

Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities Major Group
Speech

29 Nov 2022 (to be spoken on 30 Nov 2022)

Thank you, chair. Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Juan Mancias. I'm the tribal chairman of the Carrizo Comecrudo Tribe. 500 years ago our land was invaded and genocide began. A genocide that is promoted by the imperial, nationalistic attitude of the majority nations gathered here. The killing of our people continues in the industrial sacrifice zones along the Gulf, Pacific, Atlantic coasts and to every river in the Americas. With climate change clocking over us, and plastic pollution pervading in all environments, including our bodies, we cannot wait until 2040 for change or for a consensus to stop sacrificing indigenous communities and first nations around the world in the name of profit. A consensus was neither sought nor reached for the lands that were taken from us and the permits that were given to construct the fossil fuel and petrochemical infrastructure that perpetuate the global plastic pollution crisis. There is no absolution from the harm already done. Solutions cannot be stifled by member states that seek to prop up the petrochemical industry and delay this process through consensus, wasting our precious time in unproductive conversations. Tribal erasure in the Americas is ongoing and evident by the constant attack on the Tribal lands by the plastics and petrochemicals industries who continue polluting the air, water, and soil of our hereditary lands.

The problem we are trying to solve in this room has more roots than what you all are seeing right now. Plastic pollution is rooted into imperialism, genocide, slavery, nationalism and capitalism. We cannot solve this problem with the same mindset that has led to it. And we certainly cannot solve it without first nations and indigenous people being at the negotiating table. Our peoples have been protecting life since the origin of the world. And for the last 500 years we have been defending our lifeways against corporate and imperialist interests. We are all connected to the creation we are part of. Sacrificing us is sacrificing yourself and the future generations. And this has to end. Now.