

Agenda item 4 Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the UNDRIP, the outcome document of the WCIP and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Ogimaabineesik ndignicaz, Hunter's Point donjba, North Bay donda, makwaa dodem, anishinabe kwe endow.

I am here to speak on education and to propose increased coordination with reference to Article 14 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development Goal No. 4. Our Council has participated in, as well as contributed to the 2021 UNESCO consultations on Indigenous Perspectives on Higher Education. These consultations inform discussions that will be taking place at the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference on May 18 – 20, 2022.

Reflecting on the dialogue this morning, we observe that the coordination of work and participation between UNESCO and the forum can be further aligned in processes that affect Indigenous peoples.

This was identified in the 2020 UN Report, Building an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient Future with Indigenous Peoples: A Call To Action. I recommend members of the Permanent Forum participate at the UNESCO conference.

I acknowledge the member state representative from Canada yesterday. Her statement on facilitating increased participation of Indigenous peoples at the Permanent Forum and I would recommend further – at UNESCO.

Article 14 provides that Indigenous peoples establish their own education systems in life-long learning including higher education. SDG #4, indicator 4.3, needs to be consistent with Article 14 of the Declaration to ensure that quality technical, vocational and higher education is accessible to Indigenous peoples in a manner that is appropriate to their languages and life ways.

In Canada, and in one particular jurisdiction, the Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017, came into law in December 2017. This Act recognizes control and ownership of higher education by Indigenous communities.

I want to acknowledge the experiences, advocacy and commitment of many elders, parents, children and leaders to make change in higher education. We must make more steps that see Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being as the leading principle – in our languages and our communities, and not for us, but led by us as Indigenous Peoples.

Miigwech.

Laurie Robinson
Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council