

Asia Caucus Comments on the Zero Draft of the OD

Thank you and Kopivosian Mr. Chairman,

First, the Asia Caucus would also like to acknowledge the work of the President of the General Assembly (PGA) and the team of advisors in producing the zero draft which reflects certain recommendations from the Alta outcome document as well as recommendations made by the Asia caucus during the first round of consultations on 3 June and the interactive hearing on 17 and 18 June. We have been referring to this document as a basis of our analysis.

Indigenous peoples of Asia are looking forward to keen interests and active participation of our governments, and many of indigenous peoples in the region have already started to be in touch with their respective governments hoping that this High Level Plenary meeting to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples will further strengthen protection and promotion of indigenous rights.

Mr Chairman, let me start by stressing that the Asia Caucus fully supports the GCG statement and all the priorities that have been identified.

Apart from those priorities raised by my colleague, John Henriksen on behalf of the GCG especially related to land and the national implementation of indigenous peoples' rights, the Asia caucus would also like to elaborate some of our priorities.

OP11 is a priority for Asia as for the other regions. Disaggregation of data has been accepted by States and UN agencies as a way to understand situations of indigenous peoples. We believe that existing measurements such as the Human Development Index, Gender Equality Index, Poverty Index can prove useful particularly with indicators relevant to indigenous peoples are developed, and want these to be incorporated in the text of OP11.

On OP16, we have seen that NHRIs are among important institutions promoting IP rights in Asia. For example the conduct of National Inquiry into the Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Malaysia and in Indonesia on forests are important contributions towards the protection of IPs' rights. In response to the National Inquiry by Malaysian Human Rights Commission, for instance, the government has acknowledged that land issues are serious and require urgent attention.

With respect to OP23, the majority of indigenous peoples of Asia still rely on their traditional occupations and subsistence activities as primary forms of livelihoods and cultural survival. These have been duly acknowledged in international fora. We therefore requests that WCIP makes a commitment to prioritise, and not only to support

but also promote traditional occupations and subsistence activities. The Asia caucus also proposes that food sovereignty, rather than food security to emphasize indigenous peoples' right to decide on the food that they want to produce and the right to sufficient and healthy food for their communities.

We want to propose the text to read “Commit to prioritise, with free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples, programmes and resources to support and promote indigenous peoples’ traditional occupations, local and diverse economies and livelihoods, traditional subsistence activities and food sovereignty”.

For OP27, the Asia caucus is of the view that apart from the standards within UNDRIP, a reference must be made to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and make commitments to adopt measures for private sector involvement aside from promoting development of other review mechanisms and protocols.

The Asia caucus would like to see that indigenous peoples are assured of being part of the elaboration of the post-2015 Development Agenda in view of its critical long-term importance and impacts on us. With respect to OP28 therefore, the Asia Caucus requests that the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and to mainstream the promotion and protection of these rights into the development agenda at the national, regional and international levels are assured.

In Asia, conflict in indigenous lands and territories of IPs are serious concerns for us. We believe that OP33 urging Member States to cease militarization of lands, territories, waters and oceans of Indigenous Peoples and initiate processes of demilitarisation and reparation for these areas should be retained. We believe that special measures should be adopted to ensure the protection of Indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities, and also urges the United Nations to call upon States and groups to stop recruitment of Indigenous youth in armed conflict.

We will raise specific text proposals in the afternoon and will provide the PGA's Secretariat with the written texts.