

**STATEMENT BY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
TO THE UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Indigenous Peoples from all regions of the world met at the “***Indigenous Peoples International Conference on Sustainable Development and Self Determination,***” from June 17th – 19th 2012 at the Museu da República in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

From the conference emerged many answers to address the global crises, as varied as the many cultures present at the meeting. But we were of one mind about the importance of diverse local economies and traditional livelihoods for community solidarity, well-being and ecosystem management.

Indigenous Peoples abiding survival is supported by our cultures, our ways of being and living with nature, our values, moral and ethical choices and our actions. In the spirit of humanity and our collective survival, dignity and well-being, we respectfully offer our cultural world views as an important foundation to collectively renew our relationships with each other and Mother Earth. Indigenous Peoples call upon the world to return to dialogue and harmony with Mother Earth, and to adopt a new paradigm of civilization based on “*Buen Vivir* or Living Well.”

We believe that all societies must foster cultures of sustainability, and that this UN Conference on Sustainable Development should highlight culture as a fundamental dimension of sustainable development.

We see that the Earth and all life is in a serious state of peril. We see the current model of development continues to proceed on the road of peril, particularly with respect to the continued expansion of extractive industries. As indigenous peoples we have experienced the terrible and negative impacts of this approach, which must be reversed. Governments must strengthen the accountability of the business sector and legal recognition of the rights of affected communities to have a say on decisions affecting our lands.

The Rio + 20 Political Declaration recognizes the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the context of global, regional, national, and sub-national implementation of sustainable development strategies. We commend governments for this inclusion, which is a foundation for our common efforts to realise the Rio + 20 outcomes.

Indigenous Peoples thank you for your attention.