

Press Release

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Representatives of Mobile Indigenous Peoples call for respect of human rights ahead of Rio +20 Earth Summit

Wadi Dana Jordan

Ten years after the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation was agreed in Wadi Dana Jordan in 2002 (www.danadeclaration.org), representatives of Mobile Indigenous Peoples met for a workshop at the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature's (RSCN) Dana eco-lodge last week to reflect on the achievements of the past decade and to consider future actions to promote the special needs and vulnerabilities of mobile indigenous peoples.

Professor Dawn Chatty, Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, and a member of the Standing Commission for the Dana Declaration said "Hundreds of millions of mobile indigenous peoples face dispossession, eviction and restrictions to their lifestyles and livelihoods. Without concerted global action, these peoples will become especially vulnerable and economically burdensome to the states they inhabit. However, with a few critical interventions by state and international actors, these peoples can help guide the world to transitions towards a more sustainable future."

A number of representatives of the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP) attended the workshop along with policy makers, researchers, and practitioners from around the world concerned about the continuing marginalisation of many mobile indigenous peoples.

In a statement for the Rio+20 'Earth Summit' meetings to be held in Brazil in June 2012, representatives invited governments and civil society organisations to incorporate 'a fundamental obligation to respect human rights of Mobile Peoples as defined under the UN guiding principles on business and human rights' into any future resolutions, and to recognise the contributions which mobile peoples make to local and regional economies.

The statement also underscores the importance of supporting democratic environmental governance in the face of continuing expansion of protected areas, land grabbing and further dispossession of local and traditional communities.

Read the full statement at the Refugee Studies Centre website.

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