



The International Symposium
The Right to Catch Salmon in the Rivers as Indigenous Right
2023 Raporo Declaration

On the 26th~28th May, 2023, in Urahoro Town, Hokkaido, Japan, as a result of a call to action from the Raporo Ainu Nation, we held the international symposium on Indigenous rights, *The Right to Catch Salmon in the Rivers as Indigenous Right- A Gathering of Indigenous People who Live from the Sea (i), the Forest (o) and the Rivers (ru)* (hereafter “International Symposium”)

Against the background of the Raporo Ainu Nation’s struggles against the government of Japan, which continues to completely deny their Indigenous rights to land and resources, initially, the International Symposium was planned with the intention of learning from progressive Indigenous peoples of the world about the state of their Indigenous rights recovery and the progress of their struggles.

However, during the International Symposium, as Indigenous participants from throughout the world reported that they are engaged in an ongoing struggle against national and provincial governments to protect their inherent rights, it became clear that the various problems being experienced by the Raporo Ainu Nation are common ones shared by the world’s Indigenous peoples.

As a result, the participants of the International Symposium felt it necessary to issue a statement that calls attention to the on-going struggles of Indigenous people to regain the rights eroded by colonization, and have

crafted this Declaration:

We, the Indigenous peoples of the world, recognizing the importance of cooperation and solidarity in the struggle against the shared problem of the recovery of Indigenous peoples' rights, hereby jointly issue the following Declaration.

1 Rights based on traditions and customs

We Indigenous peoples possess the collective rights to the lands and resources that we have used traditionally and customarily in each region since long before colonial states were established.

2 Explicit stipulation of Indigenous rights in Constitutions and other laws

Indigenous rights to land and resources are not rights which have been created by Constitutions or laws of colonial governments, but are rather inherent rights of each Indigenous group founded in tradition and custom.

We demand that each country confirm these inherent rights of Indigenous peoples by stipulation in their Constitution, and that they provide for the specific content in law.

3 Implementation of the law respectful of Indigenous rights

Justice systems including laws in each country must protect lives, cultures, and traditional ceremonies based on the ancient customs of Indigenous peoples,

When implementing the law, in order not to violate the inherent rights of any Indigenous group, law enforcement officers in each country must fully understand and respect the content of Indigenous rights.

Courts and law enforcement officers must never impose unjust punishments or other disadvantages for the exercise of Indigenous rights to land and resources.

4 The right to revitalize and develop

We Indigenous peoples possess the right to practice, maintain, protect, as well as revitalize and develop the traditions and customs of each of our Nations. No country can violate this right.

5 Natural resource management through the traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples

Each country, when using natural resources, must act in accordance with the traditional wisdom of Indigenous peoples, who possess profound knowledge about the biological diversity in their territories.

6 The participation of Indigenous peoples in natural resources regulatory procedures

Each country, when managing and regulating natural resources, must engage in prior consultation with, provide full information to, and obtain the free, prior, and informed consent of each concerned Indigenous group which possesses the inherent rights to these natural resources.

7 The recognition of the priority of Indigenous peoples' rights

Each country, when using natural resources, must ensure that commercial and recreational use by non-Indigenous persons does not deprive any Indigenous group of their rights to these resources.

8 Prohibition of deprivation of Indigenous rights on the grounds of resource protection

States may not deprive Indigenous groups of their inherent right to natural resources on the grounds of, or under the guise of, resource protection if alternative conservation measures are possible.

9 Exercise of sustainable Indigenous rights

We confirm that in utilizing traditional knowledge, we are the ones who are engaged in sustainable fisheries, and we take pride in our practice of sustaining our natural resources for the next generations.

Hereby, we confirm the above items as well as resolve to continue the struggle against the unfair invasion of our inherent rights, pledge to always share information, mutually contact one another, form a network of solidarity, and struggle in collaboration, as well as declare that we will further expand this struggle to the world.

Finally, we close by quoting the words of Danny Chapman, who espoused our common feelings during the Symposium.

The story of the indigenous peoples gathered at this international symposium will not end with this symposium. We need to continue our struggle. We need to stand in solidarity with each other. We need to tell our story to the world. What I want to say to you is that we must continue this struggle. I hope that we will continue to be connected.

Danny Chapman

November 30, 2023

Amos Lin : Amis Nation (Taiwan)

Maraos : Yami Nation (Taiwan)

Awi Mona : Seediq Nation (Taiwan)

Danny Chapman : Aboriginal Man (the Walbunja Clan)

: Chairperson of New South Wales Aboriginal Land
Council (NSWALC)

Kathryn Ridge : Lawyer for Aboriginal Peoples

Joe Watkins : Enrolled Member, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Nang Jingwas Russ Jones : Hereditary Chief, Haida Nation

Skuvllaalbmá Áslat Niillas Áslat, Aslak Holmberg

: Sámiráđi Presideanta, President of the Saami Council

Raporo Ainu Nation (Chairperson, Masaki Sashima)