



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

HAUT-COMMISSARIAT DES NATIONS UNIES AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
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25 August 2026

Excellency,

I write to inform you in relation to the [letter of 5 May 2026](#) by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (“the Committee”) regarding the impacts of recent amendments to the legislative framework concerning Indigenous Peoples and the situation of human rights defenders, members of civil society organizations and activists working on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Committee thanks the State Party for its response to its letter and for the information provided. It notes the information on the amendments to the Federal Law "On Environmental Expertise" of 25 December 2023 No. 681-FZ, particularly the requirements for registering State-certified experts, who must have scientific and/or practical knowledge and be independent of the entity in charge of the proposed project or activities. The Committee also notes the information on Order No. 11 of 21 February 2025, which sets out the procedure for registering State-certified experts, as adopted by the Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources (*Rosprirodnadzor*). It also takes note of the certification commission's mandate and activities. It also notes that, pursuant to Resolution No. 353, until March 2027, both public and State environmental impact assessment commissions may include experts who are not included in the registration of State-certified experts.

The Committee notes the information on the federal legislative framework, particularly the Federal Law 'On Environmental Protection', which requires environmental impact assessments for economic and development projects, and the procedures for such assessments, as set out in Resolution No. 1644 of 28 November 2024. It also notes that regional authorities organise in-person or online public consultations, including public hearings, with various stakeholders, such as members of the Indigenous communities, non-governmental organisations and legal entities. The Committee notes that citizens, including members of Indigenous Peoples, can request public hearings, which regional authorities must schedule within two days of receipt. The Committee also notes that all materials and outcomes of environmental impact assessments shall be made public. The Committee notes the information provided by the State Party that Indigenous Peoples rarely submit requests for environmental impact assessments, including public hearings. The Committee also notes the adoption and implementation of policy frameworks to expand and enhance the participation of Indigenous Peoples in environmental impact assessments. It also takes note of the information that the federal legislative framework provides for the establishment of an institution for ethnological assessment with the participation of Indigenous Peoples.

H.E. Mr. Gennady Gatilov
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to the United Nations Office
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The Committee notes that the national “register of Indigenous Persons” aims to facilitate Indigenous Peoples' access to and enjoyment of their rights under the domestic legal framework, and that the concept of the register was initially proposed by a local association working on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. It also takes note of the information that registration process is ongoing, and that as of 31 December 2025, the details of 103,557 Indigenous persons had been registered, which represents approximately half of the total eligible population (those over the age of 14). The Committee also notes that non-registration in the national register does not prevent Indigenous Peoples from exercising their rights under the domestic legal framework.

The Committee notes that legal measures and criminal cases have been taken against human rights defenders, civil society organisations and their members, as well as activists working on the rights of indigenous peoples, for financial violations and the misappropriation of funds intended to support Indigenous communities. It also notes that measures are being taken to combat all manifestations of extremism and terrorist activities. The Committee also notes that there are approximately 2,000 civil society organisations and entities working on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, engaging with various consultative bodies at federal and regional levels.

Notwithstanding the information provided, the Committee is concerned about the lack of information on the adopted amendments to the Urban Planning Code (UPC) to grant the regional authorities power to decide whether public hearings are required for urban development projects affecting lands and resources of Indigenous Peoples. It also expresses concerns about the lack of information on the process of registration in the “register of Indigenous persons” and on measures taken to incorporate and respect the principle of self-identification and to address the reported slow and bureaucratic registration process. Lastly, the Committee is concerned about the lack of measures to ensure that the legislative framework on countering extremism is not used to intimidate, harass, arrest, detain or prosecute human rights defenders or representatives of civil society organizations working on the rights of Indigenous Peoples for exercising their rights to freedom of opinion and expression and to freedom of association.

In this regard and in accordance with Article 9 (1) of the Convention and article 66 of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee will consider this matter in the context of the consideration of the State Party's twenty-seventh to twenty-ninth periodic reports and requests that the State Party provide updated and detailed information during the dialogue on the legislative framework on Indigenous Peoples, including on effective and meaningful consultations on projects impacting their lands and resources and the “register of Indigenous persons”, and on measures to ensure an open space for the operation of civil society organizations and human rights defenders working on the rights of Indigenous Peoples without fear of reprisal and to ensure that the legislative framework on countering extremism is not used to intimidate, harass, arrest, detain or prosecute human rights defenders or representatives of civil society organizations working on the rights of Indigenous Peoples for exercising their rights to freedom of opinion and expression and to freedom of association.

Allow me, Excellency, to reiterate the wish of the Committee to continue to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Government of the Russian Federation with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention.



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Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'GK' with a stylized flourish.

Mr. Gün Kut
Chair

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination