



RESOURCE

Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention

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Description / Abstract

The ILO Convention No. 169 is the only international treaty open for ratification that deals exclusively with the rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.

Adopted by the International Labour Conference (ILC) at its 76th Session in 1989, in cooperation with the UN-system, it represents a consensus reached by ILO tripartite constituents. Indigenous and tribal peoples are among the vulnerable groups of concern to the ILO as it pursues its mission to promote social justice, internationally recognized human and labour rights and Decent Work. Convention No. 169 concerns the situation of more than 5,000 indigenous and tribal peoples, constituting a population of more than 370 million, living in more than 70 countries in all regions of the world. These peoples possess diverse languages, cultures, livelihood practices and knowledge systems. However, in most countries, they face discrimination and exploitative labour conditions, which are interconnected with their generalized marginalization and poverty situation. The ILO's concern for indigenous peoples dates back to the 1920s and originated in the quest to overcome the discriminatory working conditions they live under. In recognition of the complexities and specificities of indigenous peoples' situations, Convention No. 169 takes a holistic approach covering a wide range of issues that affect the lives and wellbeing of these peoples. Convention No. 169 has become a global reference point with impact on governance and development policies that spans far beyond the countries that have ratified it. Further, it is an instrument for governments to foster a favourable environment for the creation of sustainable enterprises.

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1989

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