

Indian Law Resource Center

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

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Policy Issue Resources

On June 15, 2016, after nearly 30 years of advocacy and negotiation, the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The OAS is a regional intergovernmental organization of 35 member countries of the Americas, including the United States.

The American Declaration offers specific protection for indigenous peoples in North America, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. It affirms the right of self-determination, rights to education, health, self-government, culture, lands, territories and natural resources, and it includes provisions that address the particular situation of indigenous peoples in the Americas, including protections for those living in voluntary isolation and those affected by a states internal armed conflict. Article VII of the Declaration addresses Gender Equality, and includes a commitment that States shall adopt the necessary measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination, particularly against indigenous women and children.

The American Declaration is a comprehensive, regional human rights instrument and it will become one of the most important instruments of the Inter-American Human Rights System. Both the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights will interpret the Declaration to provide content to other instruments, such as the American Convention on Human Rights the main regional human rights treaty, and the American Declaration of Rights and Duties of Man.

Throughout the negotiations, the Center played a key role in hosting preparatory meetings ahead of the negotiations with indigenous peoples from the Americas, developing proposals and strategies, and providing legal support to indigenous leaders attending the negotiations.

RESOURCES:

[Statement of the Indigenous Nations and Organizations Coalition to the Organization of American States' 52nd General Assembly](#) | [Espaol](#) (October 5, 2022)

[OAS decision to extend the Plan of Action of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) | [Espaol](#) (November 12, 2021)

[Statement of the Indigenous Nations and Organizations Coalition to the Organization of American States' 51st General Assembly](#) | [Espaol](#) (November 9, 2021)

[Statement of the Indigenous Nations and Organizations Coalition to the Organization of American States' 50th General Assembly](#) | [Espaol](#) (October 19, 2020)

[OAS decision on the Implementation of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 28, 2019)

[OAS decision on Effective Participation of Indigenous Peoples and Peoples of African Descent](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 27, 2019)

[Statement of the Indigenous Coordination of Abya Yala](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 26, 2019)

[Statement of the Indigenous Nations and Organizations Coalition to the Organization of American States' 49th General Assembly](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 26, 2019)

[Statement of Armstrong Wiggins to OAS during Inter-American Week of Indigenous Peoples](#) | [Espaol](#) (August 10, 2018)

[OAS decision on Inter-American Week of Indigenous Peoples and Monitoring Mechanism](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 4, 2018)

[Statement of the Indigenous Peoples and Nations Coalition to the Organization of American States' 48th General Assembly](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 4, 2018)

[Indigenous leaders call for the implementation of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 20, 2017)

[Statement of the Indigenous Peoples and Nations Coalition to the Organization of American States 47th General Assembly](#) | [Espaol](#) (June 19, 2017)

[Plan of Action of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(2017-2021\)](#) | [Espaol](#)(June 14, 2017)

[American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) | [Espaol](#)(January 17, 2017)

[Strategies for implementing the new American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

[Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous](#)

[OAS adopts new Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

[Armstrong Wiggins Appeals to the OAS to Implement the American Declaration](#)

[The Inter-American System of Human Rights](#)

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