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**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 8th Session
New York, May 18-29, 2009**

**Opening Statement by the Participants at the Global Indigenous Peoples' Caucus meeting from
May 16-17, 2009**

Presented by Miki'ala Catalfano, Native Hawaiian, 7th Generation Fund

Indigenous Peoples and Nations from all regions of the world who participated in the Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus meeting for the Permanent Forum 8th session reflected on a range of serious considerations and situations presented in our meeting.

This year's Permanent Forum session places special emphasis on implementation and detailed review of the Permanent Forum's previous recommendations. In this regard, we urge the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 8th Session to take note of the following critical concerns of Indigenous Peoples of the world.

Agenda Item 3. Follow-Up to the Recommendations of the Permanent Forum on (a) Economic and Social Development

1. We reaffirm support for the call to reduce the number of recommendations (E/C.19/2009/7 paragraph 56).
2. We urge the development of a mechanism to support indigenous peoples' incorporation of distinct indicators of human development that would include legally recognized access to land and territory.

Agenda Item 3(c) Second International Decade of World's Indigenous Peoples

1. We propose that the Permanent Forum call upon the Economic and Social Council to present to the United Nations General Assembly that the title, which currently reads "2nd International Decade of World's Indigenous People," be corrected to read "2nd International Decade of World's Indigenous Peoples."
2. We urge the Permanent Forum to join the "Global Stop TB Partner" and to support the Global Indigenous STOP TB Strategic Plan to address the tuberculosis crisis in Indigenous communities.
3. We reiterate that the rights affirmed in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples be applied as the operative framework and criteria for carrying out the Programme of Action for the 2nd International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, in particular its objective calling for Free, Prior and Informed consent by indigenous peoples.
4. We recommend that the Permanent Forum carry out a study assessing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals recognizing and respecting the principles of Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, notwithstanding the global economic crisis, to be presented at its 9th session in 2010.
5. We urge the Permanent Forum to call upon the United Nations General Assembly to declare 2010 the year of Food Sovereignty with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples.

6. We urge member states that any and all Free Trade Agreements must recognize, respect and implement mechanisms for the protection of the rights contained in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
7. We recognize and commend Colombia and Australia for changing their positions by endorsing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We call upon the three remaining states that oppose, as well as those abstaining, to reverse their positions and move to endorse the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for full consensus.
8. We urge the Permanent Forum to call upon the member states to respect the rights to land and territory for nomadic, uncontacted, and displaced indigenous peoples, as well as those indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and those facing extinction.
9. We reiterate our call to the United Nations to create an official United Nations archive of treaties, agreements and constructive arrangements between indigenous peoples and nation states. We also urge indigenous peoples to bring all treaties to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples 9th session to begin the process of compiling the archives.

Agenda Item 4. Human Rights

1. We call upon the Permanent Forum 8th session to urge all state parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as Indigenous Peoples, to apply the CRC General Comment #11 (2009) as a guide in implementing their obligations.
2. We call upon the Permanent Forum 8th session to endorse and adopt the attached proposed resolution that we respectfully submit [Annex 1] on the rights of the indigenous child to health and education pursuant to the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly 63rd session March 13, 2009 [A/Res/63/241].
3. We request that the Permanent Forum 8th session recommend the United Nations Human Rights Council authorize and request the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to conduct a study on the right to health of indigenous peoples, to be initiated at its 2nd session in August 2009.
4. Recognizing the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, we urge the Permanent Forum to call upon the Human Rights Council to expand the mandate to work with the United Nations Environmental Program for an international study on water that extends beyond drinking water to include spiritual sustenance and cultural livelihoods.
5. We call upon the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of indigenous peoples to conduct an investigation on Human Rights impacts of mega/development projects, including the desecration of sacred sites and militarization, upon the request of the affected indigenous peoples.
6. That the chewing of coca leaf be removed from the United Nations Vienna Convention against Illicit Drug Trafficking, because this is an integral part of the culture of various Indigenous Peoples and serves positive therapeutic, sacred and social functions.
7. We recommend that the Permanent Forum urge the Human Rights Council to address the Human Rights violations of Indigenous Peoples impacted by international borders and immigration laws and enforcement policies.
8. We strongly endorse the recommendations made to the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 15 and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in the Anchorage Declaration of April 24, 2009, along with the recommendations

submitted on May 8, 2009 to the high level Stockholm Convention COP 4 by the Indigenous Peoples Caucus to increase and ensure Indigenous Peoples' formal participation in those processes.

9. We recommend that the Permanent Forum urge member states to present their plans of action for the full implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at each session of the UNPFIL.
10. We commend the General Assembly on their declaration of April 22, 2009 as the International Day of Mother Earth. We call upon member States to begin negotiations on a Convention on the Rights of Mother Earth with the full participation of indigenous peoples.
11. We urge the Permanent Forum to call upon member States to decriminalize indigenous peoples struggling for their rights and justice and to discontinue labeling them as terrorists.
12. Finally, we endorse the Declaration and Plan of Action from the Third Indigenous Leaders Summit of the Americas held in Panama April 14 – 15, 2009, and call for their implementation.

Madame Chair, in conclusion, we affirm that the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples establishes a new framework of evaluation for the work of the Permanent Forum and all initiatives of the United Nations system. It is a necessary instrument to address the global crisis as a mechanism of world peace. Thank you.