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**Statement By
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Before

**Fifth Session
Of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
On Agenda Item 4
Ongoing Priorities and Themes**

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Madame Chairperson,

As a multiethnic national community Indonesia is keen to promote and protect human rights for all. It seems, however, that despite our best efforts to paint an accurate picture of the present state of affairs in Indonesia, there are those who appear determined to distort and caricature its present political and social realities. They choose to ignore the truth and force us to engage in an annual ritual of responding to accusations that have no basis in reality. This year is no different.

~~For those who are interested in knowing the facts, my delegation offers these details.~~ The Government of Indonesia has been charting a new social and political course. Mistakes of the past have been and are being corrected and those who are careful observers of developments in Indonesia would know this to be true.

Not only has the amended Constitution of 1945 underscored the need for the national Government to respect the ancestral territorial rights of its *adat* communities, but it has facilitated a frank open dialogue on *adat* related issues in Indonesia. The Government is now readily disposed to consultation and participation by *adat* representatives when fashioning laws that relate, directly or indirectly, to *adat* communities and their *adat* rights.

My delegation therefore feels compelled to respond to specific points that were raised yesterday by certain delegations on issues of concern to my Government. It is indeed regrettable that whereas my delegation has shown its willingness to engage in constructive dialogue on issues related to this forum, some delegations abuse this Forum by spreading political propaganda and fabricating facts about the situation in several provinces in Indonesia.

Regarding the issue of Maluku, the current Government has put various policies into effect in order to accelerate the recovery and the development of the Province of Maluku and North Maluku following the conflict in those areas. Official policy aims to revitalize the social and cultural institutions of the Maluku people, to accommodate the culture of **Pela Gadong**, give new life to the practice of "**sasi**" based on customary law and local values, as well as restore and map *adat* land rights and usage.

Concerning the suggestion to re-open the discussion on the decolonization process for Papua, it is deeply regrettable that we should occupy ourselves with such irrelevancies, given the fact that the decolonization process of the said region was completed legally more than three decades ago.

As my delegation stated last year and must repeat this year, it is our fervent hope that this noble Forum will distance itself from erratic separatist aspirations. This Forum must be protected from attempts to make it a fertile breeding ground for separatist movements around the world. To serve that purpose would be absolutely against the principles and the purposes of the United Nations Charter.

On the issue of the palm oil industry, Madam Chairperson, Indonesia's respect for adat rights is even reflected in its strategies to preserve the environment and safeguard its bio-diversity. Indonesia has been taking all necessary precautions to ensure that its expanding palm oil industry and other development projects do not impact the environment negatively.

The Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Forestry share the view that the Government should prioritize the use of abandoned land in border areas for the palm oil industry, instead of forested areas. The President has not yet made a decision on land usage and is seeking as many views as possible to determine the best option that would lead to maximum benefits for all Indonesians, especially for the community that is being affected directly by

proposed expansion plans. This shows that the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent has always been observed in Government-community relations.

Madam Chairperson,

With these facts in mind, my delegation suggests that ~~out~~ Permanent Forum follow the step taken by the UN human rights machinery in abandoning politicization, naming and shaming practices.

To conclude, I refer to the theme of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples: "Partnership for action and dignity" which requires us to act with greater responsibility, trust and accountability when dealing with the issues pertinent to this Forum.

I thank you.