



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INDIGENOUS VOICES

PRESS RELEASE

## Treaties with Indigenous Peoples in Focus on International Day

*UN event and historic Hudson River canoe trip*

UNITED NATIONS, 6 August 2013 – This year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (9 August) aims to highlight the importance of honouring agreements between States, their citizens and indigenous peoples, emphasizing the principles of friendship, cooperation and peace.

“Indigenous peoples represent remarkable diversity – over 5,000 distinct groups comprising more than 5 per cent of the world's population,” said Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. “We must work to strengthen partnerships and ensure that policies and actions respect the views and reflect the values of indigenous peoples.”

Under the theme of “Indigenous peoples building alliances: honouring treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements”, a special event at United Nations Headquarters in New York will feature remarks by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Assistant Secretary-General Shamshad Akhtar, and Mr. Paul Kanyinke Sena, Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, followed by an interactive dialogue with Ambassador Mary Morgan Moss, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations, Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, and Chief Oren Lyons from the Onondaga Nation.


Also on 9 August, more than 200 indigenous and non-indigenous paddlers are scheduled to arrive at Pier 96 at West 57th Street in Manhattan at 10:00 a.m., after having collectively travelled hundreds of miles on rivers and horseback to honour the first treaty – the Two Row Wampum – concluded between Dutch immigrants and the Haudenosaunee (a confederacy of six nations, with its seat in the Onondaga nation in New York State) in 1613.

“Our ancestors made this great agreement on our behalf 400 years ago,” noted Hickory Edwards, the lead paddler for the Onondaga Nation. “Now is the time for us to think about the people living in the next 400 years.”

“The Two Row is the oldest and is the grandfather of all subsequent treaties,” said Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper of the Onondaga Nation's Turtle Clan who has represented the Haudenosaunee at the United Nations and elsewhere. “It set a relationship of equity and peace. This campaign is to remind people of the importance of the agreements.”



United Nations



There are an estimated 370 million indigenous people in some 90 countries around the world. Practicing unique traditions, they retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, recognizes indigenous peoples' right to self-determination and their right to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and develop past, present and future manifestations of their culture in various forms.

### **About the International Day**

The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is commemorated annually on 9 August, in recognition of the first meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations, held in Geneva in 1982. The International Day was first proclaimed by the General Assembly in December 1994.

**Journalists without UN press accreditation who wish to attend the UN event**, please visit [www.un.org/en/media/accreditation](http://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation) or call +1 212-963-6934 or 212-963-6937

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**For more information** on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, please see [www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday](http://www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday) or follow [#IndigenousDay](https://twitter.com/IndigenousDay) on Twitter.

## **PROGRAMME:**

### **Friday, 9 August**

**10:00 am** Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign canoe paddlers land at Pier 96 on West 57<sup>th</sup> Street -- they are welcomed by the Dutch Consul General, Mr. Rob de Vos. The Chief of the Onondaga Nation, Tadodaho Sid Hill, will speak.

**11:30 am** Paddlers start walk across Manhattan to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza (1st Avenue at 47th Street).

**1:30 pm** Paddlers arrive at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, 1st Avenue at 47th Street, and are greeted by the Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Mr. Paul Kanyinke Sena.

**3:00 – 6:00 pm** Special event in commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples at UN Headquarters, Conference Room 2 (a Two Row campaign delegation will be in attendance). The event will be webcast live at [webtv.un.org](http://webtv.un.org).

### **Saturday, 10 August**

12:00 – 5:00 pm Two Row Wampum Festival at 220 Vesey Street

