



नेपाल NEPAL

Statement by Ms. Sewa Lamsal Adhikari, Chargé d' Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations at the 14th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on agenda item 3a "Outcome of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples"
(New York, 20 April 2015)

(Please Check against Delivery)

Madam Chair,

At the outset, let me express how delighted I am to address the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. May I congratulate you Madam Chair, on your election as the Chair of this Forum.

My delegation welcomes the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, held in September 2014. We highly value indigenous peoples' knowledge, technology, innovation and strategies to sustain the environment and acknowledge their contribution, particularly in the field of agricultural and medicine practice as well as sustainable management of natural resources, among others.

Madam Chair,

Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural country. There are more than 125 ethnic groups, speaking over a hundred different languages, out of which 59 ethnic groups have already been legally recognized as indigenous people. They constitute almost 40 percent of the country's population.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 recognizes all mother tongues as national languages of Nepal. The Constitution protects the fundamental human rights of the indigenous people and ensures their participation on the basis of the principle of inclusion and proportional representation at all possible levels.

As a State party to several core international human rights instruments, including, ILO Convention 169, Nepal is committed for the overall development of indigenous people. The Government has provisioned specific policies, programmes and institutional framework for the development of the people with an inclusive development approach, putting marginalized people and minorities at the center of development.

Nepal is committed for the gender equality and women empowerment. The Government has been implementing National Action Plans on CEDAW, CRC, CRPD, UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 with a particular focus on indigenous women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities in close coordination and collaboration with all stakeholders.

Nepal underlines the rights-based approach of development and has been focusing on participatory planning, capacity development and empowerment programmes along with social

security programmes. The Government has allocated more than 30 per cent of development budget in the local bodies for the targeted programme to the marginalized as well as indigenous people. Special provisions have been made in Nepal's Civil Service Act to ensure the participation of the indigenous people.

The government has established autonomous bodies such as the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities, National Women's Commission and National Dalit Commission for the protection and promotion of the basic rights of the people. The National Human Rights Commission, a statutory body, works as the watch dog in this regard. Nepal is advancing towards the promulgation of a new democratic Constitution, which is hoped to usher in an era of political stability, durable peace and prosperity to all including indigenous people.

Madam Chair,

Despite our continued efforts, Nepal is facing several challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss. These phenomena have directly affected the indigenous communities due to their high-dependence on natural resources. Melting of the Himalayan glaciers and the polar ice caps has intensified the negative impact on the livelihood and culture of the indigenous people leading further to mass migration and scarcity of food and water. Nepal is also vulnerable to sustain those hardly gained development achievements as well as to provide universal access to basic services to the needy people, including indigenous communities.

Nepal has set her aim to graduate from the status of LDC by 2022. To achieve this ambitious goal, my delegation underlines the importance of addressing the special needs and challenges of LDCs and LLDCs. There is a need for concerted efforts with holistic approach in all cross-cutting issues of indigenous people to improve their lives and dignity from all stakeholders. Nepal stands ready to fulfill her commitment despite her limited capacity and resources and calls upon the international community for strengthened partnership and enhanced cooperation in a sustained and predictable manner to integrate indigenous people's issues in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

I thank you Madam Chair.