



THE EUROPEAN UNION



Brussels, 9 August 2012

13115/12

PRESSE 359

**Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on
behalf of the European Union on the occasion of the
International Day of the World's Indigenous People on 9
August 2012**

"Today we celebrate the International Day of the World's Indigenous People. On behalf of the European Union, I join them in celebrating their rich cultural heritage and contribution to the world.

The EU has supported from the very beginning the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration is an important instrument for promoting human rights, but its full implementation is key to the actual enjoyment of those rights. The EU has repeatedly called on all states to make this a reality.

The EU has a long track record of promoting the human rights of indigenous people in all aspects of our work, from contacts with indigenous representatives to political dialogues and making statements at the United Nations, to giving financial support to civil society projects. But we can always do more: this is why, in the new EU Human Rights Strategy, we have committed to taking a new look at our policy and further developing it in the context of the UN Declaration and in preparation for the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples."

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B - 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Newsroom>

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

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia 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.