

Press Briefing

Who Owns the World's Land? The 2nd Edition

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



SARA OMI CASAMA

President, Coordinator of Territorial Women Leaders of Mesoamerica

Sara Omi Casama is an Indigenous leader of the Emberá people and lawyer specialized in human rights and protection mechanisms. She holds a postgraduate degree as an expert in Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights and International Cooperation. She is the legal representative of the Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests (AMPB) and President of the Coordination of Women Territorial Leaders of Mesoamerica and held the position of traditional authority as President of the Embera Congress of Alto Bayano in Panama from 2016–2021. In 2022, Forbes Magazine named her one of the 100 most influential women in Central America.



GAM AWUNGSHI SHIMRAY

Secretary-General, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

Gam A. Shimray is a Naga from Northeast India. He is a dedicated human rights activist with more than 30 years of experience defending and promoting the rights of Indigenous Peoples. As the current Secretary-General of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), he envisions contributing to the advancement of Indigenous Peoples' rights to self-determination for sustainable peace and development in Asia. He has held several positions at the national and regional levels before taking office at AIPP. In particular, he strives to achieve transformational change through the adoption of democratic means of collective actions and responsible Indigenous self-government. He has also been involved in peace building initiatives in India and has authored several publications related to human rights and environmental and ethnic issues in Asia.



PATRICK SAIDI HEMEDI

Coordinator, Dynamics Indigenous Peoples Group (DGPA)

Patrick Saidi is the National Coordinator of the Dynamics of Indigenous Peoples Groups (DGPA) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a network of 45 Indigenous organizations and those working to secure the rights of Indigenous Peoples and improve recognition of their role in protecting forests. He has expertise in advocating for protecting the rights and culture of Indigenous Peoples at the national, regional, and international levels. Under his leadership, DGPA received the 2015 Equator Prize for its successful lobbying for a legal framework in the DRC that promotes and protects the rights of the Indigenous Pygmy Peoples. He also serves as Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Network of Indigenous and Local Peoples for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems of the DRC (REPALEF-RDC/REPALEAC) and co-president of the DGM Mechanism in the DRC. Patrick holds a master's degree in environmental security and global warming.



SOLANGE BANDIAKY-BADJI

Coordinator, Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI)

Dr. Solange Bandiaky-Badji is Coordinator of the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI), a global coalition of over 150 organizations advancing the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and Afro-descendant Peoples. She also serves as President of the Rights and Resources Group, the nonprofit coordinating body of the coalition based in Washington, DC. Bandiaky-Badji previously led RRI's strategy for engagement in Africa with a focus on tenure rights reform, and spearheaded RRI's Gender Justice program. Before RRI, she was with Partners Global, where she led programs on access to justice, security sector reform, and peacebuilding. She has also worked as a regional expert on gender and climate change for the Africa Adaptation Programme (AAP) and the UNDP/BDP Gender Team in New York. Bandiaky-Badji holds a PhD in Women's and Gender Studies from Clark University, Massachusetts, and an MA in Environmental Sciences and in Philosophy from Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal.