



Permanent Mission of Finland
to the United Nations



México
Misión Permanente de México
ante la Organización de las
Naciones Unidas



Misión Permanente de Colombia
ante la ONU en Nueva York



**Indigenous People
with Disabilities**
Global Network



Ministerio de
**Relaciones
Exteriores**
Misión Permanente de Guatemala
ante la Organización de las Naciones
Unidas (ONU), Nueva York



PERMANENT MISSION OF
CANADA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



MISSION PERMANENTE DU
CANADA
AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES



Concept Note

Side Event at the 18th Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (COSP18)

Title: “Our knowledge, our power: Advancing the Rights and Leadership of Indigenous

Location: Conference Room 6, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Date and Time: Tuesday June 10th, 4:45pm– 6:00pm

Organizers:

- Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the UN
- Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN
- Permanent Mission of Mexico to the UN
- Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN
- Permanent Mission of Colombia to the UN
- International Disability Alliance
- Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network (IPWDGN)
- Minority Rights Group

Background & Rationale:

Indigenous persons with disabilities exist at the intersection of multiple and compounding forms of discrimination—including colonial legacies, systemic exclusion, ableism, and environmental injustice. Despite their enduring leadership and resilience, their voices continue to be marginalized within both Indigenous and disability rights movements.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) oblige States to guarantee the rights of Indigenous persons with disabilities without discrimination. At the Global Disability Summit 2025, Indigenous leaders issued a unified [Call to Action](#), reaffirming their right to self-determination, autonomy, and meaningful inclusion in all decisions that affect their lives, lands, and bodies.

The Call to Action also underscores that urgent action is needed to address historical and ongoing violence, including institutionalization. As emphasized by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, deinstitutionalization must be accelerated. This includes planning, implementing and monitoring the closure of institutions and the development of inclusive community support systems.

Furthermore, the Call to Action reiterates that the rights affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) are the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of Indigenous Peoples, as elaborated in Article 43 of the Declaration. For Indigenous persons with disabilities, whose voices have often been excluded, these rights must be realized in full.

This side event at COSP18 aims to ensure that Indigenous persons with disabilities are not only recognized but actively engaged in shaping global disability policy. It offers an opportunity to spotlight their priorities, amplify their solutions, and call for actionable commitments grounded in respect, reciprocity, and justice.

Objectives:

- Disseminate the Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Call to Action, issued during the 2025 Global Disability Summit, and promote its adoption as a guiding framework for States, UN agencies, and civil society actors.
- Review existing commitments and gaps in the implementation of disability and Indigenous rights frameworks, particularly CRPD and UNDRIP, as they relate to Indigenous persons with disabilities.
- Promote self-determined development, including the direct resourcing and participation of Indigenous-led organizations of persons with disabilities in international cooperation, development, and humanitarian action.
- Advance culturally grounded and accessible education, health, and climate action, recognizing the importance of Indigenous languages, knowledge systems, and healing traditions in achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of the unique experiences, rights, and leadership of Indigenous persons with disabilities
- Concrete recommendations for integrating Indigenous voices into CRPD implementation, SDG monitoring, GDS commitments monitoring and development cooperation
- Strengthened partnerships between Indigenous-led organizations of persons with disabilities, governments, and international agencies
- Public reaffirmation of the need to uphold Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and self-determined development in all actions affecting Indigenous persons with disabilities

Accessibility:

- International Sign, CART, and Spanish language interpretation

Speakers:**Moderator**

- Rosario Galarza, Senior Officer, Intersectionalities and Cross Movement Collaboration, International Disability Alliance

Introductory Remarks

- Katja Pehrman, Ambassador for Human Rights, Finland

Panel

- Jorge Armando Tzunún González, Vocal of the Board of the National Council for the Care of Persons with Disabilities of Guatemala (CONADI)
- Juliana Bustamante, Director of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Colombia
- Christine Kandie, Executive Director, Endorois Indigenous Women Empowerment Network (EIWEN)
- Olga Montufar, President, Network of Indigenous and Afro-descendant Women with Disabilities of Latin America and the Caribbean
- Setareki Macanawai, President, Fiji Disabled People's Federation

Closing Remarks

- Alicia Buenrostro Massieu, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations