

# Indian Law Resource Center

## Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://indianlaw.org/adrip/armstrong-wiggins-addresses-organization-american-states-general-assembly>

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

**June 13, 2016 | Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic** I would like to first thank the Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic, OAS Secretary General, OAS Adjunct Secretary and OAS Ambassadors.

The Ambassador of Mexico to the OAS has given me an opportunity to speak here today. It is very hard for me to tell a story that began in 1989, when the General Assembly assigned the Inter-American Commission with the project of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, and that continued up until May 19 of this year, very recently. I will do my best to tell this story in one minute, because we, the indigenous peoples, are used to working with time constraints.

This is an American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination, to our territories, lands, environment, natural resources, sustainable development and preservation of indigenous cultures in the Americas.

For us, this Declaration represents a very important step, though without implementation we will not be able to achieve full respect for the rights of indigenous peoples.

Therefore, I make an appeal to States, private sector, and Civil Society to work with us towards the implementation of the American Declaration, just as we have begun to do in the United Nations with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Without implementation of the American Declaration, our indigenous peoples will continue suffering at the hands of private enterprise dispossessing them of their natural resources. That is why I also make an appeal to private enterprise, so that they respect our basic human rights.

Thank you.

### Resources

[American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - Draft Text as Adopted June 8, 2016](#)

*We will post the official text once it is available from the Organization of American States.*

*Footnotes entered by Brazil, Canada, Colombia, and the United States and interpretive note by Colombia can be found [here](#).*

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

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

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

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