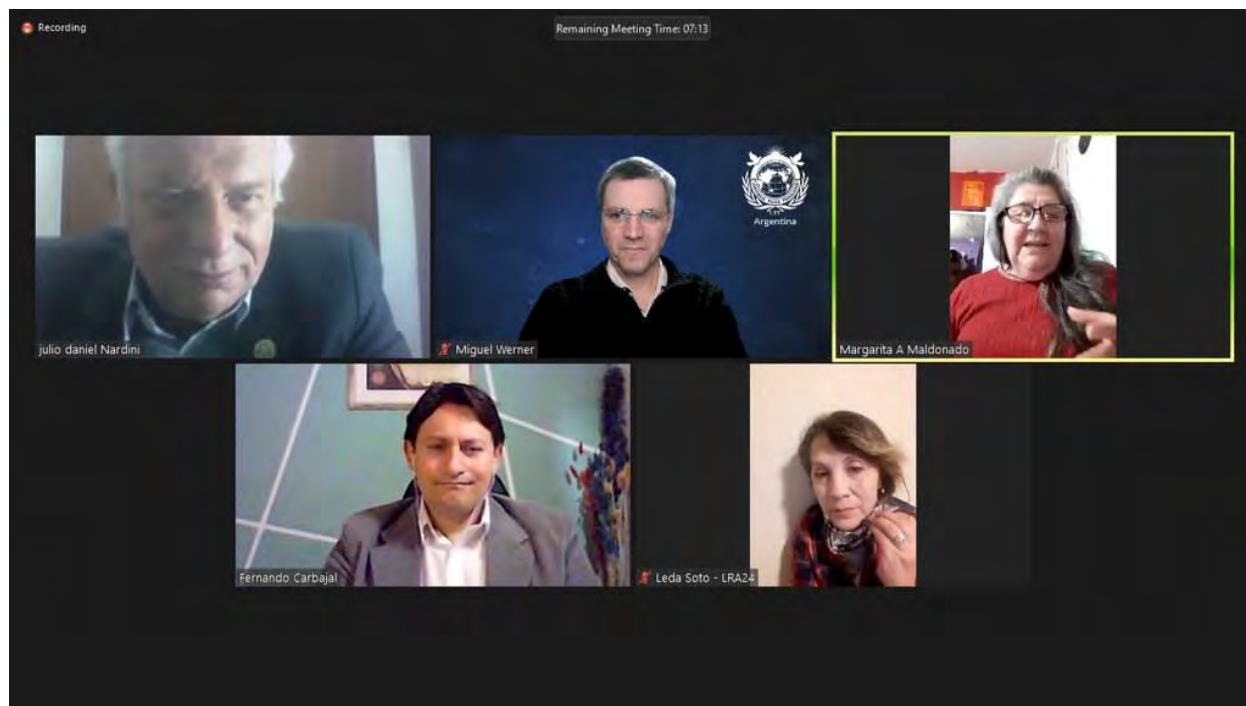


IAAP and UPF Argentina's Peace Road: Selknam Culture & Ancestral Knowledge

Miguel Werner
August 20, 2022



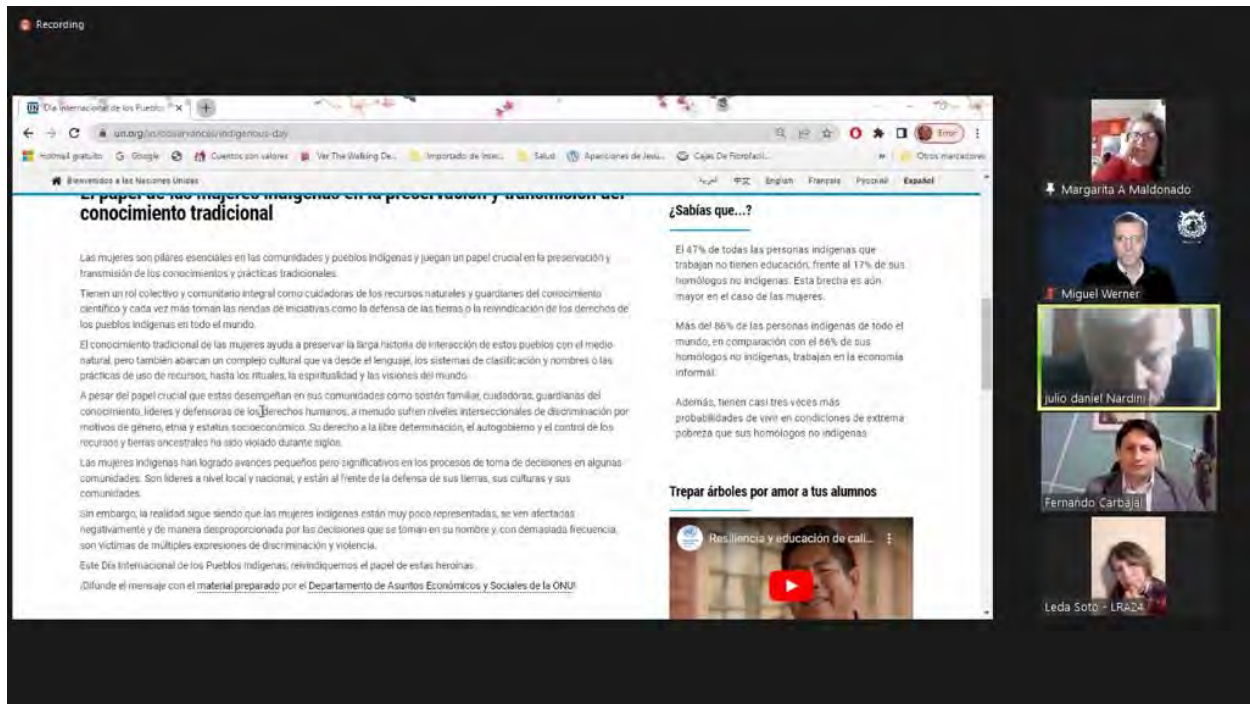
Argentina -- "Selknam Culture and Ancestral Knowledge as a Road to Peace" was the theme of the discussion with **Margarita Maldonado**, fourth generation of Selknam people, the indigenous inhabitants who lived in North and Center Tierra del Fuego (*Kárwkènká* in Selknam language) in the southernmost part of the South American continent: Argentina and Chile. This event was in support of the UN International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (August 9 each year) (1).

The Zoom meeting was held on August 20, 2022 and was promoted by **Prof. Julio Nardini**, representative of the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP) Argentina, along with Ambassadors for Peace **Fernando Carbajal**, member of IAAP-Argentina, and journalist **Leda Soto**, announcer at Río Grande's National Radio (Tierra del Fuego), and **Miguel Werner**, president of UPF-Argentina (2).

This valuable exchange sought to praise ancestral contributions in the search of knowledge and mutual respect, dialogue and cooperation among peoples, understanding and reconciliation with native peoples, through a descendant of native peoples from Patagonia, which Ms. Maldonado considers "the beginning of the world." Throughout the pleasant conversation, she had a warm smile on her face despite the rough story of her ancestors, telling us she decided to teach, not to fight. She believes in transmitting her roots and trusting the power of love and peace, which she considers should begin in each one of us, to build the future.

On this occasion, she was appointed Ambassador for Peace, an emblematic initiative in UPF's mission which seeks to empower a leadership of values and good practices, for her educational and cultural work for peaceful coexistence.

Ms. Maldonado, mother of three children, lives in Río Grande, province of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and South Atlantic Islands, where she is instrumental in the transmission of ancestral knowledge such as basketwork, the techniques for which she learned from her ancestors. She is a promoter and disseminator of her culture through talks and workshops at educational institutions and other places. She is the author of the book *Entre dos mundos: Pasado y presente de la cultura Selknam-Haus de Tierra del Fuego* (*Between Two Worlds: Past and Present of Tierra del Fuego's Selknam-Haus Culture*).



This discussion has special relevance this year under the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, which especially addresses "the preservation and transmission of traditional ancestral knowledge" by indigenous women. The multilateral organization considers that "Traditional knowledge is a cumulative body of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations maintained and developed by peoples with extended histories of interaction with the natural environment. These sophisticated sets of understandings, interpretations and meanings are part and parcel of a cultural complex that encompasses language, naming and classification systems, resource use practices, ritual, spirituality and worldviews" (3).

Quotes:

1) International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples: www.un.org/es/observances/indigenous-day

2) Ancestral Education as a Road to Peace – Discussion with Margarita Maldonado 20-8-2022: youtu.be/pU_6GcScOBM

Selknam Culture and Ancestral Knowledge – Discussion with Margarita Maldonado 20-8-2022: youtu.be/JZbdYTsQI4Q

3) UN date quote: www.un.org/en/observances/indigenous-day

