



# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## SUBMISSION FROM THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP TO THE DRAFT ELEMENTS PAPER

### **(Our shared resolve)**

The implementation of States' obligations and commitments to human rights including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) at the national level is urgently needed to advance the SDGs. This includes the implementation of the recommendations of the various human rights mechanism and procedures relating to Indigenous Peoples will accelerate their inclusion in the SDGs as well as in advancing the pledge of leaving no one behind.

### **(Our changed world)**

Indigenous Peoples continue to be left behind in terms of poverty reduction and access to appropriate social services, among others, but also continue to suffer from and dispossession, rising inequalities, climate change, forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, conflicts on resource-use and development and lack of access to justice. At the same time, their contributions to sustainable development as agents of change and the persistence of their sustainable lifeways, knowledge, skills and values as critical to advancing sustainable development are not protected and supported.

On the contrary, Indigenous Peoples' sustainable livelihoods and legitimate actions to defend their rights to lands, territories and resources are being criminalized with increasing cases of persecution, extra-judicial killings and other gross human rights violations. This illustrates the huge gap in the respect, protection and realization of the rights and wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples across the globe in relation to the implementation of the SDGs. This is despite the pledge of "leaving no one behind" and the commitment of States to respect and protect Indigenous Peoples rights as imperative to achieving the SDGs.

The COVID 19 pandemic has worsened inequality and amplified the existing systemic discrimination and marginalization of indigenous peoples, further pushing them behind from reaching sustainable development. The current priority for economic growth for COVID recovery is inconsistent with the need to balance the social, environment and economic dimensions of the SDGs. Policies were weakened for environment protection and democratic participation restricted by states in order to pursue their economic targets

in the guise of pursuing COVID recovery and advancing the SDGs. Likewise, many corporations continue to exploit indigenous peoples' lands and resources for profit but now labeled this exploitation as contributing to the pandemic recovery and supporting sustainable development

### **(Turning our world toward 2030)**

Accelerating Actions and delivery of the 2030 Agenda in the next six years will require coherent policies, appropriate measures and decisive actions on the ground by States to overcome and recover from the covid-19 pandemic and pursue sustainable development. This must include systemic measures to reverse the regression of some SDGs. Urgent transformational actions by States and other development actors must be based on a human rights framework; addressing the root causes of inequality by reversing the global economic order to serve the people and align with environment protection; provide necessary mechanisms to dismantle systemic discrimination and racism; reform discriminatory laws and policies and strengthen the accountability of States, including in ensuring the democratic space for citizens.

Indigenous Peoples as rights-holders must be legally recognized including full respect and protection of their collective rights, access to justice and concrete actions to end their discrimination as affirmed by international human rights instruments. They must be able to meaningfully participate in decision-making at all levels. Conservation measures and establishment of protected areas and reserves should ensure the implementation of the right to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples. Respectful partnerships with Indigenous Peoples will enhance their roles and contributions to sustainable development.

Country level processes on SDG planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting needs to be strengthened to ensure that development priorities integrate specific needs and priorities of Indigenous Peoples are included and implemented and their contributions to sustainable development recognized. Further, targeted programmes and measures, and allocation of resources to localize the SDGs are needed to address the condition of Indigenous Peoples. These should be developed with the full and effective participation of indigenous to ensure that their needs and perspectives are taken into account.

The Voluntary National Review process should ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and that safe spaces for them to engage is ensured without fear of reprisal. Data collection and monitoring also needs to be strengthened especially data disaggregation ethnicity to ensure that Indigenous Peoples are visible and accounted for in the SDG implementation and their specific needs and priorities are addressed.

There needs to be an integrated approach to implementing the SDGs to ensure that the achievement of one will not result to the regression of the other goals which is what is currently happening.

There is a need for states to go beyond “pledges” and “commitments” and take concerted actions to protect the people and the planet by transforming the global economic system and practicing the principles and values related to sustainability, social justice and equity; non-discrimination and respect of cultural diversity, cooperation and global solidarity.