



**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON
THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz

**Visit to Denmark and Greenland
10-19 March 2020**



The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, will visit Denmark and Greenland from 10-19 March 2020.

The Special Rapporteur is an independent expert appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2014. She has a global mandate to promote the respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights for indigenous peoples worldwide.

Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council

Special Rapporteurs are independent experts appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council to examine and report on a country situation or a specific human rights issue. They serve in their personal capacity and are independent from any government. The Special Rapporteurs are part of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council and more information on those procedures is available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx>

Background on the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples

Indigenous peoples across the world experience the consequences of historical colonization and invasion of their territories, and face discrimination because of their distinct cultures, identities and ways of life. In recent decades, the international community has given special attention to the human rights situations of indigenous peoples, as shown by the adoption of international standards and guidelines, as well as by the establishment of institutions and bodies that specifically address these peoples' concerns. The Special Rapporteur is mandated to promote the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and international instruments relevant to the advancement of the rights of indigenous peoples,

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples was created in 2001 as part of the UN human rights mechanisms of Special Procedures. The mandate, most recently renewed in 2019 by Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/RES/42/20, sets out that the Special Rapporteur should:

- Promote good practices, including new laws, government programs, and constructive agreements between indigenous peoples and states, to implement international standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples.
- Report on the overall human rights situations of indigenous peoples in selected countries, and on her activities to the Human Rights Council.
- Address specific cases of alleged violations of the rights of indigenous peoples through communications with Governments and others.
- Conduct thematic studies on topics of special importance regarding the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples.

The Special Rapporteur is mandated to undertake two official country visits per year at the invitation of governments. The current Special Rapporteur has undertaken visits to: Paraguay, Sapmi, Honduras, Brazil, Australia, the United States of America, Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Timor-Leste and the Republic of the Congo.

Brief biography of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz is an indigenous leader from the Kankana-ey Igorot people of the Cordillera Region in the Philippines. As an indigenous activist, she has worked for over three decades on building movement among indigenous peoples and as an advocate for women's rights. She has been serving as the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples since 2014.

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz is the former Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2005-2010) has served as the chairperson-rapporteur of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations. As an indigenous leader, she was actively engaged in the drafting and adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. She has founded and managed various NGOs involved in social awareness raising, climate change and the advancement of indigenous peoples' and women's rights. In her capacity as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz has provided expert testimony before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and policy advice to *inter alia* the World Bank and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

Among the thematic priorities of the current mandate-holder, where reports have been presented to the Human Rights Council and the General-Assembly, are the following topics:

- The right of indigenous peoples' to autonomy or self-government
- Conservation measures and their impact on indigenous peoples' rights
- Impacts of climate change and climate finance on indigenous peoples' rights
- Attacks and criminalisation of indigenous human rights defender
- Access to justice in ordinary and indigenous justice system
- Rights of indigenous women and girls

For further information about the Special Rapporteur's mandate and activities, please consult the OHCHR webpage at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/SRIndigenousPeoples/Pages/SRIPeoplesIndex.aspx>

General objectives of special procedures' country visits

Special procedures country visits are an essential means to obtain direct and first-hand information, and to assess positive developments as well as challenges and gaps in the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples. They allow for assessment of the human rights situation and facilitate an intensive dialogue with all relevant State authorities, both at national and local levels of government.

Country visits are based on engagement with, and information gathering from, indigenous representatives and organisations, individuals and communities affected by policy decisions, independent national human rights institutions, members of civil society, academia, international cooperation and international non-governmental organisations as well as UN agencies and entities. During country visits the Special Rapporteur conducts community visits.

A key objective of country visits is to promote and advance the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, notably in terms of practical implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, through constructive and concrete recommendations to various stakeholders.

All official visits are conducted in line with Human Rights Council resolution 5/2 on the Code of Conduct for Special Procedures Mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council, and with the Terms of Reference for country visits. See annex below.

Thematic priorities for the Special Rapporteur's visit to Denmark and Greenland

For the visit, based on background research and submissions in response to her public call for input, the Special Rapporteur is particularly interested in receiving information, including on relevant policy measures and legal framework, regarding *inter alia* the following themes:

- **Self-governance**
- **Administration of justice**
- **Access to health services (including mental health)**
- **Education and indigenous languages**
- **The situation of children and youth**
- **Homelessness/ housing**
- **Sexual abuse and violence**
- **Persons with disabilities**
- **Climate change impacts and the environment, development, mining**
- **Security matters**

On the 19th of March, the Special Rapporteur will present her preliminary findings and recommendations at a press conference at the UN City in Copenhagen.

A draft of the full report on the visit will be shared with the Governments for comments and subsequently presented to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in September 2020.

During the visit, the Special Rapporteur will be accompanied by Ms. Christine Evans, Human Rights Officer supporting the mandate on the rights of indigenous peoples at OHCHR in Geneva, contact +41 22 917 91 97, cevans@ohchr.org
