



EUROPEAN UNION



Brussels, 9 August 2010

12762/10

PRESSE 224

**Declaration by the High Representative Catherine Ashton on
behalf of the European Union on the International Day of the
World's Indigenous People**

Today, on the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, I want to send a message of support to indigenous peoples around the world on behalf of the European Union.

On this day, we celebrate indigenous peoples, and pay tribute to the enormous contribution their traditions and knowledge have made to the world's cultural heritage and to the sustainable development of our planet.

We are now in the middle of the second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005 - 2015). We therefore reflect on what has been done to protect the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and guarantee them equal treatment, and how much more remains to be done.

On the side of achievements, the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, which was supported by the European Union, stands above the rest. The Declaration would not have been achieved without the tireless advocacy of indigenous peoples' representatives. The Declaration advanced the rights and ensured the continued development of indigenous peoples around the world. Its message is a simple, but powerful one: equality for all.

The principles are therefore right; the challenge remains in putting them to practice. Regrettably, discrimination against and unequal treatment of indigenous peoples continues around the world.

P R E S S

The International Day provides an opportunity for European Union to renew its commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. On behalf of the European Union, I pledge to strive to put an end to discrimination and unequal treatment - not only in principle, but most importantly in practice.
