

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous life, dignity, and autonomy remain at risk: we demand greater State commitment, respect, and protection.

On the **International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples**, the **International Network for Human Rights – Europe (RIDHE)** reaffirms the urgent need to shed light on the multiple threats that Indigenous communities across Latin America and the Caribbean continue to face. The expansion of extractive activities, agricultural frontiers, and the invasion of their territories perpetuate the systematic violation of their **ancestral rights**, damaging ecosystems on which we all depend and undermining life, culture, and the environment.

This takes place in a context of escalating violence against **Indigenous leaders, defenders**, and communities, compounded by widespread **impunity** that hinders the defense of their rights and their political participation. This situation erodes **Indigenous autonomy** and **governance**—essential pillars for **self-determination** and the preservation of their ways of life.

The **structural exclusion** faced by **Indigenous Peoples** manifests in numerous barriers to accessing **culturally appropriate basic services** and to fully participating in decisions that affect their lives. At **RIDHE**, having worked alongside these communities for years, we have witnessed first-hand the urgent need for **States** to implement **inclusive policies** that recognize **traditional knowledge** and ensure the **comprehensive protection** and **full respect** of their **collective rights**.

Funding directed to **Indigenous Peoples** remains insufficient, reflecting the lack of effective recognition of their role in **environmental** and **cultural defense**. Despite their crucial contributions to **conservation** and **climate change mitigation**, only **7%** of **international climate funds** are channeled directly to **Indigenous organizations**—limiting their autonomy to design and implement projects based on **ancestral knowledge**. This **financial exclusion** perpetuates **structural inequality** and contradicts **international commitments** to guarantee the rights to **participation** and **self-determination** of **Indigenous Peoples**.

At the same time, worrying setbacks are evident in **institutional spaces** and **protection mechanisms** supporting **Indigenous rights** at the **regional** and **global** levels. The reduction of the presence and activities of **organizations** creates a critical gap in **human rights monitoring** and **defense**, exposing **Indigenous communities** to greater risks of **violations** and weakening **State accountability**. This erosion of

institutional spaces undermines the right to **effective protection** and to a **safe environment** for the full exercise of **collective rights**.

RIDHE raises particular alarm regarding the **humanitarian crisis** faced by **Indigenous children**, which reflects deep **structural gaps** of **discrimination** and **historical exclusion**. Nearly **43%** of **Indigenous children** in the region live in conditions of **multidimensional poverty**, severely limiting their access to **quality education**, **adequate healthcare**, and **safe, violence-free environments**. This situation is compounded by high rates of **adolescent pregnancy** and **abuse**, which violate the **fundamental rights** of **Indigenous girls, boys, and adolescents**, perpetuating cycles of **inequality** and jeopardizing their **integral development** and **dignified future**.

RIDHE therefore reminds the **States of Latin America and the Caribbean** of their duty to guarantee **direct** and **sufficient funding** to **Indigenous organizations** to strengthen **territorial defense** and **climate action**. It is also urgent to restore and expand the presence of **international mechanisms** from the **United Nations** and the **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights** to effectively protect **Indigenous rights** and ensure access to **justice**. Priority must also be given to addressing the needs of **Indigenous children**, tackling **poverty**, **gender-based violence**, and **educational inequalities** through **intercultural** and **gender-responsive policies**.

We further call for the recognition and **comprehensive protection** of **displaced** and **migrant Indigenous communities**, particularly **women** and **girls**, ensuring their access to **services**, **protection**, and **participation** in **reception processes** with a **human rights-based approach**.

The **International Network for Human Rights – Europe (RIDHE)** firmly upholds the **dignity** of **Indigenous Peoples**, valuing both the **voice** and **leadership** of their **youth** and the **profound ancestral knowledge** of their **elders**. We particularly highlight the importance of ensuring **fair** and **respectful labor conditions** for **Indigenous women** in situations of **human mobility** and **forced displacement**, who face **unique challenges** and **vulnerabilities**.

RIDHE promotes access to **education**, the protection of **collective rights**, and the strengthening of **Indigenous autonomy**, convinced that only through **respect** and the **full participation** of these **peoples** is it possible to advance toward more **just**, **inclusive**, and **equitable societies**.