



The Asian Indigenous Women's Network join all women in the world in today's celebration of the International Working Women's Day .

This year's celebration marks the 100th years of the global struggle for women's rights, justice, peace and gender equality. Today, as we hail the big and small achievements of the women's movement all over the world, let us, on this occasion, call to mind, the sacrifices of our grandmothers, mothers and sisters before us who paved the way for the rights and freedoms we enjoy today. We equally acknowledge the roles taken on by our grandfathers, fathers and brothers in support of the advancement of women.

For indigenous women, the struggle goes beyond hundred years. Ours started way back during the colonization period which has deeply scarred our lives and identities up to the present. For indigenous women, this means persistence and perseverance amidst fear, violence and injustice. This also means strengthening our ranks to confront the roots of disempowerment from all sides including patriarchy in tradition and culture.

The year 2010 also marks the 15th Anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, the 10th Anniversary of the Millennium Declaration and the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women in conflict situations. The slow progress on the realization of these commitments as seen in the persistent poverty and insecurity of women and gender violence requires greater accountability from all levels.

As we, at present, collectively address the disproportionate impacts of the ongoing global crisis in finance, food and security, environment and climate change to women, we call to mind and reiterate the global indigenous women's proposals and demands forwarded in the Beijing Declaration of Indigenous Women. These include the respect of our rights to life with dignity and free from threat and violence, self-determination and participation, our traditional knowledge and roles in sustainable development.

We call on states to fully and effectively implement their obligations to international conventions and commitments to standards towards the advancement of the status of women all over the world. Particularly, we call for the full and effective respect, promotion and protection of the basic rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous women as women and as indigenous peoples.

For indigenous women and their communities, this means the substantive application of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework in policy and practice from the local to the international levels of governance.

