
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 13, 2007. The Declaration was adopted by a substantial majority of nation states, with 143 voting in favor, 4 against (the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) and 11 countries abstaining.

The Declaration creates legal standards and obligations that countries must observe in their dealings with indigenous peoples. It includes the right of self-determination, treaty rights, rights to lands and resources, protections for sacred sites and Native languages, the as well as many more important rights.

Robert “Tim” Coulter, Executive Director of the Indian Law Resource Center and one of the original authors of the Declaration, spent 30 years working to get it adopted. For more information, go to www.indianlaw.org