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**Address to the Second Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**  
**By Janet Beaver, Alderville First Nation (Canada)**  
**Representing Education International,**

**Agenda Item # 6 Theme: Future Work of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

May 22, 2003

Mister Chairman, Members of the Permanent Forum, Distinguished Delegates and Guests, Indigenous Brothers and Sisters

**Traditional Greeting**

The following are Education International's Recommendations with regard to the Future Work of the Permanent Forum:

1. That Indigenous Children and Youth be funded to make presentations at the meeting of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child to be held in September, 2003 in Geneva
2. That the Permanent Forum call for the extension of the International Decade for Indigenous Peoples until such time as the Draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is adopted and mechanisms put in place for implementation
3. That the Permanent Forum hold regional meetings with Indigenous Peoples to:
  - gather accurate, in-depth information on specific themes
  - prioritize specific, critical issues identified by Indigenous peoples
  - develop an action plan in conjunction with Indigenous peoples to guide future work of the Permanent Forum
  - work towards the implementation of the action plan in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples and Inter-Agency Support Groups for the Forum
4. That the Permanent Forum supports the Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/65 and commits to work with the Special Rapporteur to ensure the implementation of recommendations made in the first report on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous Peoples (E/CN.4/2002/97)

The future success of the Permanent Forum must have both proper budget allocation from ECOSOC and firmer support from all member states. We also regret that the work of the Special Rapporteurs is being hampered by budgetary constraints and ineffective support.

I feel great sadness that Canada is one of the countries blocking the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples. It is unacceptable for any group or individual to exert this kind of control over another to deny basic human rights. I urgently call to all those gathered here today to continue to make your voices heard by

your governments that the delay with the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is unacceptable.

I am also reminded by the ancestors that we have all been given sacred ceremonies to ask for help so I would call upon all those gathered here to return to your homes and gather your people together to ask for that help and guidance. If there was ever a time that Indigenous Peoples of the world needed help it is now. Otherwise initiatives, such as the UNESCO video documentaries, are simply recording the pathway of extinction of Indigenous peoples.

I have also been deeply moved this week particularly by the presentations made by the Indigenous youth and I am reminded of my own traditional teachings which require that all decisions we make today be good decisions for those ancestors coming after us seven generations from now. We do not own this earth, we are simply taking care of it for those future ancestors.

Thank you Mister Chairman for this opportunity to address those gathered here today.