



IMCS-MIEC Pax Romana

International Movement of Catholic Students
Mouvement International des Étudiants Catholiques
Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos

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A Call to Protect the Rights and Heritage of Indigenous Peoples

August 9, 2024

On this significant International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, August 9, 2024, we at the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS-MIEC) Pax Romana stand in heartfelt solidarity with Indigenous Peoples across the globe. We honour the incredible richness of cultures, languages, and traditions that Indigenous Peoples bring and recognise their invaluable contributions to the global community.

This year's theme, **"Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact,"** underscores a critical issue: how to support best and safeguard Indigenous Peoples' rights. Indigenous Peoples, often residing in remote and ecologically vital regions, preserve unique cultures and protect environments essential to Mother Earth's well-being.

In our increasingly interconnected world, the pressures facing Indigenous Peoples are mounting at an alarming rate. From deforestation and resource extraction to unwanted contact, these threats endanger their way of life and existence. The urgency of this situation demands our collective responsibility to act swiftly and ensure their right to live according to their traditions and values is respected.

Pope Francis wisely warned us, *"Globalisation cannot mean a uniformity that ignores diversity and imposes a new type of colonialism."* His words remind us to be mindful of how our actions, even those meant to bring progress, can inadvertently harm the most vulnerable. We must strive to ensure that economic development and technological advancements do not come at the expense of the rights and dignity of Indigenous Peoples, as these advancements should not be achieved through the exploitation of the most vulnerable.

As we mark this day, we call on governments, international organisations, and all members of society to recognise their vital role in protecting Indigenous Peoples. It's not just a call for recognition but a call to action. We urge you to take meaningful steps to protect the lands, rights, and cultures of Indigenous Peoples. Their voices mustn't be only heard but prioritised in any decisions that impact their lives. Their self-determination must be respected as a fundamental justice and human rights principle.

By standing with Indigenous Peoples, we are not only supporting their fight for justice but also contributing to the preservation of our environment and the rich diversity of our global heritage. Let this day remind us of the significant and positive impact we can make when we act with empathy, respect, and a steadfast commitment to justice for all. Our commitment to justice is unwavering, and your support is crucial in this journey.

In solidarity,

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