

International Indian Treaty Council

The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), founded in 1974 in South Dakota, works for sovereignty and self-determination for Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and protection of their human rights, Treaties, traditional cultures and sacred lands. In 1977, the IITC was the first Indigenous organization to receive Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In January 2011, the IITC became the first Indigenous organization to be upgraded to General Consultative Status in recognition of its long-standing and wide-ranging work within the UN system on behalf of Indigenous Peoples.

Connect with Us!

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Human Rights Capacity-Building & Training Program



"This training was like planting a seed which can grow into something strong and good for our community".

Yaqui Indian elder following an IITC human rights training, 2009

Program Overview

Historic advances in the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights have taken place in recent years. With the US announcement of support on December 16, 2010, no countries remain in opposition to the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Full and unqualified implementation with the informed and active engagement of Indigenous Peoples, Nations, Tribal leaders and community members is the current focus.

IITC's Human Rights Training and Capacity-Building Program increases Indigenous Peoples' knowledge about their human rights affirmed by the UN Declaration and other international standards. Trainings encourage the informed and direct participation of Indigenous Peoples in international bodies and discussions which impact their rights and survival, and build their capacity to use international human rights processes to address critical situations and struggles. IITC's trainings are conducted by experienced Indigenous trainers, drawing upon IITC's 38 years of hands on experience and expertise working in the international arena to defend Indigenous Peoples' rights, ways of life and survival.

IITC's human rights trainings incorporate multi-media presentations, small group and plenary formats and issue-based discussions to address the specific concerns and interests of hosting Nations, Tribes and communities. They are offered in both English and Spanish, and can range in length from basic introductory presentations of 1 -2 hours to in-depth trainings over 1 - 2 days. Follow-up sessions, mentorship at international bodies and legal/technical assistance for developing submissions to UN and Organization of American States (OAS) human rights bodies are provided upon request.

Trainings are also offered to non-Indigenous organizations, educational institutions and agencies interested in learning about the human rights concerns of Indigenous Peoples and building cross-cultural human rights campaigns.

Training Topics include:

- ◆ Using, implementing and applying the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the International convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and other international human rights standards;
- ◆ An overview of the UN Human Rights system, and opportunities for participation by Indigenous Peoples including tribal leaders, women and youth;
- ◆ History of Indigenous Peoples' international work and achievements;
- ◆ Utilizing UN complaint procedures, such as UN Special Rapporteurs and Treaty Monitoring Bodies to address human rights violations and pressure countries to change their actions and policies;
- ◆ Developing a human rights-based approach to support community/tribal justice campaigns and hold countries accountable for human right obligations;
- ◆ Advancing international recognition and implementation of Treaties and Agreements between Indigenous Peoples and States;
- ◆ Using the OAS Human Rights system and developing a strong American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to defend Indigenous Peoples' human rights;
- ◆ Using a human rights framework to strengthen work addressing environmental justice, protection of sacred sites, traditional knowledge and cultural practices, food sovereignty, community and reproductive health, climate change, extractive industries and environmental toxins.



IITC, other trainers and participants at UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and protection of Sacred Sites training, Gila River Indian Community Arizona, 2009. Photo: Gila River Indian News.