



**United  
Nations**

**UNPFII  
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## **Addressee: Member States, IPs, UNESCO, UN entities**

**Paragraph #8 Session #14 (2015)**

### **Full Text**

The Permanent Forum welcomes the interest expressed at the interactive dialogue on the follow-up to the World Conference held by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on 22 April 2015, in which States and indigenous peoples stressed the importance of repatriating ceremonial objects and human remains. The Forum therefore recommends that States and indigenous peoples establish a working group to prepare a manual of good practice with regard to the repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains, with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other United Nations entities, and submit a progress report to the Forum at its fifteenth session.

### **Comments**

- An informal meeting under the leadership of the International Indian Treaty Council and other mostly North American indigenous peoples' organizations was organized in January 2016 at the United States of America Permanent Mission to the UN in New York. The meeting was attended by 2 members of the Permanent Forum, representatives from UNESCO as well as some ten Member States were also present.
- As a follow up to this meeting, the International Indian Treaty Council is organizing a Consultation on International Repatriation to be held on Friday 13 May during the 15th session of UNPFII. The ad-hoc group is expect to meet during

the 15th session.

- The PFII members have communicated with UNESCO experts in the UNESCO Section on Museums and Cultural Objects on the area. A meeting took place between the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and UNESCO on April 27. UNESCO have confirmed their willingness to participate in the further process, including by providing information about existing legal instruments under UNESCO, share case stories and attend the Consultation event during the PFII Session.
- In addition to the main recommendations, PFII members have supported concrete initiatives to address the issue of repatriating ceremonial objects and human remains, for instance through establishing dialogue between the International Indian Treaty Council and the National Museums of World Culture in Sweden to resolve a decade-long dispute about the return of a ceremonial deer head ("maaso kova") of indigenous Yaqui people.
- The suggested manual of good practice is undergoing further discussion.

## **Area of Work**

Culture