



**Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in
Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact**

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Alicia Cahuiya, Waorani. Photo: Manuel Elias

World Indigenous Peoples Day (8/9)

This year, the world community is called to protect in a special way the most isolated and those with initial contacts who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. The international community now recognizes that special measures are required to protect their rights and maintain their distinct cultures and way of life. Indigenous Peoples around the world live close to the Earth and carry profoundly wise beliefs and customs to protect Earth and their community. Throughout history, their rights have been severely violated. Among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people in the world, they suffer devastating effects of colonization, the global diseconomy, racism and extreme domination; the opioid crisis and alcoholism cut across all ethnic, religious and economic lines. How a nation treats its Indigenous Peoples is a tangible gage of its integrity and greatness.

Let's remember, at least every August 9, that Indigenous Peoples have the right to make and apply their own decisions in meaningful and culturally-appropriate ways. Indigenous youth are agents of change at the forefront of some of the most pressing crises facing humanity today; such as, harnessing cutting-edge technologies and contributing solutions for climate action and a sustainable, peaceful future for themselves and our planet. Actually, great Indigenous lead the way for all of us in terms of prioritizing health, education, community and spiritual values.

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	
Employed without education	47% (greater for women)	17%	
Work in informal economy	86%	66%	
Live in extreme poverty	3x more likely		

