

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Fourteenth Session
New York, April 20 – 1 May 2015
Agenda Item 3A Outcome of the High Level Plenary Meeting Also Known As the World Conference on
Indigenous Peoples

Madam Chair, Indigenous leaders, my indigenous brothers and sisters,

“NOTHING ABOUT WITHOUT US”

I am speaking today on behalf of the Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network and the Global Disability Caucus – a network representing indigenous persons with disabilities from all seven geo-political regions of the indigenous peoples.

Indigenous persons with disabilities face multiple discrimination and barriers to participate in society, including access to development programmes and funds, education, employment, health care, communication and transportation services. Indigenous persons with disabilities are overrepresented among those living in absolute poverty, and continue to exist as one of the world's most vulnerable populations.

It is for this reason that the Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network and the Global Disability Caucus applaud Member States for adopting the Outcome Document of the 1st World Conference on Indigenous Peoples which includes vital references to indigenous persons with disabilities in operative paragraphs 9, 10 and 18. The inclusion of indigenous persons with disabilities in legislation and programmes, disaggregation of data by disability status and the commitment to the elimination of violence and discrimination reflects key challenges faced by indigenous persons with disabilities today.

The participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities should be central to policy-making, programming, implementation and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms addressing the rights of indigenous peoples. Only an inclusive and empowered society will ensure that no one is left behind. This is in terms of equal participation, having sufficient and adequate resources, the incorporation and adherence to universal processes and, taking into account the high level of poverty that indigenous persons with disabilities at a global level live under which greatly impacts our participation at the international level. The commitment of Member States, enshrined in the outcome document, to ensure that national legislative, policy and institutional structures relating to indigenous peoples are inclusive of indigenous persons with disabilities is a strong step forward in recognizing and promoting these rights.

We request for the forum's undivided special attention to indigenous persons with disabilities to be included clearly in new development agenda and in SDG with targets and indicators from both indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities and inclusion of IPWDS be the central point in both indigenous and disability framework.

On the other hand, we would like to bring to your attention our deepest dissatisfaction on the study of Indigenous Children in the rural areas that was supposedly to be carried out in 2014 after the commencement of the WCIP. On this juncture, we are recommending that the study be reintroduced as indigenous children with disabilities are also part of our mother Earth. It is vital that there be a database developed with information regarding indigenous children with disabilities living in the rural areas.

Only an inclusive and empowered society will ensure that no one is left behind.

In the words of Chief Oren Lyons: “Although we are in different boats, you in your boat and we in our canoe, we share the same river of life”

Thank you Madam Chair.