

The United States of America

Positions for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

I. Assessing the Impact of Globalization on Indigenous Populations: Promoting National Sustainable Development without Violating Cultural Values

The United States of America (United States) recognizes that respect for indigenous knowledge, culture and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment. **Internationally**, the United States supports A/RES/61/295, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), which emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions, and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations. The United States has signed and has been party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), calling upon all signatory Member States to respect all of the civil and political rights of individuals, including the right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and the freedom of assembly. The United States also supports Agenda 21, which affirms that national and international efforts to implement environmentally sound and sustainable development should recognize, accommodate, promote and strengthen the role of indigenous people and their communities. **Regionally**, as a member of the Organization of American States (OAS), the United States assisted in drafting the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (ADRIP), a document based on the similar and related UNDRIP formulations. ADRIP calls upon all signatory Member States to respect indigenous ways of life, customs, traditions and forms of social, economic and political organization. The United States is a member of the Inter-American Investment Corporation and also a member of the Multilateral Investment Fund, divisions of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The IDB recognizes the unique role of indigenous peoples as stakeholders in the development of various regions, therefore aiming to create the conditions for indigenous peoples to thrive and grow in harmony with their surroundings by capitalizing on the potential of their cultural, natural, and social assets according to their own priorities. **Nationally**, the United States has a unique legal and political relationship with Indian tribes and Alaska Native entities as provided by legislation such as the Indian Civil Rights Act, which makes many of the guarantees of the United States Bill of Rights applicable to tribes. Recognizing that culturally sensitive sustainable development is a complex task that calls for a multi-faceted approach, the United States utilizes the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), within the United States Department of the Interior, to manage this intricate approach. The BIA offers an extensive scope of programs that covers the entire range of federal, state and local government services, including social services, administration of tribal courts, implementation of land and water claim settlements, the operation of a series of irrigation systems, electricity provisions to rural parts of indigenous lands, natural resource management on trust lands, which represent 55 million surface acres and 57 million acres of subsurface minerals estates, and economic development programs in some of the most isolated and economically depressed areas of the United States. The United States also exercises the Native American Renewable Energy Education Project (NAREEP), which responds to the desire of Native Americans for cost-effective, culturally appropriate, environmentally benign energy services for tribal community needs and economic development. In order to further carry out the promotion of sustainable development without violating cultural values, the United States has developed a three point program entitled **W.E.B.**: **W**ork to increase the provision of sustainable education and vocational training that is tailored to the individual community and tribe; **E**ncourage and help facilitate discussions among and between tribes, states, and indigenous stakeholders during and after the implementation of sustainable development programs; **B**uild partnerships with tribes to develop culturally appropriate sustainable development programs.

II. Achieving Sustainable Growth through the Promotion of Gender Equality

The United States of America (United States) recognizes that gender equality is a fundamental human right, a commonly shared value, and a necessary condition for the achievement of the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). **Internationally**, the United States strongly supports the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), producing an “international bill of rights for women,” as well as ensuring an end to sex-based discrimination against women on a worldwide scale. The United States supports A/RES/217A (III) mandating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which affirms that “everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security without distinction related to race, religion or

sex.” The United States emphasizes the value of Agenda 21 produced at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, highlighting the importance of gender equality in the quest for global sustainable growth and development. The United States notes with importance the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) and its determination to advance the goals of equality and development for all women in the interest of humanity by taking all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child, while removing all obstacles to gender equality, as well as the advancement and empowerment of women. The FWCW also promotes people-centered sustainable development through the provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training, and primary healthcare for girls and women. **Regionally**, as a member of the Organization of American States (OAS), the United States promotes the principles of the Legal Standards Related to Gender Equality in the Inter-American System report published by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), in order to stimulate the development and application of the case-law and legal standards on gender equality and the rights of women in the Americas. In 2005, the United States took part in the IV Summit of the Americas which called for the elimination of discrimination against women at work through the implementation of a range of policies that will increase women’s access to decent, dignified and productive work to ensure that men and women enjoy equality in the workplace. In 2012, the United States participated in the VI Summit of the Americas which aimed to strengthen the administration of public security and gender equality through promotion of citizen and community participation, institutional coordination, as well as training and education. **Nationally**, the government of the United States is constitutionally obligated to provide women in America with universal equality and participation on both a state and national level. The 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution (1920) allows women to vote and provides the legal status for women to seek equal rights and protection under the law. In 2009, President Barack Obama issued Executive Order 13506, which established the White House Council on Women and Girls to coordinate federal policy on issues, both domestic and international, that particularly impact the lives of women and girls, including providing assistance to women-owned businesses and working to increase the participation of women in the science, engineering, and technology workforce, and to ensure that federal programs and policies adequately take those impacts into account. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) released the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment policy in 2012, which undertakes to increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities and societies, as well as harness science, technology and innovation to reduce gender gaps and empower women and girls. In order to address this situation, the United States proposes **E.Q.U.A.L.:** **E**nsure that the international community addresses gender inequalities in education, assisting countries in developing gender-sensitive teaching and learning materials to promote the equal participation of women and men in society and at work; **Q**uicken the reduction of the gender gap by ensuring and supporting full participation of women at all levels of decision-making, and implementation in development activities and peace processes; **U**tilize women’s equal access to economic resources, including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further the advancement of women by means of international cooperation in the context of sustainable development necessary to sustain social development and justice; **A**dopt gender-smart policies needed to address the various constraints that disproportionately affect women’s access to economic opportunities, such as access to productive resources; **L**ift up women’s full and equal participation in building a better world for all and enhance their role in the development process.