

US Says No to Indigenous Rights

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, April 26, 2010

[Press TV](#) 24 April 2010

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

The US, the self-proclaimed protector of human rights, has failed to vote in favor of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Speaking to the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) at the UN, Kenneth Deer, the representative of US and Canada Mohawk Indians, said that Washington had refrained from recognizing the UN declaration on indigenous rights.

Deer described the conditions of the Indians living in the US and Canada as catastrophic, saying that they enjoy the minimum life requirements.

He reiterated that despite living in a wealthy country, the Canadian Indians challenge unemployment, poverty and lack of healthcare and shelter.

Deer, who was speaking to IRNA on the sidelines of the Ninth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, added that now Canada is mulling to reconsider its vote on indigenous rights. But, he said, Washington has not moved to review its decision.

On Sept. 13, 2007 the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to protect their lands and resources, and to maintain their unique cultures and traditions.

About 370 million indigenous people live in the world. The US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand that are home to the world's major indigenous population have so far rejected to vote in favor of the UN rights declaration.

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