



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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12 May 2025

Excellency,

I write to inform you that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (“the Committee”) received information under its early warning and urgent action procedure in relation to the situation of the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples in India.

According to the information received:

- The National Tiger Conservation Authority issued an order, on 19 June 2024, requesting the Chief Wildlife Wardens to prioritize the displacement of tribal and forest-dwelling indigenous people in 18 States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal;
- In light of this order, nearly 85,000 families or 450,000 persons belonging to the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples are subjected to displacement and forced evictions from 54 tiger reserves in the 18 States;
- The order violates the safeguards and standards of the domestic legal framework, namely under Section 38V(5) of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and Section 4(2) of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act of 2006, particularly regarding the incomplete process to recognize and determine the rights and acquisition of land of the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples, the lack of evidence that the activities or the presence of the tribal and Indigenous Peoples cause irreversible damage and threaten the existence of tigers and their habitat, the absence of confirmation that other reasonable options of co-existence are not available, and lack of available resettlement or alternative packages to impacted Indigenous communities.

H.E. Mr. Arindam Bagchi
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The Committee is concerned that the allegations regarding the order issued by National Tiger Conservation Authority, if verified, would infringe rights protected of the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). Specifically, the Committee is concerned about the reported lack of effective and meaningful consultation with the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples to obtain their free, prior and informed consent. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the information on the lack of impact assessment study in relation to the order and its impact on the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, the Committee is concerned about the reported risk of displacement and forced eviction of the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples as result of implementing this order, the lack of provided adequate alternative housing and compensation for the lands, territories and resources that they have traditionally owned or used.

The Committee takes notes of the communication (ref.: [UA IND 13/2019](#)) issued by various special procedures mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council to the State party regarding concerns related to the situation of the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples.

In this regard, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations concerning India ([CERD/C/IND/CO/19](#), para. 19) and its [General Recommendation No. 23 \(1997\) on the rights of indigenous peoples](#).

In accordance with Article 9 (1) of the Convention and Article 65 of its Rules of procedure, the Committee requests the State party to provide information, by 1 August 2025, on the above-mentioned allegations, particularly the situation of the tribal and forest-dwelling Indigenous Peoples in light of the order issued by National Tiger Conservation Authority and the risk of displacement and forced evictions.

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

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Balcerzak", followed by a horizontal line.

Michal Balcerzak
Chair

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination