



**Adoption of the convention for the protection of
all persons from enforced disappearance and
declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.
Letter from M. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the
Republic, to Mr Kofi ANNAN, United Nations
Secretary-general**

Paris, 12 July 2006

Secretary-General, [handwritten: Dear Kofi]

I should like personally to congratulate you on the adoption on 29 June by the United Nations Human Rights Council of the Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Your inaugural speech before that forum, in which you reaffirmed your commitment to these draft texts and urged the Council's recently-elected members concretely to demonstrate their determination to defend human rights by adopting them, was crucial.

The adoption of the Declaration on the Indigenous Peoples is a milestone. Culmination of a process initiated over 20 years ago, it marks an essential step forward in protecting human rights, particularly for those peoples who have too often suffered amidst indifference. As you know, France cosponsored this draft to which I attach especial importance. The inauguration of the Quai Branly Museum on 21 June this year, in your presence, provided the opportunity once again to assert the dignity of the indigenous peoples and their importance not only for history, but also for the future of mankind.

A great deal remains to be done for the indigenous peoples to obtain recognition commensurate with their cultural and human contribution to the life of our societies. France will continue to remain active, particularly in the framework of this International Decade of Indigenous Peoples. The special rapporteur on the situation of human rights and [fundamental freedoms] of indigenous peoples has, moreover, asked to visit New Caledonia this year and we shall make sure that we cooperate with him in every way we can.