

Miguel BERGER Pflümmig 13

**Statement by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany
at the 10th Session of the UNPFII, 16-27 May 2011**

Madam Chair, Excellencies, Representatives of Indigenous Peoples,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Germany remains strongly committed to the implementation of the UN
Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Respecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples is a matter
the German government takes very seriously and one that we address in
our bilateral discussions with countries having indigenous populations.
In our development cooperation, and in particular through human rights
protection projects, Germany's goal is to strengthen the rights of
indigenous peoples, to improve their living conditions and their access to
resources, and also to consolidate national and regional networks of
indigenous organisations. To further promote human rights of persons
belonging to indigenous peoples, Germany also supports the Voluntary
Fund for Indigenous Populations facilitating the participation of
representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations in the Expert
Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples established in 2007 as
well as in sessions of the Human Rights Council and of the human rights
treaty bodies.

15 years ago, the German government published the first concept on
Development Cooperation with the Indigenous Population in Latin
America, which was revised in 2006.

Our strategy, which is binding for all official implementing organizations
operating in Latin America, aims to support indigenous peoples in

articulating and exercising their right to self-determined development in all matters concerning their lives or their land. Currently, the German government is working on applying the Latin America strategy also to other regions, such as Asia and Africa.

We are pursuing a two-sided approach to implement our strategy. Firstly, we are actively engaged in strengthening indigenous organizations, in particular the umbrella organizations representing the Amazon Basin, the Andean highlands and Guatemala. Secondly, we mainstream support for indigenous peoples and their organisations into all German development projects in Latin America. Our project PROINDIGENA was established with the specific purpose of implementing this strategy.

These national policies and programs reflect the great importance the German government attaches to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and its implementation as well as to the realization of the 2nd UN Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

Madam chair,

Bearing in mind articles 3 and 32 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, let me give you a brief overview of our activities in the field of development with culture and identity, namely in political participation, preservation of traditional lands and territories, and education.

In 2010, the German government launched a new project in Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru to promote the right to identity. The aim of the project is to give rural and marginalized sections of the population access to birth certificates and identity papers through the general system of residents' registration.

About 60 million indigenous people depend almost entirely on the forest ecosystem. The International Year of Forests provides a global platform for highlighting the issue of sustainable forest management. Germany focuses on the preservation and sustainable use of land and natural resources, knowing that they are vital to those peoples' very survival, and knowing that climate change is threatening their livelihood in many regions.

With regard to the recommendations of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to support the revival of indigenous languages, I would like to highlight the many years of experience of the German development cooperation in bilingual intercultural education. Since 2005, Germany has supported the Development Fund for Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean (Fondo Indígena) in establishing an indigenous intercultural university in Guatemala and, most recently, expanding its curriculum and institutionalizing an indigenous intercultural university network. As a result, indigenous organizations and Latin American governments will be provided with highly-qualified specialist and executive staff for dealing with indigenous and intercultural issues.

In the past five years, German development cooperation projects have increasingly focused on the rights and needs of indigenous peoples. Next to mainstreaming indigenous issues into all our programs, we regularly train our staff in the field on intercultural issues and on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, therefore implementing article 42 of the Declaration.

For a number of years, German development cooperation has also worked with indigenous organisations in Africa, mainly within the multi-donor initiative "Access and benefit sharing" (ABS) Capacity

Development Initiative for Africa. The initiative supports capacity building in Africa, especially for indigenous representatives.

In order to implement ABS at national and local level, the initiative also provides, for example, support for the drafting and implementation of biocultural protocols. These protocols are developed by indigenous and local communities.

Madam Chair,

Let me conclude by reiterating Germany's continuously strong support for indigenous peoples and the successful implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Thank you.