



**The 3<sup>rd</sup> International Indigenous Women’s Symposium  
on Environmental and Reproductive Health  
Focus: Advancing research and assessing impacts of Environmental  
Violence on Indigenous Women and Girls,  
April 14 – 15, 2018  
103 Jerome Greene Hall, Columbia University Law School  
116<sup>th</sup> St. and Amsterdam Ave, New York City**

**Bio of Speakers, Moderators and Presenters**

**Chief Dwaine Perry**



Dwaine Perry is Chief of the Ramapough-Lunaape Nation. Chief Perry has a long history of advocacy and has sat with elders and Indigenous leaders in the Himalayas, the Andes and throughout North America, seeking and coalescing the seeds of unity and truth remaining in the colonized mind. He champions human rights today, focusing primarily on issues concerning the Ramapough Lunaape Nation and the Indigenous community at-large. Chief Perry stands against all forms of environmental genocide, greed and avarice. Chief Perry, has been a strong voice in championing the rights of women and advocates for a return to the original stature of women whereby the governing ethics and moral fiber of society are directed by a matriarchal philosophy once considered universal before the advent of global colonization.

**Andrea Carmen**



Andrea Carmen, Yaqui Nation, has been a staff member of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) since 1983 and IITC’s Executive Director since 1992. Andrea has many years of experience working as a human rights trainer and observer around the world, and was IITC’s team leader for work on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In 1997, she was one of two Indigenous representatives invited to formally address the UN General Assembly for the first time in history at the UN Earth Summit +5. In 2006, Andrea was a Rapporteur for the UN

“Expert Seminar on Indigenous Peoples’ Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources and their Relationship to Land”; the first time an Indigenous woman had been selected to serve as a Rapporteur for an UN Expert Seminar. Since 2010, Andrea has served on a number of Boards and is a member of the Indigenous Peoples Global Steering Committee for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which coordinates IITC’s International Work at the UNFCCC. She has presented in various UN Fora as well as Indigenous Peoples’ Conferences on the far-ranging impacts of the SDG’s for Indigenous Peoples as well as the human rights framework required for their effective implementation.

### **Myrna Cunningham Kain**



Myrna Cunningham Kain is a Miskito Indian and former member of the National Assembly from Nicaragua, Cunningham served in the Ministry of Health and as Governor of the autonomous region of the North Atlantic Coast (RAAN). She founded the University of Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua and has served as General Secretary of the Inter-American Indian Institute. In 2002, she received the Pan-American Prize to the Heroine of the Americas of Public Health of the Organization of the Health. She has a wide experience on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and has been on the board of several organizations to promote the rights of indigenous women,

including the International Forum of Indigenous Women (FIMI). In September 2010, Ms. Cunningham was awarded with an Honorary Doctorate by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), thereby becoming the first Indigenous woman to receive such recognition from the UNAM. She was also the Chair of the UN Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues for the period 2011-2013. Currently, she is the President of the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC) for the period 2017-2019.

### **Elsa Stamatopoulou**



Elsa Stamatopoulou joined Columbia University in 2011 after a 31-year service at the United Nations (in Vienna, Geneva and New York) with some 22 years dedicated to human rights, in addition to 8 years exclusively devoted to Indigenous Peoples’ rights. She became the first Chief of the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2003. In 2011, she taught the first-ever course at Columbia on Indigenous Peoples’ rights, the first course on cultural rights (2016) and is the first Director of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Program at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia, also co-chairing Columbia’s University Seminar on Indigenous Studies.

She has cooperated closely with non-governmental organizations in her native Greece and has received the Ingrid Washinawatok El Issa *O’Peqtaw Metaehmoh*-Flying Eagle Woman Peace, Justice and Sovereignty Award; the award of the NGO Committee on the Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples; the Eleanor Roosevelt Award of the Human Rights Center and of Voices 21; the Innovation in Academia Award for Arts & Culture, 2016, by the University of Kent (UK); and in 2010, the Museum “Tepee of the World” was given her name in the Republic of Sakha, Siberia, Russia. In 2016, she was featured as one of the UN’s

80 Leading Women from 1945-2016. She co-chairs the International Commission on the Chittagong Hill Tracts and is a member of the Advisory Board, Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability (Brussels). At Columbia, Prof. Stamatopoulou is affiliated with the Institute for the Study of Human Rights, the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race and the Department of Anthropology.

### **Teresa Zapeta**



Teresa Zapeta is an indigenous Maya K'iche, native of Guatemala. Currently, is the Executive Director of FIMI; besides, she has worked as a Government Officer occupying the position of Indigenous Women's Advocate and has also been responsible for the program "Indigenous women" for the Central America region at UN Women. Teresa has been linked to the struggle of indigenous women for 15 years and we know that she will continue from this space with that conviction and vision.

### **Lux de Coti**



Lux de Coti is a Mayan Guatemalan K'iche 'woman. She was adviser to ONUMUJERES of Latin America and the Caribbean. Ms. Coti is a member of the Management Group of the Indigenous Fund of Latin America and the Caribbean and also MADRE adviser for indigenous women. She is also a member of the Democratic Alert Group, Scenarios for the future of Democracy in Latin America 2015-2030. Ms. Coti was also Deputy to the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala for the Movement Politician WINAQ, Minister of Culture and Sports of Guatemala and representative of Guatemala before the Executive Board of UNESCO. Expert of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations in the Forum Standing Committee on Indigenous Issues and a representative of the Global Caucus of Indigenous Women in the Group of lobbying before the Member States of the United Nations for the resolution A/69 / L.1 of the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples.

### **Victoria Tauli-Corpuz**



Victoria Tauli-Corpuz is currently special rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Victoria is an indigenous leader from the Kankanaey Igorot people of the Cordillera Region in the Philippines. She is an indigenous activist, human rights expert, public servant, and an advocate of women's rights in the Philippines. She was the former Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2005-2010). As an indigenous leader, she got actively engaged in drafting and adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. She helped organize indigenous peoples in the community level to fight against the projects of the Marcos Dictatorship such as the Chico River Hydroelectric Dam and the Cellophil Resources

Corporation. She is the founder and executive director of Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous Peoples' International Center for Policy Research and Education). She is an Expert for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and has served as the chairperson- rapporteur of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations. She is also the indigenous and gender adviser of the Third World Network and a member of United Nations Development Programme Civil Society Organizations Advisory Committee.

### **Mariam Wallet Aboubakrine**



Mariam Wallet Aboubakrine is a medical doctor from Tombouctou in Mali. She holds a Masters in Humanitarian Action from the University of Geneva, focusing on interventions in crisis: armed conflict, marginalization/exclusion and natural disasters. Mariam is a member of Tin Hinan, a women association working for the defence, promotion and development of indigenous peoples in Africa, in particular the Tuareg. Mariam has been a very active member of this organization since she was young and has worked on many issues related to health such as nutrition, malaria prevention, and education on sexual and reproductive health among the Tuareg. She participated in training on ILO Convention 169 and several times in the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. She also volunteered with African NGOs for advocacy on Human Rights at the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations and the Universal Periodic Review in Africa. She is also an independent consultant on gender issues, health, and conflict resolution / peace agreement in indigenous communities.

### **Luis Pedernera**



Luis Pedernera is a lawyer and current rapporteur of the United Nations committee on the Rights of Children. Pedernera is a member of the Institute of the Legal and Social Studies of Uruguay (Lelsur) and the Coordination of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for the defense of the rights of children and teenagers.

### **Viola Waghiyi**



Viola (“Vi”) Waghiyi, Environmental Health and Justice Program Director, Alaska Community Action on Toxics. She is motivated by her desire to protect current and future generations from environmental contamination and its associated health harms. She is a proponent of community-based participatory research and the value of traditional environmental knowledge. In 2010, she was awarded the Environmental Achievement Award in Recognition of Valuable Contributions to Environmental Excellence in Alaska by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. In 2012, leaders of Savoonga presented Vi, a certificate of appreciation “for the dedication and

devoted service as an Ambassador of St. Lawrence Island for protecting our health and human rights.” She served as a National Advisory Environmental Health Sciences Council member to the National Institute of Health. Vi is sought out repeatedly to speak at national and international meetings.

### **Pamela Miller**



Pamela Miller serves as Executive Director of Alaska Community Action on Toxics, an environmental health and justice research and advocacy organization. With a master’s degree in environmental science and a bachelor’s degree in biology, she has thirty years of experience in research, policy, advocacy, and training programs focused on environmental health, justice, human rights, and marine ecology. She was selected as a Fellow for the Reach the Decision Makers program from the University of California San Francisco, Reproductive Health and Environment Program (2011) and as a Mentor (2013-2016). She received the Meritorious Community Service Award from the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska. Alaska Conservation Foundation awarded Miller the Olaus Murie Award in recognition of her “long-term outstanding professional contributions to the conservation movement in Alaska.” In 2016, she was elected to serve as the co-chair of the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN), a global network of more than 500 environmental health and justice organizations working for a toxics-free future. She also serves on the board of directors for the Groundswell Fund (2013-present).

### **Janene Yazzie**



Janene Yazzie has twelve years of experience as a community organizer, entrepreneur and Human Rights Advocate on the Navajo. Her work is centered on addressing complex socio-economic challenges while building resiliency to climate change with a focus on water scarcity and food security. She started a business in sustainable community development called Sixth World Solutions, LLP and co-founded the Little Colorado River Watershed Chapter’s Association (LCRWCA) through which she works on land restoration using traditional knowledge to carry out activities and develop policy for 35 Navajo Nation Chapters. She is currently a consultant for the International Indigenous Treaty Council and the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition. Because of this extensive experience, Mrs. Yazzie was recently selected to be the North America Focal Point to the Indigenous Peoples Major Group to the High-Level Political Forum on the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

## Tai Pelli



Tai Pelli is Liaison Officer of the United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP) for Central Florida, she is also co-founded the Caribbean Amerindian Development Organization (CADO). Tai Pelli is an Indigenous Human Rights, Environmental, Treaty and Indigenous Rights Advocate at international, national and local levels. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the International Indian Treaty Council, the first indigenous organization to receive General Consultative Status by UN ECOSOC. Tai is a writer, speaker and researcher who promotes the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples globally and who has been very outspoken about the Environmental Violence and Health impacts in the Caribbean, particularly the archipelago of Borikén (Puerto Rico), Food Sovereignty and Indigenous Peoples Rights. She proactively participates, advocates and presents at various UN Fora as well as other International mechanisms and platforms.

## Danika Littlechild



Danika Littlechild is a Cree lawyer from Ermineskin Cree Nation in Maskwacis, Alberta. Born and raised in Maskwacis, she works with Indigenous Peoples in Treaties 6, 7 & 8 (Alberta), in Canada and internationally. Danika's law practice focuses on Indigenous law, environmental law and international law. A member of Indigenous Climate Action, Danika also serves on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment. Danika is currently the Vice-President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Danika was the recipient in 2015 of the Esquao Award (honouring Indigenous Women in Alberta) and was also a recipient of the Alberta Aboriginal Role Models Award for Justice in the same year. She is passionate about the rights of Indigenous Peoples (in particular children, women and Elders) and the environment, especially water.

## Paige West



Paige West is The Claire Tow Professor of Anthropology at Barnard College and Columbia University where she holds an endowed chair. Her broad scholarly interest is the relationship between societies and their environments. Since the mid-1990s, she has worked with indigenous people in Papua New Guinea. She is the author of three books and the editor of five more. Dr. West is the founder of the journal *Environment and Society*, the chair of the Ecology and Culture University Seminar at Columbia University. In addition to her academic work, Dr. West is the co-founder, and a board member, of the PNG Institute of Biological Research, a small NGO dedicated to building academic opportunities for research in Papua New Guinea by Papua New Guineans. Dr. West is also

the co-founder of the Roviana Solwara Skul, a school in Papua New Guinea dedicated to teaching at the nexus of indigenous knowledge and western scientific knowledge.

### **Binalakshmi Nepram**



**Binalakshmi “Bina” Nepram** is from Manipur Nation located in current Northeast Region of India bordering Myanmar. She is an author and indigenous rights activist specializing on working for demilitarization of indigenous territories. Bina works on mitigating gun-violence, narcotics and women trafficking in indigenous territories. She is author of five books, her most recent one is titled, “Where are our Women in Decision Making: UNSCR 1325”. In 2004, Bina co-founded India's first civil society organization for conventional disarmament issues, Control Arms Foundation of India & also Manipur Women Gun Survivor Network. Recently, in 2018, Bina launched the "Global Alliance for Gender Justice, Peace & Equality," a worldwide platform across different countries. Bina is a recipient of the Sean MacBride Peace Prize and the CNN IBN Real Heroes Award and was also awarded the "Women Have Wings" Award, USA & Telegraph Newspaper Excellence Awards 2017 for her work with indigenous women survivors in Manipur & Indo-Myanmar region. Ms. Nepram is currently a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University Indigenous Studies Programme of Institute for Studies in Human Rights and IIE-SRF Scholar-In-Residence at Connecticut College.

### **Betty Lyons**



Betty Lyons is the President & Executive Director of the American Indian Law Alliance (AILA), and an Indigenous and environmental activist. Ms. Lyons worked together with the NOON organization (Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation) to educate and teach local communities about the culture of the Onondaga Nation to further a better understanding and to bridge the gap between the communities. Betty Lyons has worked for the Onondaga Nation for over seventeen years as a Public Relations Representative, Manager of the Onondaga Nation Arena, and as Executive Assistant to Tadodaho Sidney Hill. She has been an active participant at the annual United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) since the first session in 2001 and has coordinated the opening ceremonies.

### **Berenice Sánchez**



Berenice Sánchez is a Nahua-Otomí Indigenous person from the State of México, México. She is an Indigenous Rights Advocate. She has participated in national, regional and international conferences and workshops on issues which include the rights of indigenous peoples to their autonomy, self-determination and food sovereignty, and has been designated by several organizations to participate in conferences at the United Nations on Climate Change, Biodiversity and other subject matters. She has participated in national, regional and international campaigns for the recognition and respect to the rights on land and territories of Indigenous Peoples, the right to

water, and resistance before mega extractive projects and incineration. From 2013 to 2015, she was part of the Autonomous representation of her community, San Francisco Magú, in the State of México, period in which she took on the struggle against a mega development real estate project.

### **Aurelia Espinoza Buitimea**



Aurelia Espinoza Buitimea is a traditional Yaqui midwife (partera) and healer (curandera) from Vicam, Rio Yaqui, Sonora Mexico. She works with the grassroots community organization Jittoa Bat Natika Wera (Ancestral Medicine). In 2015 Aurelia presented groundbreaking testimony at the United Nations Committee on the Rights on the Child about the devastating impacts of toxic pesticides exposure on Yaqui mothers and their newborn babies and the increasing numbers of birth defects the traditional Yaqui midwives are witnessing as a result.

### **Lucy Mullenkei**



Lucy Mullenkei is a Maasai Woman from Kenya who began her activism as a broadcast journalist on issues related to environment and development. She is currently the Executive Director of Indigenous Information Network (IIN), an organization that works with Indigenous Peoples and Local communities in Kenya. The work involves networking on different aspects of environment, sustainable development, human rights, women's rights, Health and Reproductive rights and development projects at the local, national, regional and international levels. She is the Co-founder of Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN). Through her work,

Ms. Mulenkei is keen to have further research on Reproductive health, violence against Indigenous women especially from Africa researched and shared to highlight changes that come with it. She has participated in other process on the Commission on Sustainable Development, SDGs and Women 2030 at local, national, regional and international levels.

### **Anne Nuorgam**



Anne Nuorgam is a long-term Saami politician, who holds a Master of Laws degree and is currently a PhD student at the University of Lapland. She has been a member of the Saami Parliament of Finland since 2000 and is also head of the Sami Council's Human Rights Unit.

### **Theresa Castillo**



Theresa Castillo works in the fields of gender, social justice, and health equity. Her expertise includes cultural rights, sexual and reproductive health, violence prevention, and community development among vulnerable populations. Working primarily in resource-poor settings across Asia and Africa, she has collaborated with various non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, and Ministries of Health to strengthen public health systems by building the local capacity. Her research has been dedicated to immigrant, refugee, and indigenous women and girls' health issues. Currently, she is the Director of Women and Children's Health Programs at HealthRight International and serves as an Adjunct Professor at New York University's College of Global Public Health and Bard College's Globalization and International Affairs program. Theresa received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from University of Chicago and her Master's and Doctoral Degree in Public Health Education from Columbia University.

### **Baskut Tuncak**



Baskut Tuncak is an international lawyer, specializing in laws and policies on the management of toxic chemicals. He is currently a senior researcher at the Raul Wallenberg Institute in Sweden. Previously, Baskut was a visiting scholar at American University Washington College of Law and a senior attorney with the not-for-profit Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL). Prior to his legal career, he worked as a synthetic chemist with pharmaceutical, biotechnology and synthetic biology companies. He has served in various advisory roles to both governmental and non-governmental initiatives.

### **Antonella Cordone**



Antonella Cordone has worked at IFAD since 1999. She is the Technical Advisor and Coordinator for Indigenous and Tribal Issues, working in the Policy and Technical Advisory Division in the Programme Management Department. She holds a Masters in International Cooperation and Planning for Development, and a Masters in Modern Languages and Literature, both from the University of Rome La Sapienza. In her work at IFAD Antonella has coordinated the preparation of IFAD Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples and leads its implementation in IFAD's operations. She manages the IFAD Indigenous Peoples' Assistance Facility.

### **Natalia Caruso**



Natalia Caruso is currently the Program Director of MADRE. She is originally from Argentina with a degree in sociology with research and field experience in Indigenous women's rights, women's rights, and the right to development. Natalia has also contributed for over 10 years to the work of the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI), providing technical assistance in the areas of financial management, development, and monitoring of FIMI's programs. Her previous experience includes consulting at the United Nations Human Development Report Office at the Headquarters in New York and conducting research on gender/children budget initiatives in developing countries.

### **Rochelle Diver**



Rochelle Diver is a member of Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Northern Minnesota. She is currently a consultant for the International Indian Treaty Council's (IITC) Environmental Health Program spearheading IITC's work with Indigenous Women and the UN Chemical Treaties within the UN Environmental Programme. She has represented her Nation and the International Indian Treaty Council by participating in various United Nation's Treaty Bodies and mechanisms including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Minamata Treaty on Mercury and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

### **Alvaro Esteban Pop**



Alvaro Esteban Pop is a political scientist and an expert in international relations with extensive professional experience in the field of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. He worked as Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and was the Coordinator of the Council of Mayan Organizations of Guatemala; Coordinator of the National Commission for Constitutional Reform of Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala; Head of Indian Mission in the Naleb' Agency. He is currently Technical Secretary of the

Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC).

### **Lynn Freedman**



Lynn Freedman is the director of the Averting Maternal Death and Disability (AMDD) Program and of the Law and Policy Project, both in the Mailman School's Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health. Before joining the faculty at Columbia University in 1990, she worked as a practicing attorney in New York City. She has been a leading figure in the field of health and human rights, working extensively with women's groups and human rights NGOs internationally. She has also published widely on issues of health and human rights, with a particular focus on gender

and women's health. She is currently serving as a senior adviser to the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Child Health and Maternal Health and is the lead author of the Task Force's Final Report "Who's Got the Power: Transforming Health Systems for Women and Children."

### **Tarcila Rivera Zea**



Tarcila Rivera Zea is an indigenous activist from Peru. For more than 30 years she has been defending indigenous rights through her organization CHIRAPAQ, and her involvement in other networks and institutions. She has received awards of recognition from UNICEF, Ford Foundation, Sacred Fire Foundation, and the Ministry of Culture of Peru for her distinguished trajectory and valued contributions to the promotion and defense of indigenous cultures and rights. She is a member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for the 2017-2019 period.

### **Olga Montúfar Contreras**



Olga Montúfar Contreras is a representative of a foundation called Paso a Paso, a foundation of Indigenous persons with disabilities. She is also a representative of the global caucus of Indigenous people with disabilities. In 2012, with the support of the Disability Rights Fund, she, along with other Indigenous people with disabilities, made her first intervention at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

### **Nicole Yanes**



Nicole Yanes is a youth delegate and Programs Assistant for the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC). In her personal capacity, Nicole founded a student organization in 2013 called "Light is Life: Food Sovereignty Project." Light is Life utilizes gardening as a means to actualize decolonization and seeks to create Indigenous-centered solutions to unhealthy diets, availability to traditional foods, and cultural loss. She is from the Opata Nation from Sonora, Mexico. She is also interested in environmental issues and the effects of climate change on traditional food production.