

Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women

Joint Stakeholder Submission to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review of

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Joint Stakeholder Submission by: Indian Law Resource Center; * National Congress of American Indians; ** National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Inc.; *** and Clan Star, Inc. ****

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* Founded in 1978 by American Indians, the Indian Law Resource Center (ILRC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides legal assistance to indigenous peoples of the Americas to combat racism and oppression, to protect their lands and environment, to protect their cultures, to achieve sustainable economic development and genuine self-government, and to realize their other human rights. ILRC is in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. (www.indianlaw.org).

** The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments, and is committed to ending the epidemic of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. In 2003, NCAI created the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women to address and coordinate an organized response to national policy issues regarding violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. NCAI is in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. (www.ncai.org).

*** The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Inc. (NIWRC) is a national non-profit organization that provides technical assistance, policy development, training, educational materials, and resource information on violence against Native women and the development of tribal strategies and responses to end the violence. (www.niwrc.org).

**** Clan Star, Inc. (CSI) is a nonprofit organization incorporated under the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and devoted to improving justice to strengthen the sovereignty of indigenous women through legal, legislative, and policy initiatives, and education and awareness.

A. SUMMARY

1. This joint stakeholder submission is by the Indian Law Resource Center and the National Congress of American Indians, two nongovernmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Inc., and Clan Star, Inc. Stakeholders are all nonprofit organizations committed to ending violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and strengthening Indian nations to address this crisis. Other organizations and entities supporting this joint submission are the Yup'ik Women's Coalition, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending violence against Yup'ik women; the Emmonak Women's Shelter, a nonprofit organization that is the only Native village-based women's shelter in Alaska that serves Alaska Native women; and the Emmonak Village, a federally recognized tribe located in Alaska.
2. This joint submission flags how the United States' discriminatory legal system perpetuates violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls and denies them meaningful access to justice. Significant areas of United States law continue to violate the United States' obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the provisions of other human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with respect to protecting American Indian and Alaska Native women from violence and ensuring nondiscrimination and equality under federal law.
3. Violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls has reached epidemic levels on tribal lands and in Alaska Native villages—rates that are 2½ times higher than violence against any other group of women in the United States.¹ Native women are more than twice as likely to be stalked than other women.² One in three Native women will be raped in her lifetime, and six in ten will be physically assaulted.³ Worse, the murder rate for Native women is ten times the national average in some tribal communities.⁴ Alaska Native women are subjected to the highest rate of

¹ See, e.g., Pub. L. No. 109-162 § 901 (2006); see also U.S. Dep't of Justice, Domestic Violence and Stalking, The Second Annual Report to Congress Under the Violence Against Women Act (1997); U.S. Dep't of Justice, Stalking and Domestic Violence, The Third Annual Report to Congress Under the Violence Against Women Act (1998).

² See, e.g., Pub. L. No. 109-162 § 901 (2006); see also U.S. Dep't of Justice, Domestic Violence and Stalking, The Second Annual Report to Congress Under the Violence Against Women Act (1997); U.S. Dep't of Justice, Stalking and Domestic Violence, The Third Annual Report to Congress Under the Violence Against Women Act (1998).

³ See PATRICIA TJADEN & NANCY THOENNES, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE: FULL REPORT OF THE PREVALENCE, INCIDENCE, AND CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN 22, ex 7 (2000), at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf>.

⁴ See U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Indian Country Criminal Justice: Departments of the Interior and Justice Should Strengthen Coordination to Support Tribal Courts*, Report No. GAO-11-252, 5 (Feb. 2011), available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11252.pdf>.

forcible sexual assault in the country.⁵ One in two Alaska Native women will experience sexual or physical violence, and "an Alaska Native woman is sexually assaulted every 18 hours."⁶ The actual incidence of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women is most likely much higher due to underreporting. These disproportionately high rates of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women are largely a result of the discriminatory system of federal laws and court decisions governing Indian country and Alaska Native lands, and to the United States' persistent failure to respond adequately to the violence against Native women in Indian country and on Alaska Native lands. All of these factors create a situation where American Indian and Alaska Native women are denied meaningful access to justice and are less protected from violence than other women because they are indigenous, members of indigenous communities, or are assaulted on tribal or Alaska Native lands.

4. By this joint submission, stakeholders recommend that the United States should:
- Reform its laws to meet existing international human rights obligations, as well as the minimum human rights standards set forth in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, by removing systemic discriminatory legal barriers that fail to protect American Indian and Alaska Native women and children against violence.
 - Repeal U.S. law that excludes Alaska tribes from protections that apply to other federally recognized tribes, and empowering Indian and Alaska Native tribes to ensure safety and justice in their communities through the exercise of their inherent sovereignty including the exercise of full criminal jurisdiction within their lands.
 - Fully implement the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013⁷ (VAWA 2013) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)⁸ to recognize the sovereignty of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and provide full access to the intended legal reforms and life-saving resources.
 - Fulfill its responsibility to assist Indian tribes in strengthening their sovereign authority to respond to the epidemic of violence against Native women by providing the resources and assistance to Indian and Alaska Native nations in sufficient, dedicated, and equitable amounts and by appropriate means to ensure equal protection against violence and meaningful access to justice for all American Indian and Alaska Native women, including victims of domestic and sexual violence.
 - Fully and effectively implement the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010,⁹ including the recommendations of the Indian Law and Order Commission.¹⁰

⁵ S. 1474, the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act of 2013, § 2(a)(3).

⁶ S. 1474, the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act of 2013, § 2(a)(3), (4).

⁷ Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub. L. No. 113-4, 127 Stat. 120.

⁸ Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, Pub. L. No. 98-45, codified at 42 U.S.C. §§ 10401 et seq., last amended by Pub. L. No. 11-320 (2010).

⁹ Tribal Law and Order Act, Pub. L. No. 111-211, Title II (§§ 201-266).

- Ratify and implement CEDAW.

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Epidemic of Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women

5. Systemic legal barriers in United States law create an unworkable, discriminatory criminal jurisdictional scheme and limit the ability of Indian nations to protect American Indian and Alaska Native women from violence and to provide them with meaningful remedies and access to justice. For more than 35 years, United States law stripped Indian nations of all criminal authority over non-Indians. Indian nations have been unable to prosecute non-Indians, who, according to the Census Bureau, comprise 76% of the population on tribal lands and 68% of the population in Alaska Native villages and commit most of the violent crimes against Native women on tribal lands.¹¹ While the United States Congress restored limited tribal criminal jurisdiction under VAWA 2013,¹² as discussed further below, the reality is that implementation of this narrow amendment will take decades and may never be fully realized. Thus, with only a few exceptions, Indian and Alaska Native nations and tribes stand as the only governments in the United States without legal authority to protect their own citizens from violence perpetrated by any person. These restrictions, coupled with a poor record of enforcement by federal and state officials having jurisdiction to do so, perpetuate a cycle of extreme rates of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women.

6. Since its 2010 Universal Periodic Review, the United States has responded to this crisis and taken affirmative steps forward by enacting legislation including the Tribal Law and Order Act in 2010¹³ to enhance tribal sentencing authority and, most recently, enacting VAWA 2013¹⁴ to restore limited criminal authority to tribes over certain non-Indians who commit domestic violence, dating violence, or violate protection orders. Reforms under VAWA 2013 also address other certain barriers impeding the safety of Native women.

7. Yet, significant systemic legal gaps remain. Many Native women must wait for justice as the new tribal jurisdiction provisions in VAWA 2013 are not effective until March 2015. Indian nations must meet stringent requirements to implement VAWA 2013 and this, coupled with a severe lack of funding, may delay or even deter tribes from exercising restored jurisdictional authority. And, even where tribes do exercise this restored jurisdiction, tribal jurisdiction extends only to certain crimes of domestic

¹⁰ Indian Law and Order Commission, *A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer: Report to the President & Congress of the United States* (November 2013), available at http://www.aisc.ucla.edu/iloc/report/files/A_Roadmap_For_Making_Native_America_Safer-Full.pdf.

¹¹ Native women experience a per capita rate of interracial violence far exceeding that of the general population with one study finding about 88% of the offenders identified by Native women survivors as being non-Indian. See Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoenne, U.S. Dep't of Justice, *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings From the National Violence Against Women Survey 9 and 22* (2000).

¹² Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub. L. No. 113-4, 127 Stat. 120, § 904.

¹³ Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-2111.

¹⁴ Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub. L. No. 113-4, 127 Stat. 120, § 904.

violence and dating violence. Tribes will still be unable to prosecute non-Indians in cases of rape not having the necessary nexus to the Indian tribe under the statute. In addition, this statute does not extend jurisdiction to Indian tribes in crimes of stalking or sex trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Native women. VAWA 2013 allows eligible Indian nations to prosecute non-Indians only when the non-Indian has a pre-existing relationship with the tribe or tribal members. Therefore, strangers may still enter reservations and commit violent crimes against Indian women and yet be exempt from prosecution in tribal courts. And some tribes, including the more than 220 tribes in Alaska are excluded from the law entirely.

The Crisis Facing Alaska Native Women in Alaska Native Villages

8. Especially dire is the situation for Alaska Native nations and women. A "special rule" in VAWA 2013¹⁵ operates to exclude all but one of Alaska's 229 tribes from the new increased protections. The "special rule" exacerbates the existing crisis within Alaska Native villages where Alaska Native women and girls experience epidemic levels of violence that are the highest in the United States. Alaska Natives comprise only 15.2% of the population in Alaska, yet they represent nearly 50% of the domestic violence victims and 61% of the sexual assault victims.¹⁶ In some Alaska Native villages, Alaska Native women report rates of domestic violence up to ten times higher than the rest of the country and physical assault victimization rates twelve times higher.¹⁷ By excluding 228 Alaska Native villages, VAWA 2013 denies Alaska Native women equal protection under the law and treats them differently than other women in the United States, including other indigenous women.

9. Recently, a statutorily authorized commission, the Indian Law and Order Commission, completed its comprehensive report to the United States President and Congress—A Roadmap for Making America Safer.¹⁸ The Commission found that the exclusion of Alaska Native villages from the definition of Indian country in VAWA 2013 separates the villages from other federally recognized tribes and places them at a severe disadvantage regarding public safety. The Commission recommended that local control and criminal authority be restored to Alaska Native Villages.

10. The United States and the State of Alaska have long supported laws, policies, and practices limiting Alaska tribal governments' authority to protect and ensure the health and well being of Alaska Native citizens. State law enforcement officers who *do* have authority to protect Alaska Native women serve less than 100 of Alaska's more than 200 rural villages. Many Alaska Native villages are without any law enforcement at all. Consequently, the life of a woman depends largely on the ability of the local Alaska

¹⁵ Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub. L. No. 113-4, 127 Stat. 126, § 910.

¹⁶ UAA Justice Center Report to the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (May 13, 2010). According to the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's Epidemiology Center, 1 of 2 Alaska Native women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence.

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ Indian Law and Order Commission, *A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer: Report to the President & Congress of the United States* (November 2013), available at http://www.aisc.ucla.edu/iloc/report/files/A_Roadmap_For_Making_Native_America_Safer-Full.pdf.

Native village to provide timely help and protection. The lack of tribal authority to address violent crimes locally and immediately, coupled with the ineffective response by state law enforcement, creates an extremely dangerous environment for Alaska Native women who are targeted for all types of violence—domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence and sex trafficking. Services for Native survivors of violence are sorely lacking; in the entire State of Alaska there is only one Native village-based women’s shelter exists in Alaska – the Emmonak Women’s Shelter.

11. Decisions by the United States courts regarding protection orders have further jeopardized the safety of American Indian and Alaska Native women. In *Town of Castle Rock, Colo. v. Gonzales*,¹⁹ the United States Supreme Court held that the U.S. Constitution does not require state law enforcement to investigate or enforce alleged violations of domestic violence protection orders. United States decisional law denies women, including American Indian and Alaska Native women, the right to have their protection orders enforced by law enforcement officials, leaving them unprotected. In 2011, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights reviewed the situation in *Gonzales*²⁰ and issued a landmark decision. The Commission affirmed the United States’ legal duty to respect one of the most basic human rights — the right to be free from violence and determined that the United States violated its obligations under international human rights laws by failing to use due diligence and reasonable measures to protect women against violence.

12. The *Gonzales* case involved protection orders issued by a state court; however, tribal courts also may issue civil protection orders against abusers, Indian or non-Indian. Often, such orders are the only remedy and form of tribal protection for the victim. This is particularly so for Alaska Native women. Currently, the State of Alaska is blatantly disregarding the safety of Alaska Native women by refusing to enforce any tribal court protection orders unless they comply with Alaska state requirements and are registered or filed in an Alaska state court. Recently, Associate U.S. Attorney General Tony West wrote the State Attorney General of Alaska that Alaska’s position does not comply with federal law, which requires enforcement of a tribal court protection order regardless of whether such orders were filed or registered in a state court.²¹

Missing and Murdered American Indian and Alaska Native Women in the United States

13. Murder rates for American Indian and Alaska Native women are ten times the national average on some reservations. Though data is scant, the number of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women is alarming to Native communities. Federal officials also have acknowledged that human trafficking is increasing in Native

¹⁹ 545 U.S. 748 (2005).

²⁰ Jessica Lenahan (Gonzales) v. United States, Report No. 80/11, Case 12,626 (July 21, 2011), available at www.oas.org/en/iachr/decisions/merits.asp.

²¹ See 18 U.S.C. § 2265(d)(2). A copy of the letter from Associate U.S. Attorney General Tony West to the State Attorney General of Alaska regarding tribal court protection orders is available at: <https://turtletalk.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/letter-from-asg-west-to-ag-geraghty-july-28-2014.pdf>.

communities and among Native populations. In addition to the trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Native women within the United States, Native women and children are at particular risk for international trafficking. Because a large number of Indian reservations are located on the United States' borders with Canada and Mexico, Native women and girls can easily be taken off of these reservations and trafficked over either border. Over 60 miles of the United States' northern border is classified as "Indian country" and under tribal jurisdiction. There are 6 tribes with lands on the U.S.-Canada border and 24 other tribes within close proximity of the northern border or on the shores of one of the Great Lakes. Another 26 tribes are located along the U.S.-Mexico border, some of which have extensive cultural and family ties in Mexico. Alaska Native women are close to Canada, Russia, and to expanding international shipping routes as well. Increased shipping activity, along with the low level of monitoring in those waters, compound the risk that these women could disappear onto ships and end up as trafficking victims in other countries. A growing number of disturbing cases from throughout Indian country and Alaska Native villages reflect federal unresponsiveness, lack of an effective national protocol for handling these cases, scant data, and institutionalized disregard for reports of missing Native women.

Impacts of the Extractive Industries on the Safety of American Indian and Alaska Native Women in the United States

14. Oil and gas development on and near tribal lands raise the already high risk that American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls will be targets of violence, murder, and sex trafficking. While federal officials have acknowledged that human trafficking is increasing in Native communities and among Native populations, there is little data on sex trafficking and sexual exploitation within the energy development context. There have been some arrests and at least one federal conviction involving victims from Indian reservations at the heart of the North Dakota oil boom. Most of the defendants are believed to be Bakken oil patch workers from out-of-state. Much of the risk of sex trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation stems from a major influx of out-of-area workers, many of whom are housed in extremely large temporary housing complexes known as "man camps." Wherever the boomtown pattern draws large numbers of outside workers into close proximity with Native communities, similar risks of sexual violence and sex trafficking may arise. Given the lack of tribal criminal jurisdiction over these crimes committed by non-Indians, American Indian and Alaska Native women are denied effective legal protection.²² The VAWA 2013 amendment restored criminal jurisdiction to certain Indian tribes only in cases of domestic violence, dating violence, and violation of an order of protection within Indian country. International attention has recently focused on the problem of sex trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence in the context of extractive industry activities in indigenous territories. In 2012, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues convened an expert group meeting, which found that extractive industries

²² Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub. L. No. 113-4, 127 Stat. 120, § 904(c).

operating in indigenous territories with insufficient oversight often detrimentally impact indigenous women and girls with respect to sexual assault and sex trafficking.²³

C. U.S. COMPLIANCE WITH ITS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS

15. Because of the significant and life-threatening gaps and legal barriers remaining in U.S. law, the United States continues to deny basic rights to American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls that others in the country freely enjoy, particularly the right to be free from discrimination, violence, and to enjoy equality under the law and the right to effective judicial remedies when their rights are violated.

16. These failures of U.S. law also violate the United States' international human rights obligations and human rights norms and obligations regarding: equal protection of the law (ICCPR Article 26, UNDRIP Articles 2 and 44); access to justice and effective remedies (ICCPR Article 2, CEDAW Article 2(c)); prohibitions against discrimination against women (CEDAW); protection of women and children against violence and discrimination (UNDRIP Article 22(2)); rights to life and security of the person (UNDRIP Article 7); and rights to access to justice and to obtain adequate reparation or satisfaction for damages suffered (ICERD Articles 5(b) and 6)).

17. In 2008, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination criticized the United States for its failure to meet its obligations under the ICERD to prevent and punish violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. The Committee's Concluding Observations and Report expressed "concern that the alleged insufficient will of federal and state authorities to take action with regard to such violence and abuse often deprives victims . . . and in particular Native American women, of their right to access to justice and the right to obtain adequate reparation or satisfaction for damages suffered. (Articles 5(b) and 6)."²⁴ The Committee recommended the United States increase efforts to prevent and prosecute perpetrators of violence against Indian women, including promptly, independently, and thoroughly investigating reports of rape and other sexual violence against Indian women.²⁵ The Committee further recommended that the United States use the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as guidance for interpreting its obligations relating to indigenous peoples.²⁶ In its June 2013 Periodic Report, the United States responded to the issue of violence against indigenous women in ¶¶ 188, 189 and 190, with more general information found in ¶¶ 191-195.²⁷ At ¶ 188, the United States acknowledged that the problem of violence against American Indian and

²³ *Combating violence against indigenous women and girls: article 22 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 28 February 2012 (E/C.19/2012/6), para. 21.

²⁴ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding Observations United States of America, CERD/C/USA/CO/6 (Feb. 2008) at ¶ 26.

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.* at ¶ 29. Subsequently, on December 16, 2010, President Obama announced the United States' endorsement of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

²⁷ The Committee specifically raised this issue during the 2008 Periodic Review, both through the Rapporteur's question 19, and again in ¶ 26 of the Concluding Observations. The U.S. filed a written response to the Rapporteur's question; the relevant portion begins at page 63 of the United States submission.

Alaska Native women “stems at least in part from the fact that under U.S. law, tribal authorities have been prevented from exercising criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians on Indian lands, and are also limited in their criminal sentencing authority.” At ¶ 169, the United States “supports tribal authority over a broad range of internal and territorial affairs, including . . . community and public safety.”

18. On August 29, 2014, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination issued its Concluding Observations²⁸ regarding its latest review of the United States compliance under the ICERD. The Committee remained concerned “at the disproportionate number of women, particularly . . . American Indian and Alaska Native women, who continue to be subjected to violence, including rape and sexual violence.”²⁹ The Committee acknowledged steps by the U.S. since 2008—particularly the enactment of the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010, which enhances tribal sentencing authority, and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA 2013), which includes an amendment restoring limited tribal criminal jurisdiction over certain non-Indians committing domestic violence, dating violence, or violate protection orders. But, as the Committee emphasized, this restored jurisdiction is *limited*.³⁰ The Concluding Observations call on the U.S. “to intensify its efforts to prevent and combat violence against women, particularly against American Indian and Alaska Native women, and ensure that all cases of violence against women are effectively investigated, perpetrators prosecuted and sanctioned, and victims provided with appropriate sanctions.”³¹

19. On March 27, 2014 the UN Human Rights Committee released its Concluding Observations from the United States review on its compliance with the ICCPR.³² The Committee expressed concern that American Indian and Alaska Native women are at high risk of domestic violence and face obstacles to justice. In ¶ 16 of the Concluding Observations, the Committee recommended the United States fully and effectively implement VAWA 2013 and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) to: (1) "strengthen measures to prevent and combat domestic violence" and "to ensure that law enforcement personnel appropriately respond to domestic violence;" (2) "ensure that cases of domestic violence are effectively investigated and that perpetrators are prosecuted and sanctioned;" (3) "ensure remedies for all victims of domestic violence, and take steps to improve the provision of emergency shelter, housing, child care, rehabilitative services and legal representation for women victims of domestic violence;" and (4) "take measures to assist tribal authorities in their efforts to address domestic violence against Native American women."

²⁸ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of United States of America, CERD/C/USA/CO/7-9 (29 Aug. 2014).

²⁹ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of United States of America, CERD/C/USA/CO/7-9 (29 Aug. 2014) at ¶ 19.

³⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of United States of America, CERD/C/USA/CO/7-9 (29 August 2014).

³¹ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of United States of America, CERD/C/USA/CO/7-9 (29 August 2014).

³² See <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw58-2014/session-outcomes>.

D. STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS

20. The United States should reform its laws to meet its existing international human rights obligations, as well as the minimum human rights standards set forth in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, by removing systemic discriminatory legal barriers that fail to protect American Indian and Alaska Native women and children against violence.

21. The United States should repeal U.S. law that excludes Alaska tribes from protections that apply to other federally recognized tribes, including but not limited to Section 910 of Title IX of VAWA 2013, which specifically excludes all but one of Alaska's 229 tribes from the increased protections that apply to other federally recognized tribes. The United States should empower Indian and Alaska Native tribes to ensure safety and justice in their communities through the exercise of their inherent sovereignty including the exercise of full criminal jurisdiction within their lands.

22. The United States should fully, fairly, and effectively implement VAWA 2013 and FVPSA to recognize the sovereignty of American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and provide full access to the intended legal reforms and life-saving resources.

23. The United States should fulfill its responsibility to assist Indian tribes in strengthening their sovereign authority to respond to the epidemic of violence against Native women by providing the resources and assistance to Indian and Alaska Native nations, including their law enforcement, judicial, victim services, and criminal justice systems, in sufficient, dedicated, and equitable amounts and by appropriate means to ensure equal protection against violence and meaningful access to justice for all American Indian and Alaska Native women, including victims of domestic and sexual violence.

24. The United States should fully and effectively implement the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010, including the recommendations of the Indian Law and Order Commission set forth in its required report to the President and Congress of the United States, submitted in November 2013.³³

25. The United States should sign, ratify, and implement CEDAW to ensure that U.S. law is in compliance with international legal norms regarding all forms of discrimination against women, including American Indian and Alaska Native women.

³³ Indian Law and Order Commission, *A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer: Report to the President & Congress of the United States* (November 2013), available at http://www.aisc.ucla.edu/iloc/report/files/A_Roadmap_For_Making_Native_America_Safer-Full.pdf.