Today, on the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, the European Union and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to indigenous peoples both in and outside the EU.

The 27 Member States of the EU all support the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, an important milestone for them and for everyone working to promote human rights. We work with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to support the participation of indigenous peoples at UN events and meetings; and we support the International Labour Organisation in its work for indigenous peoples, including that based on ILO Convention 169. The EU and its Member States also welcome the establishment of the UN Indigenous Peoples' Partnership, a unique innovation that brings together several UN agencies and contributes to the mainstreaming of the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in the UN system and activities. We encourage all stakeholders to support this important initiative.
The EU gives practical and financial support to indigenous peoples around the world. This support, in the context of promoting social cohesion, ranges from sustainable development programmes in Colombia, to community projects in Nepal, to livelihood programmes in the Philippines. As stated in the 2005 European Consensus on Development, "the key principle for safeguarding indigenous peoples rights in development cooperation is to ensure their full participation and the free and prior informed consent of the communities concerned".

Issues affecting indigenous peoples often cross state boundaries. We therefore promote international cooperation, for instance in EU cross-border projects between the Arctic indigenous peoples of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Iceland†, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia and Azerbaijan align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
† Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.