

[Rights experts call for greater protection of indigenous people during migration](#)

Governments are being urged to ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples are recognized, whether they are living on their traditional lands or forced to move elsewhere.

The [appeal](#) has been made by a group of independent experts, appointed by the UN Human Rights Council, who are calling on States to act now to protect these communities during migration.

Globally, there are approximately 370 million indigenous people, meaning those who are descendants of the original inhabitants of a geographical region or country, according to UN estimates.

“In many parts of the world, indigenous peoples have become migrants because they are fleeing economic deprivation, forced displacement, environmental disasters including climate change impacts, social and political unrest, and militarization,” the experts said in a press release issued on Tuesday.

“While States have the sovereign prerogative to manage their borders, they must also recognize international human rights standards and ensure that migrants are not subjected to violence, discrimination, or other treatment that would violate their rights”, they said.

“In addition, states must recognize indigenous peoples’ rights to self-determination; lands, territories and resources; to a nationality, as well as rights of family, education, health, culture and language.”

The statement was released ahead of the [International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples](#), observed annually on 9 August, with this year’s theme highlighting migration and movement.

The human rights experts said there is a “dearth” of data on indigenous people who are migrants and this “invisibility” means that those who are detained at international borders, or prosecuted or deported from a country, are often denied due process.

The members of the UN [Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), called on national authorities to immediately reunite children, parents and caregivers who may have been separated during border detentions or deportations.

“In addition, States must ensure that indigenous peoples migrating from their territories, including from rural to urban areas within their countries, are guaranteed rights to their identity and adequate living standards, as well as necessary and culturally appropriate social services,” they added.