Seeking Justice in International Law

The significance and implications of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Mauro Barelli

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Seeking Justice in International Law

Today human rights represent a primary concern of the international legal system. The international community's commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights, however, does not always produce the results hoped for by the advocates of a more justice-oriented system of international law. Indeed, international law is often criticised for, inter alia, its enduring imperial character, incapacity to minimise inequalities and failure to take human suffering seriously. Against this background, the central question that this book aims to answer is whether the adoption of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples points to the existence of an international law that promises to provide valid responses to the demands for justice of disempowered and vulnerable groups. At one level, the book assesses whether international law has responded fairly and adequately to the human rights claims of indigenous peoples. At another level, it explores the relationship between this response and some distinctive features of the indigenous peoples' struggle for justice, reflecting on the extent to which the latter might have influenced and shaped the former.

The book draws important conclusions as to the reasons behind international law's positive recognition of indigenous peoples' rights, shedding some light on the potential and limits of international law as an instrument of justice.

The book will be of great interest to students and scholars of public international law, human rights and social movements.

Mauro Barelli is a Senior Lecturer at The City Law School, City University London.

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Mauro Barelli London, January 2016

List of abbreviations

CERD Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination CESCR Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

CRC Committee on the Rights of the Child

ECOSOC Economic and Social Council

EMRIP Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

ERTF European Roma and Travellers Forum

EU European Union

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization FPIC Free, Prior and Informed Consent

HRC Human Rights Committee

IACtHR Inter-American Court of Human Rights

ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICERD International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Racial Discrimination

ICJ International Court of Justice
IFC International Finance Corporation
ILO International Labour Organization
NGOs Non-Governmental Organisations
OAU Organization of African Unity

OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

SRMI Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues

UN United Nations

UNDG United Nations Development Group

UNDRIP United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

Peoples

WGIP Working Group on Indigenous Populations WGDD Working Group on the Draft Declaration

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