

**doCip
ARCHIVES**

**UNITED NATIONS
PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES**

Second Session
12 - 23 May 2003

AGENDA ITEM 6: FUTURE WORK

Statement by Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA)
Les Malezer - les.malezer@faira.org.au

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Permanent Forum website continue to be developed as a source of relevant information to Indigenous Peoples organizations, to help fulfill the Forum's mandate to 'raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues within the United Nations system; and prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues'; and that sufficient resources be made available by the UN for this purpose.
 2. That the Permanent Forum establish, through the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, communications with the human rights treaty bodies for the purpose of developing jurisprudence on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
 3. That the Permanent Forum consider the Durban Declaration as an important document for promoting States action to combat racism against Indigenous Peoples, and that the Secretariat write to States asking for them to include information on their actions under this Declaration to the next Session of the Permanent Forum. The Permanent Forum should request ECOSOC pass a resolution urging States to give specific attention to Indigenous Peoples in the implementation of the Durban Declaration Programme of Action, in particular focusing upon the actions required to end racial stereotyping and discrimination against Indigenous youth and children.
-

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action is pleased to have contributed to discussions on all of the Issues for Indigenous Peoples at this Session.

Once again, we are reminded of the enormous difficulties faced by the many Indigenous Peoples around the world, the obstacles that confront our enjoyment of our human rights as peoples, and our environmental and economic interests, and the pressure upon the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to remedy and ameliorate the situations. We continue to wish you well in that task, and express our satisfaction with the work and progress made so far since the appointment of the Forum members and secretariat. We are particularly pleased to see that the number of United Nations and international agencies are giving their attention and cooperation to the work of the Permanent Forum.

Mr Chairman, we would like to make three proposals for consideration by the Permanent Forum.

Firstly we suggest that the website of the Permanent Forum continue to be developed, and also the associated but independent website of the Indigenous Media Network. The website already serves its purpose well as there is ample information on the Forum and the processes for participating in the business of the Forum.

But there is much more which can and should be done if the Permanent Forum is going to meet its objective to raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues within the United Nations system; and its objective to prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues.

These are enormous tasks and will require links and exchanges with many UN bodies if Indigenous Peoples organizations are to be able to keep track of all the information being provided and developed.

Secondly, Mr Chairman, we seek more interaction through the Permanent Forum with the Human Rights treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child etc.

We believe that these organizations play two vital roles, the first being the complaints and monitoring mechanisms of the respective treaties, and the second being the developing international jurisprudence regarding the legal rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Thirdly, Mr Chairman, we suggest that the Permanent Forum should provide some focus upon the Durban Declaration arising from the World Conference Against Racism. This Declaration reaffirms the obligations upon States to take positive action to eliminate racial discrimination.

In its various manifestations, racism and racial discrimination, underlie most if not all of the breaches of our rights. Under the United Nations system all States are duty-bound to eliminate racial discrimination. We do not need more charters, declarations, decisions or resolutions to establish this point. What we do need is action from the States to fulfill their obligations to Indigenous Peoples.

We propose that ECOSOC build upon the recent resolution passed in the Commission on Human Rights (Resolution 2003/29) by making a specific reference to the States obligation to address racism and racial discrimination against Indigenous Peoples.

Thank you, Mr Chairman, and, again, we wish the members of the Permanent Forum well in the tasks ahead.

END