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3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
United Nations Headquarters, New York  
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Agenda Item:  
Culture

Statement on behalf of  
The Asian Indigenous Peoples' Caucus

Presented by Chandra Roy

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Greetings from the Asian Indigenous Peoples' Caucus!

Land is the foundation of our culture. It is vital to our identity, and we do hereby reaffirm our commitment to upholding our rights to our land and our culture.

In many parts of Asia indigenous peoples' culture is under threat – through violence, militarization, oppression and colonization. To these brutalities is added the new device of globalization by states and corporations who want our land and resources.

We urge the Permanent Forum to make the following recommendations:

To prevent the deliberate erosion of the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples

~~It is urgent the Permanent Forum express its concern at the impact of such processes on indigenous peoples and ensure that indigenous peoples' own decision-making processes and institutions are fully respected. How we give or withhold our consent is not defined by external corporations or agencies. It is vital that development occurs on our terms and is indigenous led, as the negative impact of culturally inappropriate external interventions is immeasurable;~~

We note that the WGIP is working on a legal commentary on the principle of free, prior and informed consent and the UNDP report on the current understanding of this concept within the UN system. We call on the Permanent Forum to request the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the UN WGIP and the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples to give the highest priority to the elaboration of the principle of free, prior and informed consent in full cooperation with indigenous peoples' organizations and indigenous experts;

- > Women are the custodians of our cultures and knowledge and the mainstay of our subsistence economies. We are more severely affected by processes of globalization, but rarely if ever involved in so-called participatory processes. We call on the Permanent Forum to urge member-states, UN bodies and agencies, including financial institutions (such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank) to ensure that indigenous women are fully engaged as rights holders in all such processes;
- > That all UN system bodies and agencies establish mechanisms together with indigenous peoples' organizations, to monitor such processes and examine the effects of development and globalization and all other processes of dispossession on indigenous peoples' culture;
- > To call on all states to adopt the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the provisions relating to the protection of the cultural rights of indigenous peoples.

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