

NEPAL

Rev. 1

Statement by Permanent Representative of Nepal on explanation of vote on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (September 13, 2007)

Madame President,

Nepal appreciates the opportunity to vote in this historic declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples after long-drawn negotiations both at the Human Rights Council and here in the General Assembly.

Nepal has voted in favor of the draft resolution as we are strongly committed to safeguard and promote the rights and interests of various ethnic and indigenous peoples.

As a nation of diverse ethnic composition and home to various indigenous peoples, Nepal always upholds the rights of indigenous peoples. The new democratic dispensation in Nepal is fully committed to protect the rights of the indigenous peoples and has adopted a path of fully inclusive democratic framework, which has been reflected in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the interim constitution that was adopted last year and in the agreement between the government and the representatives of the Janjatis and the indigenous peoples earlier this year. These commitments will be accommodated in the new constitution that will be written by the Constituent Assembly to be elected on November 22, 2007, which is to take decisions with regard to these issues, articulating the interests and aspirations of all Nepalese citizens, including the indigenous peoples.

It has been principled stand of the Government of Nepal to remain fully committed to the promotion and protection of the human rights of all, including the rights of indigenous peoples, in a positive manner and to support them in every possible way within the overall framework of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

It is Nepal's understanding that the principles mentioned in this Declaration are collective reflections of good intentions of the international community as guidelines towards the protection and promotion of the rights of the indigenous peoples, and therefore, do not create any binding legal or political obligations on the part of the States which have voted for it.

Thank You.