# **ILO 169 WHAT** IS IT?

ILO 169 is a convention of the International Labour Organisation, which is part of the UN. It is the most important international law for tribal peoples.

The convention recognises the land ownership rights of tribal people, and says they should be consulted on developments that affect them. Governments which ratify ILO 169 are legally bound to abide by it.

# WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The UN recently adopted a new declaration on indigenous peoples' rights. This is a great step forward, because it sets basic standards for how governments should treat tribal peoples. However, it does not have the force of law, and no sanctions can be applied to countries that ignore it.

ILO 169, by contrast, sets a series of standards for the treatment of tribal people, which governments who sign it are legally obliged to abide by. The more countries that ratify it, the greater the effect it has.

The convention recognises tribal peoples' right to equality and freedom from discrimination, and requires governments to consult them when taking decisions that will directly affect them. Most importantly, ILO 169 recognises that tribal peoples collectively own their lands and territories, and that they should not be forcibly evicted from them.



The British government refuses to sign up to the convention, saying it is not relevant as no tribal people live in the UK. However, this has not prevented other countries in a similar position, such as Spain and the Netherlands, from doing so.

Ratifying ILO 169 would commit the UK government to basic standards of consultation for the 'development' projects it funds that affect tribal people. UK-based companies operating on tribal lands would also be under increased pressure to abide by the convention's principles.

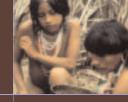
There is no reason for the UK government not to ratify the convention, other than a reluctance to commit to the protection of tribal people and the need to consult them about projects which may profoundly change their future.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Please write to the British government using this text or your own words: 'I am writing to urge the UK government to ratify ILO Convention 169 on tribal and indigenous people. The UK government has a duty, as a member of the UN and EU, to promote and encourage respect for tribal peoples' rights.

Furthermore, it has a direct responsibility to ensure their rights are protected, through the impact of its development projects on tribal communities around the world. ILO Convention 169





Yanomami father with his children, Brazil.

Himba mother and child, Namibia.

Waorani, Ecuador.

is currently by far the most effective way of protecting tribal peoples' rights, and the UK government should ratify it as soon as possible.'

Please send your letter to: The Prime Minister 10 Downing St London SW1A 2AA Fax: 020 7925 0918

Please also send a copy to your local MP. You can write to your MP directly through this website: www.writetothem.com

# WHY BOTHER?

Other governments have proven themselves receptive to campaigns to ratify ILO 169: this year the Spanish government signed up after a long campaign led by Survival supporters.

Widespread ratification of ILO 169 will make it harder for governments all over the world to ignore tribal peoples' rights to their land and the need to consult them on relevant issues. Ratification of the convention means that the protection of tribal populations is a subject of international concern.

### THE STORY SO FAR:

#### 1957 >>

The first ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 107) is adopted. 27 ratifications, of which 18 are still in force. 1989 >> ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169) is adopted, providing further protection for tribes. **1990 - 1998** >> Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands ratify ILO 169. By 2003, there are 17 ratifications of the convention. 2006 >> Spain agrees to sign up to the convention. The Spanish Prime Minister thanks Survival for its work on the issue.

2007 >> UN adopts the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Unlike ILO 169, it is not legally binding. Nepal ratifies ILO 169.

## THE FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS.





'I am very happy today to hear this news. We hope that other countries will join Spain and stand tall for tribal peoples.' Roy Sesana, leader of the Bushman organisation First People of the Kalahari, on the Spanish government's ratification of ILO Convention 169.

#### 19 countries have so far ratified ILO 169:

Argentina	Honduras
Bolivia	Mexico
Brazil	Nepal
Colombia	Netherlands
Costa Rica	Norway
Denmark	Paraguay
Dominica	Peru
Ecuador	Spain
Fiji	Venezuela
Guatemala	

### I'd like to know more

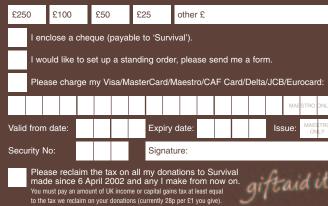
Please send me more information about tribal peoples.

#### I'd like to do more

Please let me know how I can get more actively involved in Survival's work.

First name	Last name	
Address		
Postcode	Country	
Email	SURVIVAL WILL NOT PASS ON ANY OF YOUR DETAILS TO ANY	YONE ELSE

#### I'd like to give more



To keep costs down, we do not normally send acknowledgments of gifts. Please tick if you require one.

If you are not an existing Survival supporter, please let us know where you found this leaflet.

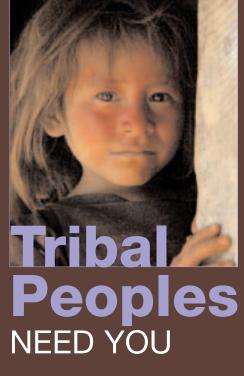
#### Please return this form to: SURVIVAL, FREEPOST PAM 5410, LONDON EC1B 1EE, UK

To read, watch and hear more about tribal peoples, visit: www.survival-international.org

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Survival International 6 Charterhouse Bldgs. London EC1M 7ET, UK T: +44 (0) 20 7687 8700 F: +44 (0) 20 7687 8701 info@survival-international.org

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Pressure intensifies on UK government to ratify key international law for tribal peoples

We help tribal peoples defend their lives, protect their lands and determine their own futures.

#### www.survival-international.org

