

## Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

Latin America is a region where the violation of human rights has become part of the citizens' daily life. It is crucial that *you*, as delegates of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, work hard to find a way to provide citizens with the security that they deserve. In this committee you will debate two of the most relevant topics

***Topic A: Reform of the Current Drug Policies:*** Drug policies are failing. They are causing enormous harm to individuals and communities around Latin America regarding the poorly designed drug laws. The objective of these laws will be for criminals to face prosecution for the production and possession of drugs. This can fuel violence, instability and health crises. The war on drugs refers to the efforts given by the governments over the last 50 years to prohibit and penalize possession, transportation, sale, production and use of drugs. The efforts made by the government have not successfully reduce the drug's availability in the vast majority of the countries.

***Topic B: Discrimination against indigenous communities in Mexico and Central America:*** A big concern in Latin America and the Caribbean is the discrimination against indigenous communities. There are approximately 40,000,000 people that belong to 600 indigenous groups. Most of these groups are distributed among Latin American countries. According to World Bank figures, 12.76% of the entire American population and approximately 40% of the rural population is indigenous. The security of their territories and resources has been severely affected in this recent decades due to the constant battle between the governments of the region and the indigenous population since both seem to think they "own" the land. There is also a lack of implementation of indigenous people's rights. It is an ongoing struggle between indigenous peoples and the governments regarding the right to be consulted, free expression and self-determination.

We are looking forward to seeing you so that you, as members of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, can provide proposals to tackle the previously mentioned situations.

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## **Topic A: Reform Of the Current Drug Policies**

Drug policies are failing. They are causing enormous harm to individuals and communities around Latin America regarding the poorly designed drug laws. The objective of this laws is to seek punishment of the production, possession, use and dependence of drugs. This can fuel violence, instability and health crises.

The war on drugs is referred to the efforts given by the governments over the last 50 years to prohibit and penalize possession, transportation, sale, production and use of drugs. The efforts made by the government have not successfully reduce the drugs availability in the vast majority of the countries. For example, in the United States prisons, the drug-related charges almost doubled from the late 1980s until today. Also the use of illegal drugs actually increased and street drug prices have lowered.

The failure of the war on drugs has led to consider alternative methods.

1. Decriminalization: This means the removal of sanctions on minor drug offenses. For example impose a fine instead of jail time.
2. Depenalization: The retention of drug offenses as a crime based on community needs and practical considerations.
3. Regulated Access: Government experiments a range of option with the use of illegal drugs as a commercial market for substances. Using controlled quantities for harm prevention.

Drug use as a public health issue may be a good way to require less concentration of money and resources on criminal justices.

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/why-we-need-drug-policy-reform>

## **Topic B: Discrimination against indigenous communities in Mexico and Central America**

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Approximately in Latin America and the Caribbean there are approximately 40,000,000 people that belong to 600 indigenous groups. Many are from Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, Bolivia and Ecuador.

According to World Bank figures, 12.76% of the entire American population and approximately 40% of the rural population is indigenous.

The security of their territories and resources has been severely affected in this recent decades due to the constant competition between the governments of the region and the indigenous population. The governments want to create new investments in the areas. Such as new investments to subsoil resources or biodiversity, the incentive of extractives and the export of raw materials. Unfortunately the institutions in charge of monitoring environmental and social impacts in this rural areas are unable and weak. There is also a persistent racism and neglect of decision-makers towards the rights of the indigenous people in the region. This has led to inequality and a progressive impoverishment to the indigenous groups.

There is also a lack of implementation of indigenous people's rights. It is an ongoing struggle between indigenous peoples and the governments regarding the right to be consulted, free expression and self-determination. There is also a gap in the recognition and enforcement of indigenous rights. This has created an impact in a series of conflicts to the indigenous peoples and the international institutions in charge of monitoring human rights.

<http://www.iwgia.org/regions/latin-america/indigenous-peoples-in-latin-america>