place in Havana in 1977, within the framework of the United Nations Decade for Women. Fourteen conferences have been held to date.

The purpose of the Regional Conference is to identify women's needs at a regional and sub-regional level in order to reach agreements on public policies. Based on the Conferences, a Regional Gender Agenda is developed based on the commitments made by Member States in the documents they adopt: the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into the Latin American Economic and Social Development (1977); the Regional Program of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001 (1994); the Santiago Consensus (1997); the Lima Consensus (2000); the Mexico City Consensus (2004); the Quito Consensus (2007); the Brasilia Consensus (2010) and the Santo Domingo Consensus (2013). This Agenda is open to the incorporation of new commitments based on the socio-economic and political context of the region.¹⁶

¹⁶ ECLAC (2019). "What is the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean?" at https://conferenciamujer.cepal.org/14/sites/crm14/files/c1900830_web.pdf

It is necessary to highlight that the **Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030**,¹⁷ was approved by Governments during the XIII Regional Conference (2016).

The Regional Conference is a place where discussions are held, problems are identified, recommendations on public policies are presented, and periodic evaluations on compliance with regional and international agreements are carried out.

The ECLAC Secretariat prepares the position paper that Member States must approve at the sub-regional preparatory sessions (the Caribbean, Central America, South America), which serves as a basis for the discussions taking place at the Conference itself, where Member States delegations discuss the contents of the position paper and reach a compromise on the final text to be presented at the end of the Conference.

WHEN AND WHERE IS THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE HELD?

The venue changes each time. The XIV Conference, which was originally scheduled for November 2019, eventually took place from January 27 to January 31, 2020, in Santiago de Chile, due to situational problems.

WHO ARE THE PARTICIPANTS?

- ECLAC Member States (46 Member States¹⁸) who are usually represented by their Ministers for Women or their equivalent, as well as the official representative of the diplomatic mission in the host country;
- Associate members;
- Observer States (from other regions);
- Observers:
 - UN funds, programmes, and agencies;
 - non-governmental organizations; and
 - intergovernmental organizations.

¹⁷ <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/41013-montevideo-strategy-implementation-regional-gender-agenda-within-sustainable>

¹⁸ CEPAL: "Member States" at <https://www.cepal.org/en/estados-miembros>

HOW CAN INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATE?

As indigenous women, we can participate in the Regional Conference under the civil society category. In this case, non-governmental organizations are not required to be in consultative status with ECOSOC, although organizations with a long trajectory and networks are prioritized.

Feminist organizations have a strong participation; therefore, networking with the country's most representative organizations connected to the feminist and women's movement in the region is an excellent strategy to learn more about registrations.

Overall, we can participate through the following modalities:

- National delegations: official delegations of Member States may invite prominent civil society members to be a part of their delegation;
- Organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC (although few indigenous organizations have this status);
- Observers: regional or sub-regional networks recognized for their work attend meetings as observers.

Side events

Prior to the conference itself, side events and the **Civil Society Forum** are held in addition to the official meetings between Member States, where different organizations of the broader women's movement meet, with feminist organizations playing a leading role.

You are not required to be registered as civil society to take part in side events, although you must have a special accreditation for one day, which can be obtained with the support of an organization hosting the side event, especially if you participate as a panelist.

However, bear in mind that some of these instructions may differ between Conferences, so staying up to date with every single call and visiting the official event's webpage in advance is essential.¹⁹

¹⁹ In recent years, given the proliferation of ultra-conservative and anti-rights movements and organizations that oppose the implementation of the Regional Agenda, strategies and concrete measures have been designed at the conferences to ensure that disruptions by these actors do not hinder the progress of the full spectrum of women's rights

As mentioned in previous sections on the CSW and the Forum, you can either organize a side event or be a panelist in some of these spaces. Participating in roundtables on official program topics is also a good strategy, since the arguments expressed in these spaces can be used in the subsequent drafting of official documents.

Watch ECMIA's participation – Commission for Children and Youth in the XIV Conference

Video of Esther Camac Ramírez at the Civil Society Forum: "Economic autonomy of women and feminisms in Latin America and the Caribbean" Roundtable

<https://www.facebook.com/juventudecmia/videos/905796776506829>

As previously mentioned, in order to ensure that the voices of indigenous young and adult women are taken into consideration and heard in these spaces, it is important to be well-connected with other articulations who enjoy prestige and power in these spaces.

Civil Society Statement and official document

As a strategic move, we can have an impact on the drafting of the official document of this space as well as participate directly in the preparation of the civil society and youth statements. Some suggestions are given in the recommendation section.

WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE?

During the Regional Conference, an outcome document, that can be either a **consensus**, a **strategy**, or a **commitment**, is prepared. While this is a non-binding, expository document, it expresses the will of Member States in the region to work towards gender equality. In some cases, such as the **"Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030"** (2016), this entails a commitment by Member States to submit periodic compliance reports.

The official outcome of the XIV Conference was the *Santiago Commitment*.

HOW IS THIS SPACE RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN?

This is the most important space for dialogue on gender equality and women's rights in the region, and it is closely linked to international processes covering these issues, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), among others, in which indigenous women have been involved for more than 25 years, as mentioned above.

The Regional Conference space is very important for indigenous women in the region as it is more "accessible" than global spaces such as the CSW: most events are in Spanish and most speakers speak the language; the number of attendees is smaller; spaces are smaller and the agenda is more specific. It is also easier to make alliances and approach State authorities, UN funds, agencies and programmes, and civil society representatives. Therefore, there are more opportunities to participate and intervene.

Another reason why this space is important is that it allows the participation of civil society organizations who are not necessarily in consultative status with ECOSOC. This is the case of many indigenous women's organizations and mixed-gender organizations. Therefore, taking advantage of these spaces to reach out to actors and institutions that would be otherwise difficult to access is essential.

As indigenous women, we have always been involved in women's rights spaces, with the aim of seeking the recognition of our individual and collective rights. In these spaces, we try to position problems that are specific to indigenous women as the rules and processes that seek gender equality are often extremely broad and prevent our visibility.

WHAT ISSUES ARE ADDRESSED THAT ARE RELEVANT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN?

The Conference addresses issues related to women's autonomy and equality, with an emphasis on aspects related to physical, economic, and decision-making autonomy.

Currently, "The Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030" is in force. It was approved by Governments during the XIII Conference (2016) and is based on an instrument used to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, considering the specific context of Latin American and the Caribbean.²⁰

²⁰ https://conferenciamujer.cepal.org/14/sites/crm14/files/20-00056_brochure_what_is_crm_ene2020_eng_web.pdf

Nowadays, there is also a strong debate in our region regarding the Regional Gender Agenda due to the presence of far-right governments and a wave of conservative activists who seek to reverse the progress made. For indigenous women, taking part in dialogues on women's rights is essential in order to do everything in our power, as a group that lacks visibility, to preserve what has already been achieved and to include our priorities in the agenda.

On the other hand, this is an important space to get closer to and articulate with other social women's movements, and find similarities and differences that allow for the establishment of common agenda points. These rapprochements are crucial to strengthen proposals that include more groups and, consequently, enjoy greater support.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGH-LEVEL EVENT - 1 FEBRUARY 2019

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

In this section, you will find a compilation of recommendations for indigenous representatives, especially for young women, who decide to participate in the international spaces included in this document, although they can also be useful to others, depending on their characteristics. These recommendations come mainly from young and adult indigenous leaders who participated in the process this document is based on. We have also included supplementary comments made by allies who shared with the group and provided support.

The first part includes a compilation of the general recommendations applicable to the three spaces, which are divided based on three aspects: **preparation, participation, and personal scope.**

Specific charts for each of the three spaces are included at the end. First, the particular barriers to participation in each of these spaces are identified and then several recommendations are proposed depending on the event's nature.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations apply to the spaces mentioned in this document, but are also relevant for other spaces. All the same, we suggest checking the nature of each space first, especially the participation modalities that are specific to civil society, to check the relevance of the recommendations.

Recommendations for preparation

Logistical aspects

- If necessary, schedule the renewal of all needed identification documents, such as passports, and other visa procedures, in advance, especially if the event will take place in the United States.
- Seek **financial resources** in advance to ensure participation.
- Be cautious and pack clothes that are appropriate for the weather of the city where the event will take place. We often get sick from being too hot or cold, or due to the frequent use of air conditioning.
- Bring power adapters to charge electronic devices, since sockets are often different from those used in our countries of origin.
- Get used to the idea that the food will likely be quite different from what we are used to. This should be seen as an opportunity to learn more and expand our experiences.
- Download the event's apps, which are usually launched a few days before. This will make organizing your participation in official and side activities easier.

Mapping of actors and previous events

- Identify **key actors** who will participate in the space, whether they are representatives or officials of Member States, the UN system or the civil society of **our countries**.
- Find information on these key actors online to be able to **identify them** more easily and have a reference when approaching them during the event.
- Identify potential allies and "enemies" who may even oppose the agenda we want to position.
- Participate in civil society **preparatory meetings** of our countries that take place before the main event and get involved in *spotlight reports* ²¹ and follow up on them. As far as possible, it is crucial to participate in regional preparatory meetings as well.

²¹ Spotlight reports were previously known as shadow reports.

Thematic research

- Review terminology specific to each space and see how it relates to our own terms. For example, if you are attending a space on women's rights, learn about the terms related to gender equality or feminisms and compare them with those used by the indigenous women's movement.
- Strategically use any **terminology** that is not ours, but is in alignment with the terms we use and matches what we want to express, especially when you have the opportunity to make strategic contributions to the drafting of the official report.
- Reflect on how other movements use our terms and see if they use them **in the same sense**, in order to differentiate them.

Collective preparation

- Know how to **distinguish the different natures** of spaces and have a clear notion of what can and cannot be achieved, in order to develop better strategies. The articulation of individual and collective rights of indigenous women, young women, and girls tends to be a big challenge. In certain spaces such as the CSW, individual women's rights are usually prioritized, while the Permanent Forum focuses on their collective rights. In both cases, this can render invisible the concrete demands of indigenous women in all their diversity, if we fail to strategically raise our voices. Incorporating an **intersectional perspective**, often absent in practice, is usually a huge challenge for young indigenous women.
- Reflect in advance as an **organization and/or delegation** on the theme of discussion, by reviewing relevant documents from the space and the indigenous movement, and on the reality we see in our communities to contribute with **real, relevant, and representative proposals**.
- Formulate **SMART** recommendations based on reflections and readings, and, if possible, have a moment as a delegation for such end.
- Innovate and **build on what has already been proposed. Avoid repeating the same recommendations.**
- Compile all the **recommendations and proposals** in a physical document and make copies in order to pass them around to State, UN system, and civil society representatives.

- Consider preparing a **statement or position paper** including these recommendations and a brief analysis of the situation of indigenous women regarding the event's theme.
- Create content to raise awareness among **non-governmental organizations and civil society**, and not just among Member States.
- Try to translate the document into English and distribute it in both languages.
- Try to include **at least one person who has experience in the space and in international advocacy**, who also has key connections that will open doors during the event.

Articulation and side events

- Expand the proposals' scope so that **other civil society groups or movements can be included in them** and greater support can be achieved.
- Identify **which spaces** will be prioritized to participate and ask questions when there is a chance. Each meeting comprises side events, official debates, civil society discussions, and social gatherings that can be prioritized according to the interests of the delegation attending the event.
- Seek **invitations to participate in a side event or panel discussion** in advance, since this allows us to be present and position our proposals and demands.
- If possible, attend the event as part of **a network** in order to take precedence over other civil society and UN system organizations and when speaking in plenary sessions.

Self-care and support

- Be aware that sexist, adultcentric, and racist situations and discourses can occur in these spaces. Therefore, it is important to have the tools to respond to these situations and to take care of ourselves both individually and collectively so that it does not affect our performance.
- Protect yourselves from the "external use" of our "indigenous image" that can take place in these spaces.
- Listen to the political guidelines and personal advice of influential and long-standing indigenous leaders, and seek their support throughout the event.

Recommendations for participation itself²²

General recommendations

- Be aware that the UN system is the home of Member States and that there are certain rules to observe. However, that does not mean that we will not be disappointed or surprised when we hear dishonest speeches from our own countries, such as when they mention advances that never happened.
- Do not be afraid to **ask for the floor and insist** on being heard in spaces when there is an opportunity to participate as civil society members.

Articulations

- Seek **articulations and alliances** with other civil society groups or movements, such as Afro-descendant women, rural populations, peasant women, among other groups. In particular, it is important to seek articulations with other indigenous participants.
- Creating articulations and alliances is important. While our agendas are not identical, there will almost certainly be some common points of struggle. However, a mutual and balanced benefit must be achieved to avoid one party having more of an advantage than the other; in other words, relationships must be horizontal.

Lobbying

- Be attentive to **events** that are **held outside the official agenda**, in the afternoons since many of these are crucial to establish or get more connections and to obtain complementary “unofficial” information. In addition, these events tend to have a more “informal” atmosphere and approaching other people can be easier. Likewise, between official agenda events, the United Nations corridors can be a good place to foster these connections.
- Seek **direct contact** with representatives of our countries, since these spaces facilitate dialogue with ministers, ambassadors, and other officials, compared to the difficulties we face at a national level in this regard.

²² Recommendations in this section are highly interrelated; following one recommendation leads us to another: lobbying is carried out through articulations; and lobbying is intended to make sure that our demands are taken into consideration and rendered visible effectively.

- Seek meetings with representatives of national, regional, and global **United Nations funds, agencies, and programmes** to position the priorities of indigenous women and youth.
- **Create alliances and advocate with the official delegations** of Member States to get them to include us in their official delegations in future events, and to take our proposals to closed negotiation spaces.
- Once key actors are identified, choose the people in charge of **following or approaching** each of them.

Positioning and visibility of the demands

- **Register** on the speakers' list on time if you plan to read a statement.
- If the statement cannot be read at the plenary session, seek **other means to showcase it** (via social media, through allies, on video, on paper, among others).
- If you have been chosen to participate as part of the official delegation, take this opportunity to obtain first-hand information and to try to position some issues that can be considered during the negotiations between Member States on the outcome document.

Internal organization

- If you are participating as a group, **form commissions and distribute responsibilities** in advance. For example, in ECMIA's latest process with young women, delegations formed three commissions: communication, organization-logistics, and drafting of the statement.

Participation in side events

- Arrive **before time for side events**, as rooms often fill up very fast, and you may even lose the opportunity of getting interpretation devices, which are much needed when events are held in other languages. Be aware as well that some of these events may require **prior registration**.

At CSW, ECMIA's youth delegation was not able to read their statement as public participation of civil society members was very limited. They eventually decided to read it together and record a video to spread their message on social media. This strategy was very popular.

Watch the video here: <https://www.facebook.com/633614366708859/videos/2255488418025049>

- If you have the opportunity to participate as a speaker in a side event or panel discussion, **prepare your intervention together** as a delegation and validate its contents.
- Try to prioritize, focus, and insist on our proposal's key issues during the events you will be attending.
- During your participation in some of these spaces, share local, national, and up-close experiences and link them to the regional-global situation.

Advocacy in the outcome document and other statements from other articulations

- Try to get the **event's draft outcome document** as quickly as possible, analyze it, suggest modifications, and closely follow the negotiation process. In some cases, the document is already well advanced by the time of the event, so getting involved in **prior consultation processes** at the country or regional level is a good idea.
- Develop your **dialogue, negotiation, and consensus** skills, as they will allow us to speak respectfully, but without forgetting to express our main concerns. In these spaces, you will find people who think differently and who want to position or prioritize other agendas or who have other strategic interests that are not usually so obvious. Therefore, you should also learn to read between the lines; you must learn to develop a "political intuition".

Participation in the media

- If you decide **to participate in the media**, prepare in advance key messages you wish to convey. Sometimes you have to be careful with some media that could misrepresent or misunderstand what you want to say, to "make it more marketable" or to serve other political interests. When we publicly expose ourselves, it is also very important to be clear about our collective organizational identity and who we are representing at the event, to avoid conflicts upon our return to our respective countries. If you are unsure, it might be better to avoid the media seeking to interview us. Likewise, if you don't have the exact answer, you can divert the attention to other topics and even answer by asking other questions.
- As for the visibility and dissemination of our participation and proposals on social networks, try to agree, in advance, as a delegation where our first post should come from, in order to forward or share it later from the original post.

Personal scope

- Overcome the fear of approaching strangers and take the chance to talk to all kinds of people.
- Keep in mind that you may feel insecure or afraid of making a mistake, especially if it is your first experience, as these spaces can be scary and overwhelming. Being able to overcome this and dare to participate using your unique and valuable knowledge and experiences is essential. Try to also share your fears with other participants.
- Arrive at least a day before to become familiar with the place, if possible and depending on the available budget.

An anecdote

During a workshop, a member of ECMIA's Commission for Children and Youth said that once she and another member were participating in an event where journalists wanted to ask them about some issues which they had no clear position on as an organization. At the end, to avoid exposing themselves (and their organizations), they hid in the bathroom.

- "Learning by doing" is often what works best, by finding a balance in the learning process between theory and practice and starting from what we know while gradually moving towards the unknown.

Recommendations after participation

- Arrange a meeting with our organization to report on the main results as well as on the next steps agreed by the delegation that attended the event.
- Follow up on the publication of the official outcome documents when their release is delayed beyond the event's closing ceremony.
- Follow up on compliance with the commitments made by Member States in the official document that was finally approved.

- Follow the recommendations drafted in these spaces and put them into practice in our national and local work when making claims or presenting arguments, as mentioned above. These aspects are important because the recommendations should not be seen as a purpose, but rather as a means to improve our advocacy processes.

BARRIERS AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Permanent Forum

Barriers to effective preparation and participation

- Participation is open to indigenous organizations and Member States, UN agencies, and indigenous organizations take turns on the speakers' list, so many times there is not enough time for everyone to participate.
- Visibility may be lost among other interventions, as many representatives of indigenous organizations and networks take the floor.
- Some preparatory and consultation documents are in English.

Recommendations for effective participation	
Preparation	Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Be ready in terms of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• where the Permanent Forum will take place (check the official program, side events, etc.);• the main theme or themes to be addressed in the session;• the review of previous Forum documents and other related mechanisms; and• identifying good practices and implementation challenges regarding the theme in our countries.— Use Yanapaq.info, the services of the Indigenous Peoples’ Center for Documentation, Research, and Information – DOCIP, and other digital tools to support our proposals and learn more about how our priority issues have been addressed in the Forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Participate in interactive dialogues, which are open to indigenous organizations after every discussion, and in any activity where attendees can ask for the floor.— Seek direct contact with the <i>members of the Permanent Forum</i> to position our issues and priorities so that they can be included in the recommendations.— Join coalitions to position issues of common interest.— Take part in indigenous caucuses.

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

Barriers to effective preparation and participation

- English is the official language of most spaces and many of them lack interpretation services. There are also people and representatives from other organizations who speak other languages, but they speak English for common understanding.
- Many of the preparatory and consultation documents are in English.
- Documents, even those in Spanish, are often difficult to understand because the language is very complex and they refer to very specific terms and mechanisms.
- Regarding the time distribution during the official meeting, Member States always take precedence, so civil society has a limited amount of time to participate: Member State representatives must stop asking for the floor before civil society representatives get a chance to speak.
- Indigenous women have little presence and making ourselves noticed among such varied and numerous women's groups and organizations is a challenge.
- Each group tries to position their own issues and political agenda, which sometimes generates struggles for visibility within civil society.
- As attendees are from very varied groups, very specific issues related to feminism and women's rights are addressed. These issues are often unknown and can be confusing for us when taking a stance as young indigenous women.

Recommendations for effective participation	
Themes	Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Be ready in terms of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• where the CSW will take place (check the official program, side events, etc.);• the priority theme and the review theme;• the review of previous CSW documents and other related mechanisms;• the review of the report that is developed prior to the session as a result of the <i>Expert Group Meeting</i>, since this document defines most of the contents of the official document. One drawback is that both the meeting and the document are often in English, which is unfair since the rest of the official languages of the UN are left out;• identifying good practices and implementation challenges regarding the priority and review themes in our countries; and• issues that will be addressed in the feminist and broader women’s movement, as well as related terminology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— If possible, have someone help you communicate in English (either a delegation member who is fluent in the language or an ally).— Find creative ways to make our positioning or proposals and demands visible, since interventions in plenary meetings are difficult and there are many other groups positioning their issues.

Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

Barriers to effective preparation and participation

- Indigenous women have little presence and making ourselves noticed among such varied and numerous women's groups and organizations is a challenge.
- The organizations of the feminist and broader women's movement have particular interests and agendas that compete for the relevance given to the issues.
- Some spaces are closed to indigenous women, giving priority to other interests or groups that are more "powerful".
- As attendees are from very varied groups, very specific issues related to feminism and women's rights are addressed. These issues are often unknown to us and can be confusing for us when taking a stance as representatives of ECMIA's Youth.

Recommendations for effective participation

Preparation

- Be ready in terms of:
 - where the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean will take place (check the official program, side events, etc.);
 - the main theme;
 - the review of previous Conference documents, such as the Montevideo Strategy, and other CSW-related mechanisms;

Participation

- Seek **direct contact** with the ministers for women (or equivalent) of each country during plenary meetings, after side events and in common spaces.
- Have a significant presence **in thematic spaces where we are not usually present**, such as those addressing the issue of women and the economy.

Recommendations for effective participation	
Preparación	Participación
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the review of Member States reports on progress on the Montevideo Strategy (at the regional level) or the Beijing Platform for Action (at the global level) from the country you are visiting, if any; and• issues that will be addressed in the feminist and broader women’s movement, as well as related terminology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Try to be present in the teams in charge of drafting official documents and join the drafting group in charge of the civil society position paper that is read in plenary meetings and is led by feminist organizations. Joining drafting groups of young women is also essential.

Listen to some testimonies of members of ECMIA’s Children and Youth Commission who have participated in these spaces

Testimony of Carolina Salazar Cristancho: Losing the fear of speaking in public (first part: https://drive.google.com/file/d/197KlmFSTgcC8kJcKIYYOF-gj_4fl4nw/view?usp=sharing Second part: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vzejBkU2oKFv0DMndL8j7PX-f0oYZ_m3/view?usp=sharing).

Testimony by Olga Idalia Mestizo Tesorero: Working in an organized way by commissions. (first part: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NvzYQsHjm8V8LXhRp4L3k5UgvzP0lUvW/view?usp=sharing> Second part: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CqP-SAwwZsmYcJ8GhLHWawQVQpmUDvU4/view?usp=sharing>).

Testimony of Tarcila Rivera Zea: The importance of intergenerational work (First part: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eKvbgnfwKEOTCJV8ig8nbLu8Jj0eZ2uL/view?usp=sharing> Second part: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eYezViTec0WTVKNb8F-LlGmq_cBwYnnM/view?usp=sharing).

FUNDING POSSIBILITIES

Taking part in these spaces is very expensive for organizations, and they do not usually have enough funding to participate. Sometimes it is possible to have a specific project that can cover expenses as part of a capacity-building or broader advocacy process, although that is usually not enough to send a considerable number of participants. In that sense, seeking resources to ensure our participation is an important aspect that we must consider in advance.

Here are several instances you could turn to for financial support. Some of them launch calls specific to the spaces mentioned above. That being said, we must keep trying and put all of our energy into knocking on different doors:

MamaCash

<https://www.mamacash.org/es/el-activismo-feminista-funciona>

FRIDA

<https://youngfeministfund.org/about/>

UN Women

<https://www.unwomen.org/en>

CONGO CSW LAC

<https://ngocswlac.org/>

International Indigenous Women's Forum

<https://fimi-iiwf.org/?lang=en>

Global Fund for Women

<https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/>

UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/IPeoplesFund/Pages/IPeoplesFundIndex.aspx>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACREDITACION

The formal registration process that enables a person —either government, non-government, or media— to participate in UN conferences, summits, or special sessions and in their PrepComs (preparatory committee meetings).

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly is the highest main body of the UN and consists of all Member States. It governs the work of the UN and formally adopts the documents resulting from IMs organized by the UN.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

LOBBYING

It refers to influencing international agreements by promoting our views through contact with delegates

on official country delegations (our own and others), other members of civil society (including different caucuses), as well as major negotiating blocks. The interaction can be formal or informal.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

CAUCUS

A caucus is an informal grouping of like-minded individuals, groups, or states. Caucuses can be either issues-based (e.g. education caucus), regional (e.g. Asian caucus), or a major group caucus (e.g. youth caucus).

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

AGREED CONCLUSIONS

Agreed conclusions are mainly adopted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and its subsidiary bodies as one of the outputs for a session.

For example, the main output of the Commission on the Status of Women is the agreed conclusions on priority themes set for each year. Agreed conclusions contain an analysis of the priority theme and a set of concrete recommendations for governments, intergovernmental bodies and other institutions, civil society actors and other relevant stakeholders, to be implemented at the international, national, regional, and local level.

Source: <https://ask.un.org/faq/51292> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/outcomes>

CONFERENCE OR SUMMIT

An international meeting of high-level government officials, UN officials, and civil society representatives (including NGOs and experts). The culmination of a long negotiating preparatory process.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

CONSENSUS

Consensus enables resolutions, decisions, or final conference documents to be adopted without a vote. Consensus is achieved through negotiating and compromise and implies agreement among all government delegations.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

CONVENTION, TREATY, OR PROTOCOL

“Convention” and “treaty” are used interchangeably and refer to legally binding agreements between Member States. Conventions and treaties define the duties of those states that have ratified them. Protocols are developed after a particular convention or treaty, establishing additional rights and obligations. They must be signed and ratified like conventions and treaties and are also legally binding agreements. See also <http://untreaty.un.org/English/guide.asp>

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

DECLARATION

A document expressing non-binding agreement between Member States.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is a visionary agenda for the empowerment of women that was established in 1995 as the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China. It remains today as the most comprehensive global policy framework and blueprint for action to realize gender equality and the human rights of women and girls, everywhere. The Platform for Action covers 12 critical areas of concern with objectives and goals for different actors: poverty; education and training; health; violence against women; armed conflict; the economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights; the media; environment; and girls.

Source: https://beijing20.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf

ECOSOC (ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL)

It is one of the 6 main bodies of the UN. ECOSOC leads the actions to achieve the economic, social, and environmental development of the international community. It coordinates 22 programs, 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions, and 5 regional commissions.

NGOs seeking accreditation need to do so via ECOSOC. ECOSOC was the first UN dialogue space to open its doors to NGOs. In the past, meetings were only between Member States and UN organizations.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

MEMBER STATE

A country that is recognized by the United Nations as independent and that has subsequently become a member of the UN.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

ECOSOC CONSULTATIVE STATUS

In order to participate in the dialogues, an NGO must have ECOSOC Consultative Status, which is an accreditation given by ECOSOC upon recommendation of the Committee on NGOs (19 Member States). There are currently more than 5000 accredited NGOs.

Non-governmental, non-profit public, or voluntary organizations that are given consultative status with the Economic and Social Council maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with the UN. Those that have attained consultative status through a process of application and review by the Committee on NGOs of ECOSOC are able to contribute to the work programs and goals of the UN by acting as experts, advisers, and consultants to governments and the Secretariat.

This status facilitates participation in spaces of the UN system. An NGO in Consultative Status can attend international conferences and meetings organized by the UN or their preparatory meetings.

If we are not in consultative status, indigenous organizations can look for allies who are in that status or begin the application process.

There are three different categories of Consultative Status (General, Special, and Roster status) and a series of eligibility criteria that have to be evaluated to apply

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf
NGO Branch. "Introduction – Consultative Status".

<http://csonet.org/index.php?menu=30>

SIDE EVENT

An event (e.g. expert group presentation, roundtable, simultaneous conference, fair, NGO, or civil society forum) held parallel to an IM, usually related to the issues being negotiated.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

EXPERT GROUP

Experts include academics, representatives of governments, and NGOs. Expert group meetings may be convened by the conference secretariat or mandated by Member States as part of the preparatory process for a UN meeting.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

ADVOCACY

It is a set of initiatives implemented with the aim of promoting legal and political transformations or achieving the approval or fulfillment of a public policy. Advocacy is done to achieve changes in our societies, especially to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in political management and to promote sociocultural changes.

There is a variety of actors who carry out advocacy strategies such as international organizations, NGOs, indigenous peoples' organizations, private companies, universities and study centers, political parties, associations and unions, etc. Given this variety, it is essential to strengthen alliances and pacts between different types of organizations.

Before starting with advocacy, it is important to know and be aware of what you are seeking to change regarding the critical issues you want to have an impact on. Different types of advocacy strategies can also coexist. For example: media campaigns, lobbying, strategic planning, etc.

Source: http://www.americalatinagenera.org/es/documentos/sintesis_foros/foro_estrategias_incidencia_politica.pdf

SPOTLIGHT REPORT

The 'spotlight' report (previously known as 'shadow report') is a tool for monitoring the States' compliance with international commitments in accordance with international conventions. This report can be written by civil society organizations and groups. It is called a spotlight report when it is written after having access to the official government report submitted to the corresponding body of the UN system, for example: the CEDAW Committee. On the other hand, it is called an **alternative report** when it is written where no government report is available (either because the government did not prepare one or because it did it too late).

Source: https://catedraunescodh.unam.mx//catedra/CONACYT/20_MetodDisenyoCEDAW_ver3/new-page.html#:~:text=El%20Informe%20sombra%20es%20una,la%20Discriminaci%C3%B3n%20contra%20las%20mujeres%20

https://docs.escri-net.org/usr_doc/CEDAW_CESCR_reporting_guidelines_FINAL_Oct_6_2010.pdf

INTERSECTIONALITY

It is a tool for analysis, advocacy, and policy-making that addresses multiple discriminations and helps us understand how different sets of identities have an impact on access to rights and opportunities.

In other words, it aims to address the manner in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression, and other systems of discrimination create inequalities that structure the relative positions of women. Therefore, concrete measures are required based on these realities to transform these discriminatory situations.

Source: https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/intersectionality_a_tool_for_gender_and_economic_justice.pdf

LEGALLY BINDING

International Law is based on the fact that States recognize common principles and ways of acting; however, there is no superior authority that makes these rules or enforces them, as is the case of parliaments in national law.

Nevertheless, there is a set of recognized rules and their enforcement has different binding degrees. Member States are only bound to comply with those “legally binding” rules to which they voluntarily agree.

For example, a recommendation does not have these characteristics and is not considered a binding commitment, but it is rather a guide for actors on how to act with reference to a certain issue.

However, as indigenous leader Tarcila Rivera Zea always says, the recommendations may not be legally binding, but they are **morally binding**.

Source:

Shaw, Malcolm N. (2004). “International Law”. 5ta Ed. Cambridge University Press: Reino Unido.

Monroy Cabra, Marco Gerardo. “Valor Jurídico De Las Resoluciones De Las Organizaciones Internacionales”. *Ensayos De Teoría Constitucional y Derecho Internacional*, Universidad Del Rosario, Bogotá, 2007, pp. 467–469.

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE COUNTRIES TO THE UN

It represents your country’s stance on multilateral policy matters to the UN. The bodies in which this work is developed are the six thematic commissions that comprise the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the International Court of Justice, and the other bodies that comprise the UN system.

Permanent missions fulfil duties such as attending and actively participating in UN meetings and events; monitoring its operation and the achievement of its objectives; defending your country’s position in UN meetings and activities; promoting the participation of officials in various entities.

Source: <https://www.preventionweb.net/organizations/25264>

MEMBERS OF THE PERMANENT FORUM

The Permanent Forum is comprised of sixteen independent experts, acting on their personal capacity, who serve for a three-year term as Members and may be re-elected or re-appointed for one additional term.

Eight of these experts are nominated by governments and eight are nominated directly by indigenous organizations in their regions.

The experts nominated by indigenous organizations are appointed by the President of ECOSOC and represent the seven socio-cultural regions that were determined to give broad representation to the world's Indigenous Peoples.

The regions are: Africa; Asia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; the Arctic; Central and Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia; North America; and the Pacific—with one additional rotating seat among the three first listed above.

Source: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us/permanent-forum-on-indigenous-issues.html>

OBSERVERS

According to international law, only those states that are recognized by the United Nations as independent or as Member States can negotiate and vote on international or multilateral agreements. Once a treaty comes into effect, those states that have accepted to be a Party to the agreement are the only participants allowed to make decisions on its implementation or review. However, other entities (e.g. inter-governmental organizations, specialized agencies) can be officially identified as observers and take part in the negotiations and defend their ideas and interests. As observers, however, they cannot vote or object to a consensus at formal or informal sessions.

In the specific case of ECLAC, some States participate as observers. Members of the United Nations which do not belong to the Commission and States which are not members of the United Nations **hold consultative status**.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf
https://conferenciamujer.cepal.org/14/sites/crm14/files/20-00056_brochure_what_is_crm_ene2020_eng_web.pdf

DELIBERATIVE BODY

It has the power to enforce the decisions and agreements made.

Source: <https://www.wordreference.com/definicion/deliberante>

INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODY

The general principle of an intergovernmental body is its interstate dimension. In other words, these

entities are made up of a group of States and all of them create a supranational alliance (beyond their national scope) in order to establish cooperation among the Member States.

Source: <https://www.definicionabc.com/politica/oig.php>

EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

When participating in a certain space had good results, it means this participation has been effective. It is not limited only to “being present”, or simply making demands without concrete proposals. This requires preparing in advance, strengthening our skills and designing a strategy with a specific purpose. However, despite this, sometimes conditions are not in place for obtaining visible results.

RESOLUTION

A document sponsored by a government or group of governments containing a set of recommended actions. Resolutions include a preamble outlining its purpose, a listing of previous decisions adopted on the issue, and operative clauses which specify the recommended actions to be taken.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

A conferences’ administrative unit or body usually established to provide services and manage UN conferences. The secretariat is responsible for a range of tasks including accreditation of NGOs. Sometimes it includes preparation of key documents and preparatory information.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

MANDATE ISSUES

When an organization—in this case, the UN— undertakes to follow up on issues within the scope of its responsibilities assigned to it.

Source: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

LEARN MORE

Below are a series of supplementary resources in case you wish to go in depth or expand some of the contents of this guide. Likewise, if you desire other resources to be considered in future editions of this guide, feel free to contact the CHIRAPAQ team through the technical secretariat of the Commission for Children and Youth through juventud@ecmia.org and secretaria@ecmia.org

ABOUT THE PERMANENT FORUM

Official website of the Permanent Forum

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/unpfii-sessions-2.html>

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/Pages/EMRIPIndex.aspx>

Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/SRIndigenousPeoples/Pages/SRIPeoplesIndex.aspx>

Yanapaq.info

A browser and database where you can easily find recommendations of the Permanent Forum.

<https://yanapaq.info/en/>

Indigenous Peoples' Center for Documentation, Research, and Information - DOCIP

<https://www.docip.org/en/>

Global Indigenous Youth Caucus

<https://www.globalindigenousyouthcaucus.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/GlobalIndigenousYouthCaucus?fref=ts>

DOCIP document with recommendations to participate in the Permanent Forum

https://www.docip.org/fileadmin/documents/Docip/Fiches_pratiques/Fiches_UNPFII/EN/Docip-Factsheet-UNPFII-2019-en.pdf

TOMORROW IS TODAY. Participation and Advocacy Strategies for CERD and the Permanent Forum

This is a manual that explains in detail the nature of the Permanent Forum and the possibilities to participate in this space and in CERD.

If you are interested in this guide, please contact the email address previously mentioned.

Outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

<https://undocs.org/A/RES/69/2>

Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development

https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/21860/S20131039_en.pdf?sequence=15&isAllowed=y

ABOUT CSW

CSW Official Website

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>

CoNGO LAC

Committee of NGOs on the Condition of Women from Latin America and the Caribbean – CoNGO
CSW LAC

<https://ngocswlac.org/quienes-somos-who-we-are/>

ABOUT THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Official website of the Regional Conference on Women

<https://conferenciamujer.cepal.org/14/en>

What is the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America?

https://conferenciamujer.cepal.org/14/sites/crm14/files/20-00056_brochure_what_is_crm_ene2020_eng_web.pdf

Montevideo Strategy for implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the sustainable development framework by 2030

https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/41013/1/S1700033_en.pdf

OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Main organs of the United Nations system

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/index.html>

UN System Chart

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/index.html>

Human Rights Council

It is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system made up of 47 States responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/hrbodies/hrc/pages/home.aspx>

Navigating International Meetings. A Pocketbook Guide to Effective Youth Participation (2002)

Guide with general advice to participate in international meetings. Despite its publication date, many of the contents are still valid and very useful. It contains an extensive glossary of technical words that are usually used in these spaces; some of these definitions have been included in the guide we are presenting. In addition, the guide provides explanations on issues that are linked to certain symbols used in negotiation texts.

https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/pocketbook_youth_participation_en.pdf

Feminist organizing toolkit: planning virtual meetings

This toolkit was developed in the context of COVID-19, in response to the need to strengthen skills in our organizations to promote meetings and other types of virtual communications.

<https://www.wecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ICT-toolkit-Spanish-2.pdf>

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FORDFOUNDATION



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