

Statement of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus

16th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Tuesday 25 April 2017
10:00 am – 01:00 pm

High Level event of the General Assembly to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

We, the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, as the voice of those who cannot stand with us physically today — the Indigenous youth of the world; *recognize and celebrate* the outcome of the historical and ongoing struggles of our Indigenous ancestors, brothers and sisters.

We acknowledge the struggles of our respective elders; those who have passed, those who are present here at the Permanent Forum and those who are present in spirit; and particularly, those who are emerging.

We *welcome* the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is now the time for Indigenous Peoples, Member States, and United Nations Agencies to evaluate the achievements made and the challenges that remain for its implementation at all levels, especially in relation to indigenous children and youth.

We *highlight* the achievements made at the national, regional, and international levels in recognition of the individual and collective rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the creation of spaces for consultation and dialogue with the Member States and United Nations Agencies.

We *appreciate* the recognition of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus as a forum of participation and meeting, and as the representative voice of Indigenous youth across the seven socio-cultural regions.

We *reaffirm* that the rights and needs of indigenous youth are linked to the collective rights of our peoples, including the right to freely self-determine identity, the right to preserve and transmit culture, the right to traditional lands and territories, and in particular the rights that protect the profound relationship we have with our territories, to enable the continuity and transmission of ancestral knowledge and spirituality.

The Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, and the Indigenous Youth of the world, stand ready to continue the journey and the fundamental task of promoting and protecting our rights at all levels. This work must continue under the guidance and support of our ancestors and elders, and in good cooperation between sisters and brothers.

We cannot fail, we cannot leave anyone behind: together young and youthful at heart, we must realize the full implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Global Indigenous Youth Caucus