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WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

United Nations - Geneva

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AGENDA ITEM 4(b): Principal Theme: "INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND GLOBALIZATION"

Thank you Mr. Chairman. My name is Rose Saddleback. This is a joint statement on behalf of the Ermineskin, Samson, Louis Bull and Montana of the Cree Nation. Also for I.O.I.R.D. We want at the outset to thank Mr. Guisse, expert member of the W.G.I.P., for his very helpful working paper on the principal theme.

We want to underscore three very important aspects of his paper from the perspective of the Maskwachis Cree who have a Treaty with Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. A Treaty which, some argued, has been transferred to the Crown in the Right of Canada.

- (1) We find Mr. Guisse's Working Paper, in particular paragraphs 3, 6, 7, 8, 13, 16, 17, 19, 24 and 32, to be very appropriate and descriptive of our position so we would respectfully draw your attention to those paragraphs for special attention.
- (2) As you, Mr. Chairman, in your Treaty Study Final Report stated and rightly so, "Treaties are all about land," Mr. Guisse's paper makes a very important link to the impact of globalization on Treaty and other Indigenous lands and territories.
- (3) Our Treaty Number 6 has an article which is currently under ongoing violations; an article which Mr. Guisse's paper refers to in detail in "Section A - Globalization and Indigenous ... right to health".

The concern our delegations have Mr. Chairman, is the effect that globalization has on our existing International agreements like Treaty Number 6. Indigenous Treaties can simply be over ridden by multilateral agreements or to use Mr. Guisse's words, globalization can simply "trump" our Treaties unless they are protected and enhanced by the U.N. Systems. As Expert Member, Ms. Hampson, suggested yesterday, a possible study, this is a matter we propose could be included.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would draw the Working Group expert members' attention to the U.N. Permanent Forum's Second Session Report Sections 2 and 3; in particular, however, to paragraphs 32 and 39.

I quote only paragraph:

"39. Considering the effects of globalization and the need for Indigenous Peoples to participate in the global economy to promote their development the Forum recommends that the Economic and Social Council invite the World Trade Organization to participate in the third session."

We would respectfully urge this 21st Session of the W.G.I.P. to adopt a similar recommendation urging the W.T.O.'s participation and for the W.T.O. to begin involving direct participation by Indigenous Peoples. Thank you.

Ms. Rose Saddleback
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