



With breaking stories and  
newswire products from

**UN NEWS CENTRE**



## **New Congolese law ‘significant’ step for indigenous rights – UN expert**



Indigenous Baka children in the Republic of Congo often do not go to school because of discrimination

7 January 2011 – An independent United Nations human rights expert today welcomed a new law recently adopted in the Republic of Congo, calling it a “significant” step in ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples.

“This law is the first of its kind on the African continent, and it provides an important example of a good practice in the region for the recognition and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples,” James Anaya, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, said in a statement.

“This marks a significant step in recognizing and protecting the rights of marginalized indigenous peoples of the country, including groups such as the Baaka, Mbendjele, Mikaya, Luma, Gyeli, Twa and Babongo, which collectively have been known as Pygmies,” he added.

Mr. Anaya commended the Republic of Congo for its adoption on 30 December of the law, and voiced his hope that all measures to ensure that it is carried out will be taken soon.

“Effective implementation of the law will require a strong and concerted effort by government authorities at all levels, especially in light of the extreme circumstances of disadvantage that indigenous peoples in Congo still face,” he noted.

Mr. Anaya, who visited the country in November 2010, will release his report on the situation of indigenous peoples in the Republic of Congo later this year.

Like all Special Rapporteurs, he works in an independent and unpaid capacity and reports to the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[UNICEF hails new law on rights for indigenous children in Republic of Congo](#)