



UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING



CHALLENGES AND THE FUTURE OF MINORITY AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS PROTECTION CONFERENCE

Organised by

University of Stirling and Congress
of Nations and States (CNS)

Sponsored by

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Report on the Challenges and the Future of Minority and Indigenous Rights Protection Conference 2025

Around the world, many Peoples – whether from minority or Indigenous communities – are facing serious challenges to their cultures and ways of life. In response to these threats and given the plethora of legal instruments that seek to protect marginalised groups, the Stirling Conference provided a platform to discuss these challenges through unique perspectives, rigorous academic discussions, and knowledge exchange on a deeper level. Emphasising the importance of partnerships between academia and civil society, the event addressed urgent global issues, including but not limited to human rights violations, curtailed freedoms, and environmental destruction. We hope this publication offers valuable insight into those discussions and invites readers to engage with the forthcoming special issue in the University of Stirling Human Rights Journal (USHRJ).

Sincerely,

Dr Damian Etone (Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Stirling) and Regina M. Paulose (CNS Special Projects Officer)

Day One

Keynote Address: Professor Joshua Castellino

Professor Joshua Castellino, Co-Executive Director of Minority Rights Group International and Professor at the University of Derby, delivered the opening keynote for the conference on day one. As a leading expert on advancing minority and indigenous rights and a journalist and scholar with over one hundred articles on international law and territorial borders, he drew on decades of experience, calling for the urgent need for systemic change to protect minority and indigenous rights. He linked many modern injustices to colonial structures that persist under today's economic hegemony. Using the terms 'minority' and 'indigenous' interchangeably, he acknowledged im-



portant distinctions between the two while emphasising their shared experiences of systemic exclusion. Tracing ten major human rights movements, from the abolition of slavery to the fight for environmental rights, he pointed to a persistent gap between the promises of legal standards and their implementation in practice. He outlined structural barriers such as anthropocentrism, settler colonialism, extractive economies, and rising populism that deepen minority vulnerabilities. Professor Castellino identified seven critical challenges for advancing rights, including

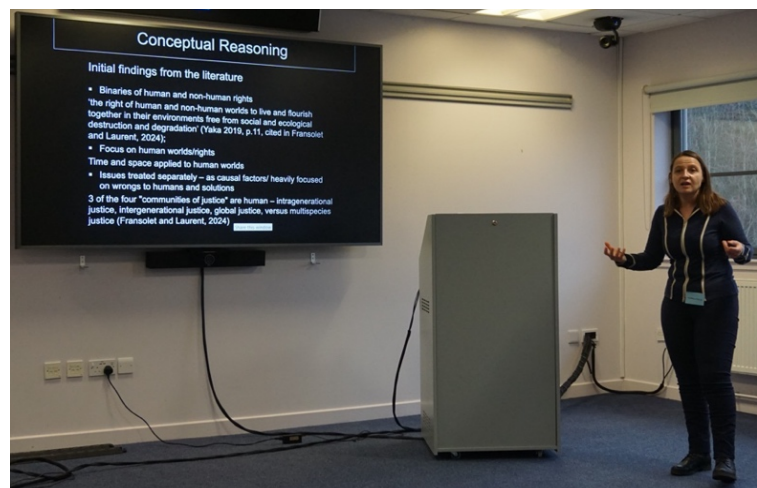
reframing the human rights agenda, questioning state sovereignty, pushing for reparations, and shifting advocacy strategies. He stressed the importance of raising awareness among majority populations and building alliances across different movements. Concluding his keynote, he called for persistent advocacy, a deep engagement with historical context, and the nurturing of 'new shoots' of change to disrupt the ongoing cycles of injustice.

Session 1: Environment, Climate, Natural Resources and Indigenous Peoples

Chaired by Dr Narissa Kashvi Ramsundar

First Panellist: Dr Petya Dragneva accompanied by Dr Edzia Carvalho (University of Dundee)

Dr Petya Dragneva opened the first session with insights from her upcoming book chapter on *Just Transition and Law: Legal Dimensions of Low Carbon Transformation*. Drawing from her research with Dr Edzia Carvalho, she framed the current climate transition as both one of many historical transformations and yet unique in its urgency and scale, driven not by progress but survival. Highlighting the 2023 UN Emissions Gap Report, Dr Dragneva warned emissions now surpass 2022 levels, pushing the 1.5°C Paris target further out of reach. In an era of ‘poly-crises’ – climate collapse, AI disruption, populism – Dragneva called for systemic rethinking as we are at a critical juncture that will either lead to systemic recovery or irreversible collapse. She challenged the separation of human and non-human rights, advocating for ecological interdependence. Referencing the UN World Charter for Nature and constitutional examples from Ecuador and Bolivia, she urged moving beyond liberal, human-centred models toward a systems-thinking approach grounded in power analysis and the recognition of nature’s intrinsic value.



Second Panellist: Dr Austin Nwafor (University of West England, Bristol)

Dr Austin Nwafor critically examined the disproportionate impact of plastic pollution on Indigenous communities, describing how its persistence, lasting up to 600 years, has created a global environmental crisis. Building on this, he linked this to key Sustainable Development Goals, including health and climate action, and underscored the dangers of single-use plastics, especially microplastics and airborne particles. Indigenous Peoples, whose survival often depends on the land and sea, are especially vulnerable yet remain insufficiently protected by the current legal frameworks. Existing instruments like UNDRIP are either non-binding or too broad. Dr Nwafor argued that the Global Plastics Treaty must include indigenous voices to avoid further marginalisation and ensure meaningful protection. Without action, plastic pollution will severely undermine indigenous food security and cultural survival.



Third Panellist: Ruona Qi (Duke University)

Ruona Qi discussed the challenges faced by Mongolian herders, an Indigenous community in Mongolia, amid climate change and evolving state policies. She explained that rising temperatures and extreme weather have severely impacted traditional pastoralist practices. Mongolian herders have historically adapted through mobile pastoralism, community reciprocity, and flexible land use. However, Chinese policies promoting land privatisation, grazing prohibitions, land degradation, and social fragmentation have undermined these adaptive strategies. Qi highlighted the tension between traditional ecological knowledge and state-driven scientific approaches that restrict mobility. Many younger herders now face economic and cultural pressures, often abandoning traditional lifestyles to seek a more secure and stable life in larger cities. She concluded by stressing the need for more inclusive, community-driven land management solutions to preserve both livelihoods and cultural identity of Indigenous Peoples.



Fourth Panellist: Nelson Goodnews Ologhadien (University of Dundee)

Nelson G. Ologhadien presented the impact of energy development on African Indigenous Peoples' land and natural resource rights, making a case for energy justice. He highlighted that, like oil and gas, renewable energy projects often harm Indigenous communities, leading to displacement, land degradation, exclusion, and cultural erosion. Ologhadien explained that in Africa, Indigenous identity is shaped by cultural distinction, self-identification, and strong ties to native land. International and regional frameworks like UNDRIP and the African Charter offer some protections, but many national laws remain limited. Notable exceptions include the Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo,



where specific national legislation exists but is not universally applied. He argued for a balance between energy security goals and indigenous rights, proposing energy justice principles – distributive, procedural, recognition, restorative, and cosmopolitan justice – as a necessary framework to ensure fair, equitable treatment and prevent further marginalisation of vulnerable groups.

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Fifth Panellist: Dr Karolina Prażmowska-Marcinowska (University of Silesia)

Dr Karolina Prażmowska-Marcinowska addressed Arctic Indigenous Peoples' right to remedy in the context of climate change, emphasising the need to move beyond framing Indigenous Peoples as victims. She explored how international human rights mechanisms can be utilised to hold governments responsible, noting that accountability is a cornerstone of the human rights framework. Although litigation and individual complaint procedures offer pathways to remedies such as justice and reparation, many existing systems prioritise state-centred, individualistic approaches and often fail to accommodate indigenous needs. Climate change litigation, initiated partly by Indigenous groups, faces barriers tied to the colonial foundations of international law. Dr Prażmowska-Marcinowska argued for transforming legal frameworks to reflect indigenous histories and governance and called on law schools to challenge Western legal narratives and advocate for a shift in language and practice.



Session 2: Indigenous People, Minority Groups and Domestic Protections

Chaired by Dr Edit Frenyo

First Panellist: Dr Soe Win (SUNY Brockport, the State University of New York)

Dr Soe Win delivered an insightful presentation on the conflict between the Burmese military and the Karen ethnic minority group, who make up about 6-7% of Burma's population, tracing its roots to British colonial rule, however, the Karen have faced systemic oppression since pre-colonial times. British colonisation deepened the ethnic divisions, and during World War II, the British



recruited Karen fighters, intensifying tensions with the Burmese majority. After Burma's independence, the Karen request for an independent state was denied, leading to the formation of the Karen National Union and one of the world's longest-running civil wars. While some Karen advocate for full independence, others support a federal democratic solution for Burma. Dr Win concluded by emphasising that the conflict, fuelled by militarisation and ongoing ethnic cleansing, continues today.

Second Panellist: Dr Judith Oloo (Robert Gordon University)

Dr Judith Oloo examined the Nubian community's ongoing struggle for recognition and citizenship in Kenya. Despite being a long-established minority of over 100,000 people living in Kibera, Nubians remain excluded from national ID systems, denying them access to essential services. She discussed key cases brought before African human rights bodies, which found Kenya guilty of violating Nubians' rights to nationality and non-discrimination. However, almost 15 years later, Kenya has yet to comply. Dr Oloo highlighted the limitations of African mechanisms in the absence of political will. While these rulings affirmed minority rights and advanced legal standards, she stressed that enforcement remains the greatest challenge. She noted that the Nubian experience illustrates how legal victories without implementation can reinforce disillusionment and erode trust in state institutions. Moreover, Dr Oloo argued that long-lasting solutions must address both legal recognition and the socio-economic marginalisation that stems from decades of exclusion. Nonetheless, the Nubian case has contributed to the development of jurisprudence for other marginalised communities seeking justice.



Third Panellist: Dr Narissa Kashvi Ramsundar (Canterbury Christ Church University)



Dr Narissa Kashvi Ramsundar discussed the urgent need for due diligence in the sale and distribution of arms, particularly in Asia, where increased militarisation poses risks to Indigenous and minority groups. Drawing on the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, she explored how arms transfers can fuel human rights violations, especially when funds are diverted from essential services to defence. The lack of legal duties on suppliers to conduct Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) exacerbates this risk. Dr Ramsundar highlighted that both the Arms Trade Treaty and EU Common Position impose obligations to assess risks of abuse before authorising exports. She emphasised the importance of strengthening monitoring mechanisms and aligning state and corporate practice with HRDD principles to protect vulnerable communities. In addition, she argued that arms regulation must evolve beyond state-centric frameworks to account for environmental degradation and the rights of nature, which are increasingly recognised at the national level.

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Session 3: Minority and Indigenous Rights: International Tribunals, Norms and Interpretations

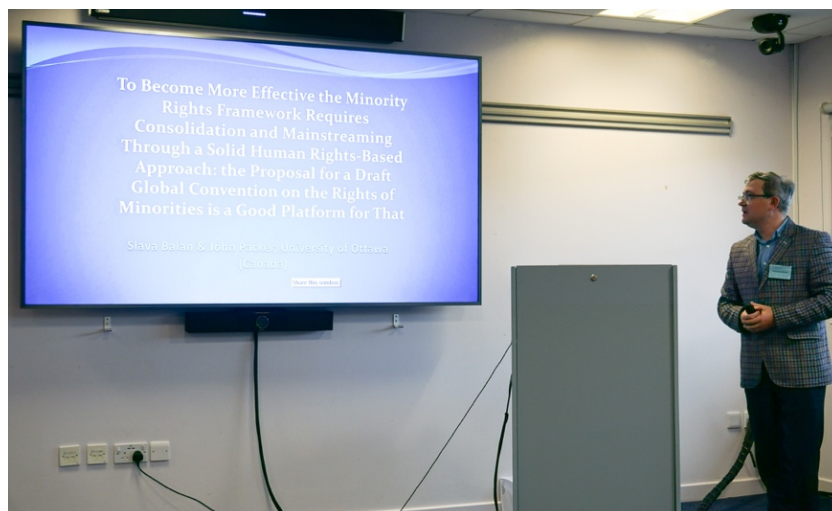
Chaired by Dr Damian Etone

First Panellist: Dr Elisa Ruozzi (University of Turin)

Dr Elisa Ruozzi examined how economic, social, and cultural rights – particularly those of Indigenous Peoples – are interpreted and enforced in the Inter-American human rights system. She focused on Article 26 of the American Convention, which promotes the progressive realisation of these rights but does not guarantee their direct justiciability. Through evolving jurisprudence, the Inter-American Court has asserted its competence to apply Article 26, referencing international treaties, UN resolutions, and national laws to define rights such as access to food, water, culture, and a healthy environment. Dr Ruozzi questioned how reparations for Indigenous communities – often involving broad, systemic remedies – can realistically fulfil all rights. She emphasised the need for legal clarity, effective enforcement, and genuine reparative mechanisms beyond symbolic measures.



Second Panellist: Slava Balan (University of Ottawa)



Slava Balan discussed the urgent need to consolidate and strengthen the minority rights framework through a solid human rights-based approach. He underlined that the marginalisation of minorities is often at the root of violent conflicts and mass displacement, as seen in Ukraine and Gaza. Despite this, international protections for minority rights remain thin and frag-

mented. Balan highlighted the proposal for a Draft Global Convention on the Rights of Minorities as a bold step forward, framing minority rights as full human rights subject to the obligations of respect, protect, and fulfil. The draft addresses autonomy, self-government, language rights, and the proactive elimination of systemic discrimination more comprehensively than previous instruments. He concluded that this proposal offers a powerful tool for advocacy, legal argumentation, and strengthening global minority protection.

Third Panellist: Lia O'Broin (Dublin City University)

Lia O'Broin explored the scope and implementation of Indigenous Peoples' right to maintain their own juridical systems. She emphasised that while international law increasingly recognises legal and normative pluralism, implementation remains uneven and constrained by national standards. indigenous legal traditions are upheld through instruments like ILO Conventions 107 and 169, UNDRIP, and decisions from regional human rights courts. However, obligations are often limited by the requirement to align with state systems and international human rights standards.



O'Broin argued that revitalising indigenous justice systems should be seen as a form of collective reparation and structural empowerment, particularly in transitional justice contexts. Examples from Bolivia, Canada, and the United States highlight both progress and persistent challenges in achieving true jurisdictional equality and adequate protection for indigenous legal traditions.

Day Two

Keynote Address: Professor Angela O'Hagan

Professor Angela O'Hagan opened the second day of the conference, drawing on her extensive experience in public policy and advocacy, promoting social justice in institutional decision-making. Most recently, Professor of Equality and Public Policy at Glasgow Caledonian University, she has held leadership roles across Scotland's community and statutory sectors, including Director of Carers Scotland and Head of Campaigns at Oxfam Scotland. In her keynote, Professor O'Hagan highlighted the work of Scotland's Human Rights Commission, particularly in exposing barriers to healthcare, housing, and education – especially in rural communities. She addressed new initiatives supporting people with learning disabilities and Scottish Indigenous communities, underscoring the need for recognition, reparation, and justice. Referencing Article 5 of the National Minority Framework, she emphasised the urgency of cultural preservation and public accountability. Projects like *Spotlight* investigate the denial of rights to Gypsy Travellers and broader systemic issues, including housing inequality. Her address called for action grounded in international frameworks, community-led justice, and a renewed commitment to human rights in everyday life.



Session 4: Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination

Chaired by Dr Edzia Carvalho

First Panellist: Dr Maureen N. Eke (Central Michigan University; CNS)

Dr Maureen N. Eke presented a powerful account of Biafra's struggle for self-determination, connecting it to broader discussions of genocide, mass atrocities, historical trauma, and the ongoing denial of justice. Drawing on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, she outlined Nigeria's systemic violations of international and constitutional obligations. Citing events such as the 1966 Kano Massacre and the Asaba Massacre, she highlighted the targeting of civilians through starvation, mass executions, and sexual violence. She also addressed ongoing atrocities, including attacks by Fulani militants against private citizens and the destruction of farmland. Dr Eke noted that these patterns of violence – often state-sponsored or ignored – are aimed at displacing communities and erasing their cultural presence. She further stressed that Nigeria's failure to acknowledge these acts or implement truth commissions constitutes a continued betrayal of victims and deepens intergenerational trauma. Concluding her remarks, she criticised the erasure of Biafran history and the absence of transitional justice mechanisms, truth commissions, or memorials to honour the dead and begin collective healing.

Second Panellist: Awring Shaways (KG Lobby Center; CNS)

Awring Shaways presented a detailed examination of the systemic marginalisation and ongoing struggle of the Kurdish people in Iraq. Despite regional autonomy in the Kurdistan Region, the Kurdish population remains politically and culturally sidelined. Shaways drew attention to repeated genocides – from the Anfal campaign under Saddam Hussein to ISIS atrocities against Kurdish Yazidis – alongside displacement, statelessness, barriers to full citizenship, and the systematic denial of cultural and linguistic rights. The 2017 independence referendum, in which over 92% voted for Kurdish statehood, was met with state retaliation and little international support. She also pointed out that while the Iraqi constitution nominally recognises Kurdish autonomy, it lacks concrete guarantees for citizenship rights – leaving many Kurds without basic legal protections. Additionally, the geopolitical interests of



neighbouring states continue to undermine Kurdish aspirations, often framing Kurdish nationalism as a threat to regional stability. Shaways highlighted that the Kurdish fight for recognition is not only a political struggle but a humanitarian one, calling on international legal and scholarly communities to support Kurdish self-determination and cultural preservation.

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Third Panellist: Dr Lilia Arakelyan (East Carolina University)



Dr Lilia Arakelyan discussed the ongoing conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, emphasising that despite Azerbaijani claims of a resolution, the 2023 ethnic cleansing of over 120,000 Armenians proves otherwise. She drew parallels to the Irish conflict, where deep-rooted divisions persist despite agreements and official narratives of peace. Dr Arakelyan noted the critical roles of Russia and Turkey in fuelling the conflict while posing as peace brokers, with Russia's shifting alliances complicating any genuine peace efforts. Although a ceasefire was brokered, Azerbaijan continues occupying Armenian territories in violation of earlier agreements. Today, Armenia faces increasing pressure from Russia,

Azerbaijan, and the EU to accept a new, unfavourable peace deal. However, this so-called peace process fails to address the underlying issues of sovereignty and historical justice, risking continuing instability rather than offering an adequate resolution. Dr Arakelyan warned that the international community's inaction threatens the long-term security and future of the Armenian people.

Fourth Panellist: Dr Alessandro Bufalini (University of Tuscia)

Dr Alessandro Bufalini focused on the participation of Indigenous Peoples in international treaty-making, using the 2021 joint declaration between Germany and Namibia as a case study. Although intended to address Germany's colonial-era crimes against the Herero and Nama people, the agreement faced strong criticism for excluding Indigenous representatives. Dr Bufalini stressed that under international law, particularly the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous communities have the right to participate in decisions affecting them.



Germany's reliance on Namibia's government, while framed as respecting sovereignty, perpetuated colonial patterns by sidelining indigenous voices. He emphasised that democracy alone does not safeguard minority rights and called for states to ensure transparent consultation and respect for free, prior, and informed consent to achieve sincere reconciliation.

Session 5: Minority and Indigenous Rights: Language, Identity and Cultural Heritage

Chaired by Nelson Ologhadien



First Panellist: Dr Erika De Vivo (UiT the Arctic University Norway)

Dr Erika De Vivo presented on the enduring impact of colonial legacies on indigenous rights, focusing on the Sámi people and their homeland, Sápmi. She highlighted how colonisation led to the loss of tangible and intangible Sámi heritage, including traditional knowledge. Despite existing legal standards, objects and photographs were often acquired through unethical means in the late 19th century. Sámi councils and parliaments across Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia are now seeking the return of artifacts, although some countries, such as Italy, deny colonial responsibility. While some artifacts were made for tourists with consent, original Sámi objects were often destroyed or taken without official agreement. Closing her remarks, Dr De Vivo stressed that colonisation involves not only territorial control but also profound cultural violence and systemic harm, a legacy that demands urgent redress and accountability.

Second Panellist: Nerys Palmer (Norwegian Centre for Human Rights)



Nerys Palmer discussed the evolving protection of Sámi rights in Norway, focusing on the 2024 amendments to the Sámi Act and the UN Indigenous Languages Decade. She emphasised the importance of effective participation in decision-making, highlighting Norway's strong legal framework but noting a persistent gap between formal commitments and real implementation. Based on interviews with experts, Palmer showed that despite advancements like the 2022 Language Act, the Sámi Parliament often lacks true decision-making power. Historical assimilation policies continue to impact language preservation and political autonomy. While recent reforms mark progress, Palmer stressed the urgency of addressing language loss and broader structural inequalities to ensure that Sámi people can fully exercise their cultural and linguistic rights.

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Third Panellist: Iva Divkovic (Independent)

Iva Divkovic addressed the soft erasure of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, highlighting persistent barriers to minority rights within the EU framework. While Macedonians once had limited cultural rights, Bulgaria's post-1963 policies erased their existence from official recognition. Despite multiple ECtHR rulings affirming Macedonian rights to free assembly and association, EU institutions have taken minimal action to support their implementation and uphold accountability. Divkovic detailed how a complaint to the European Commission was dismissed, citing member state sovereignty over matters concerning minority rights. Legal efforts to hold the Commission accountable under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union failed, revealing procedural and jurisdictional gaps. She stressed that systemic discrimination demands accessible legal remedies, warning that current structures make protecting minority rights in the EU unnecessarily difficult and risk entrenching injustice.



Fourth Panellist: Dr Deniz Arbet Nejbir (Mesopotamia Observatory of Justice)

Dr Deniz Arbet Nejbir examined Turkey's systematic suppression of the Kurdish language, tracing its roots to the early Kemalist 'One Nation' policy, which sought to erase Kurdish identity through Turkification. He detailed how legal frameworks – from the 1924 Constitution to the 1982 Constitution – institutionalised the eradication of the Kurdish language and culture. Despite minor reforms under the Justice and Development Party, significant restrictions remain, with private education in Kurdish still heavily controlled and Kurdish political expression suppressed. Dr Nejbir argued that this systematic denial constitutes linguistic genocide, aligning with Raphael Lemkin's conceptualisation. He concluded by emphasising that Turkey's policies, past and present, reflect an enduring attempt to annihilate Kurdish cultural and linguistic identity, which violates international human rights norms.



Session 6: Indigenous Rights, Peace Agreements and Post-Conflict Contexts

Chaired by Dr Judith Oloo

First Panellist: Haley Mason (University of Ottawa)

Haley Mason examined how Canada's Act C-92, intended to respect First Nations, Inuit, and Métis child welfare, falls short of the UNDRIP standards. While affirming the right to self-determination, the Act does not guarantee that indigenous laws will prevail, making jurisdiction complex and difficult to assert. Mason criticised Bill C-92 as offering Indigenous communities a colonial bargain with limited funding and oversight. She further noted that the Act's reliance on coordination agreements – often lengthy and inaccessible – places Indigenous communities at a procedural disadvantage, reinforcing systemic barriers rather than removing them. She emphasised the need for effective participation, true autonomy, and stable financial support, highlighting that Indigenous children remain disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. To meet UNDRIP obligations, Mason recommended stronger enforcement mechanisms, clear governance structures, and guaranteed long-term funding to ensure Indigenous children's cultural and linguistic rights are upheld and protected.



Second Panellist: Dr Piergiuseppe Parisi (University of York)

Dr Piergiuseppe Parisi presented how Colombia's Nasa people – one of the country's largest Indigenous groups – use spirituality as a form of protection amid ongoing armed conflict. Located in the highly contested southwestern region, the Nasa face threats from state and non-state actors competing for territorial control. Dr Parisi highlighted that conventional security frameworks fail to capture how Indigenous communities experience harm – not only physically but also spiritually and environmentally. Drawing from security studies and indigenous cosmivision, he explained how violence disrupts the harmony between land, people, animals, and nature. Spiritual damage, such as the destruction of sacred sites or the killing of elders, leaves deep communal wounds. To conclude, Dr Parisi argued that international law must move beyond material definitions of harm and adopt standards that recognise spiritual and cultural security.



Session 7: Minority and Indigenous Rights in the Modern Technological Era

Chaired by Dr Linda Mensah

First Panellist: Dr Roberta Medda-Windischer (Eurac Research – Institute for Minority Rights)

Dr Roberta Medda-Windischer explored how artificial intelligence (AI) impacts minority rights, particularly in the context of bias, representation, and systemic discrimination. She emphasised



that AI systems often reflect and reinforce existing social hierarchies, especially when trained on incomplete or biased data. From recruitment tools favouring men to facial recognition systems misidentifying people of colour, she outlined the risks of ‘bias amplification’ and lack of transparency in AI decision-making. Dr Medda-Windischer argued for a human-centred approach, calling for participatory development, interdisciplinary collaboration, legal safeguards like the EU AI Act, and greater transparency in algorithmic decision-making. She concluded that while AI has the potential to support inclusion, without human accountability and thoughtful design, it can deepen existing inequalities and marginalise already vulnerable communities.

Second Panellist: Dr Colin Luoma (Brunel University)

Dr Colin Luoma presented the evolving interpretation of the right to life and its connection to indigenous cultural rights. He traced how international systems like the ICCPR, ACHR, and ECHR have expanded the right to life toward a broader ‘right to a dignified life,’ encompassing economic, social, and cultural rights. However, he noted a persistent failure to fully integrate indigenous cultural rights within this framework.



Drawing on cases such as *Yakye Axa v. Paraguay* and the *Ogiek* case, Dr Luoma argued that courts often recognise material harms but hesitate or outright reject claims rooted in cultural loss. He stressed that sidelining cultural rights undermines indigenous survival and identity, creating a significant normative gap in international human rights law.

Closing Round Table and Dinner Keynote

During the closing roundtable, participants emphasised the need for a multifaceted approach to minority and indigenous rights, combining legal advocacy, grassroots action, and academic research. Panellists highlighted the power of community-led solutions and collaboration across movements while also urging a critical rethinking of legal systems and power dynamics that often exclude minority voices. Many urged stronger unity between minority and Indigenous groups, noting that although international law offers recognition, it often falls short in enforcement. The session closed with a sense of shared purpose and commitment to turning dialogue into concrete, community-driven action.

At the end of day two, Davie Donaldson delivered an insightful session titled ‘Decentralizing Resources, Strengthening Community Voices,’ underscoring the urgency of placing decision-making power and resources directly in the hands of minority communities. Drawing on participatory action research with Gypsy/Traveller groups, he highlighted the importance of grassroots leadership and intersectional solidarity, noting that real change must be community-led, not externally imposed, and rooted in the direct transfer of power and resources to those most affected.

Special Session: Land Rights Panel/Workshop

The following day, the Special Session on Land Rights focused on the ongoing challenges Indigenous and minority communities face around displacement and access to ancestral lands. The workshop explored how legal frameworks often fall short in practice and how extractive industries, climate change, and state policies continue to undermine land security. Participants called for better enforcement of land protections, recognition of customary land use, and stronger international accountability to ensure land rights are upheld as a cornerstone of justice.

