

Bonn: Indigenous peoples' knowledge and wisdom valuable to climate adaptation, Peruvian activists say

7 November 2017 – Peruvian indigenous activists at the United Nations Climate Conference ([COP23](#)) in Bonn, Germany, made a strong call Tuesday for indigenous peoples to be part of the solution to tackling climate change, emphasizing their traditional wisdom and practical knowledge about adaptation methods.

“We don't want to speak only about climate change but about climate catastrophe [...] What can we do? There are alternatives, especially from the indigenous peoples, especially from the wisdom of indigenous women,” said Roberto Espinoza, Advisor for the Interethnic Association for the development of the Peruvian Rainforest (Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana – AIDESEP), at a press conference.

Rosalía Yampis, Director of the Women's Program in AIDESEP, also highlighted the “very important role” indigenous women can have in climate adaptation.

“Women have this ancestral knowledge about seeds and what we have to sow,” she told the press conference. She added that indigenous peoples are providing input to Peru's national contribution to the [Paris Agreement](#) in protecting the watershed.

There are about 13 million indigenous peoples in Peru. As a national indigenous rights organization, AIDESEP works to improve the health, education and housing of these peoples. It is a member organization of the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (COICA).

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Roberto Espinoza

According to AIDESEP, “it is amply demonstrated that indigenous territories are fundamental for the conservation of forests.” In them, generally, “deforestation is minimal, even less than in some protected natural areas. Therefore, today, one of the main strategies to counteract the loss and degradation of forests in the Peruvian Amazon is to ensure the safety and sustainable management of these territories,” explains the organization on its website.

“There are alternatives with the wisdom and knowledge of our peoples. We, as indigenous peoples, are working on these alternatives,” said Janio Sangama, from the region of San Martín, which is mostly located in the upper part of the Peruvian Amazon rainforest. “When we speak about sustainable development, we are looking after the management of our resources in a more orderly way.

We worry about deforestation,” he added. “In San Martin, we had a big flood. We have a proposal called ‘hand in hand with Government’ to confront these natural catastrophes.”

He said that the indigenous peoples have begun sustainable production or orderly production with technologies from communities. “We have been managing alternative crops in our territories. We are not destroying our forest,” he underscored.

Roberto Espinoza said that “water is being reduced because of deforestation. So we are sowing water – even if it sounds bizarre – with some special plants indigenous people know that can enhance the water cycle underground,” he added.

Regarding reforestation, Jammek Manikusi, a member of AIDSESP, said indigenous people are concerned about the use of exotic plants, like pine and eucalyptus. “These plants have impacts on the soil. We want a natural reforestation with natural wisdom of the peoples, with more proper methodologies, more adapted to natural regeneration of soils in the Amazon.”

[Building safe houses, UN agency helping Dominica recover from disaster](#)

7 November 2017 – Seven weeks since hurricane Maria made landfall in Dominica and left widespread destruction in its wake, the United Nations migration agency has been supporting local tradespeople with safe construction skills to repair the damage and create conditions for a full recovery.

One of the first beneficiaries to have her house repaired by local construction workers trained by the UN International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) is 31-year-old Tessa Williams, a mother of three, whose eldest child is in a wheelchair and youngest still an infant.

“With this house, we have ensured that Tessa and her children have a safe home,” [said](#) Jan-Willem Wegdam, IOM’s team leader in Dominica.

“The community sees there is actually something happening and we have completed the training of our carpenters on safe construction skills,” he added.

Tessa was chosen by her own community to be one of the first recipients of the IOM support.

[According](#) to the UN agency, 20 teams of trained local workforce are repairing the roofs of some 400 vulnerable households which were moderately to heavily damaged in the storm. They are deployed in Wesley, Calibishi and Woodford

Hill, three of the hardest-hit communities on the Caribbean island.

Furthermore, with funding from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund and the Government of the United Kingdom, IOM procured building materials in the Dominican Republic in record time and brought it to Dominica with the help of the Dutch Navy.

It's not only about having a roof over their heads but about creating the conditions for a full recovery after a huge disaster

Rebuilding houses is also helping address some of the tensions in the community resulting from prolonged stay in makeshift dwellings or living in close coexistence with relatives or friends.

The work is also having another impact: it is keeping many people from migrating to neighbouring countries in search of better opportunities after losing their homes and means of livelihood in the aftermath of the hurricane.

Housing projects are a great way to keep locals from leaving the island, but we need stronger funding to create as many employment opportunities as possible and to rebuild the lost dwellings," said Mr. Wegdam, adding, "It's not only about having a roof over their heads but about creating the conditions for a full recovery after a huge disaster."

Dominica was hit on 18 September by the Category Five Hurricane Maria that devastated the island with winds of nearly 250 km per hour. It has been estimated that 23 per cent of buildings were destroyed, 39 per cent of the houses sustained severe damage, and further 28 per cent were affected to some degree.

However, sustained support is needed in the island as almost 2,000 persons – including the elderly, single-female heads of households and persons with chronic diseases – are still living in shelters due to destruction or severe damage to their homes.

[Security Council recognizes contributions of police components to UN peacekeeping](#)

6 November 2017 – The Security Council on Monday adopted a resolution stressing the important contribution that United Nations policing can provide in peacekeeping and special political missions throughout the conflict cycle.

In the unanimously approved text, the 15-member body, while stressing the primacy of political solutions to conflict, resolved to include, on a case by case basis, policing as an integral part of the mandates and decision-making structures of UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

In doing so, the Council took into account the need for consistent integration of police expertise within the planning of such missions, and to give dear, credible, achievable, appropriately resourced mandates for policing-related activities.

While recognizing the role of UN policing in UN efforts to prevent conflicts, the Council called on the Secretary-General to make sure that planning of UN peacekeeping and special political missions with police mandates are based on a thorough analysis of the context, capacities and needs of host-States.

Further, the Council recognized the important role that UN police components can play in the protection of civilians, including in preventing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence and violations and abuses against children in the conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Secretary-General is requested to submit a report by the end of 2018, including on the implications for the delivery of policing mandates of changes to the Secretariat's peace and security architecture, as well as efforts to strengthen and improve UN policing coherence, capability, accountability and police generation.

Briefing the Council were Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Issoufou Yacouba, Police Commissioner of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali ([MINUSMA](#)), Georges-Pierre Monchotte, Police Commissioner of United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti ([MINUJUSTH](#)), and Priscilla Makotose, Police Commissioner of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur ([UNAMID](#)).

VIDEO: United Nation's new Police Adviser, Luis Carrilho, speaks about expectations for the UN Police Week 2017. The annual event, running from 6 – 10 November 2017, brings together heads of police components in UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions around the world.

[UN Security Council calls on Myanmar to end excessive military force in](#)

Rakhine state

6 November 2017 – Strongly condemning the widespread violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state, which has led to the displacement of over 600,000 members of the country's minority Muslim Rohingya community, the United Nations Security Council on Monday called on the Government to end the use of excessive military force and intercommunal violence in the region.

In a [statement](#) read out by Sebastiano Cardi of Italy, the President of the Security Council for the month of November, the 15-member body also called on the Government "to restore civilian administration and apply the rule of law, and to take immediate steps in accordance with [the Government's] obligations and commitments to respect human rights, including the rights of women, children, and persons belonging to vulnerable groups, without discrimination and regardless of ethnicity, religion, or citizenship status."

The Council also urged the Government to implement measures in line with its [resolution 2106 \(2013\)](#) to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual violence, and encouraged it to work with the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The Council also expressed concern over severely limited humanitarian access to the affected parts of the region and demanded that the Government ensure immediate, safe and unhindered access to UN and other humanitarian actors, and ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

In the Presidential Statement, the Security Council also welcomed the Myanmar's decision to establish a "Union Enterprise Mechanism" and urged the Government to ensure that the Mechanism supported such return and allowed United Nations agencies full access.

Further, welcoming the Government's support for recommendations by the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and calling for their full implementation, the Council stressed the importance of transparent investigations into allegations of human rights abuses and violations, including sexual violence and abuse and violence against children, and of holding to account all those responsible for such acts.

"In this regard, the Security Council calls upon the Government of Myanmar to cooperate with all relevant United Nations bodies, mechanisms and instruments, in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights," added the Presidential Statement.

Also in the Statement, the Council commended the provision of humanitarian assistance and support for dialogue by Bangladesh as well as other regional countries and organizations; and requested the Secretary-General to continue to engage with the Myanmar through good offices.

It also encouraged the UN chief "to consider, as appropriate, appointing a Special Adviser on Myanmar."

UN chief extends condolences to bereaved families in wake of 'horrific' shooting in Texas church

6 November 2017 – Deeply saddened to learn of the horrific shooting in a Baptist church in the small town of Sutherland Springs, Texas, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres on Monday extended his condolences to the bereaved families and to the Government and people of the United States.

According to a [statement](#) from a UN spokesperson, Mr. Guterres also hoped for a speedy recovery of those wounded in the shooting.

Media reports suggest that Sunday morning, 05 November, a gunman carrying an assault rifle opened fire inside a church in a small church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, killing 26 people and wounding some 20 others.