



UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS
EXTERNAL SIDE EVENT

Women Human Right Defenders in the Context of Business and Human Rights:

Role of Indigenous Women and leaders in the defense of land and territory

November 25, 2025, 8:30-9:30 AM CET | Geneva Press Club

Indigenous women human rights defenders are at the forefront of resisting harmful business practices that threaten land, water, and community well-being. As guardians of ancestral territories and leaders in water management, food systems, and cultural life, they experience environmental impacts directly – and respond with powerful collective action. Their resistance has shaped legal reforms, halted destructive projects, and elevated the global understanding that defending Indigenous land is inseparable from defending human rights, gender equality, and climate justice.

Across regions such as Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Nepal, these women confront racism, patriarchy, and criminalization, yet continue to build strong networks that protect their territories and advocate for sustainable, rights-based development. This side event of the 14th UN Forum highlights their leadership, the challenges they face, and the urgent need to strengthen protection through a gender-responsive implementation of the UN Guiding Principles.

Panelists

Joan Carling, Indigenous Kankanaey leader, Executive Director of the Indigenous Peoples Rights International-IPRI and 2024 Right Livelihood Laureate recognized for her global advocacy for Indigenous rights and climate justice.

Maria Quixtan, a K'iche leader from the Valle de Palajunoj in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, who serves on the municipal indigenous council and is active in the network "Red de mujeres Ixquib Noj"

Ada Fidelina Pérez Pedrano, an Honduran environmental activist and coordinator of the "Movimiento Ambientalista Social del Sur por la Vida (MASSVIDA)"

Event will be in English/Spanish. Interpretation available