

Presented by Ms. Tamara Brennan

25/05/05, #5, 269

CAPAJ
Comisión Jurídica para el Autodesarrollo de los Pueblos
Originarios Andinos



Entidad Consultiva Especial del Consejo Económico y social ECOSOC de las Naciones Unidas
Ave. 2 de Mayo 644, Tacna, Perú, tel. 51-52-742601, fax. 51-52-711126, e-mail: jachajawira@yahoo.com

IV Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
First Point of the Agenda, Fourth Item, Human Rights
New York, May 25, 2005

Madame Chairperson:

As we have all listened to the many statements from our colleagues from around the world it is striking how there are common themes reflected throughout many of the interventions. The recommendations that we will make shortly arise from this consultation of representatives from around the world.

The on-going struggles of Indigenous Peoples to regain control of their lands and to administer their own affairs themselves is being subsumed under the more immediate need to defend their communities from so-called development projects that put their very survival at risk. In fact, under the prevailing economic model operating today, corporations have more rights than do Indigenous People.

The trade agreements by which this strange situation is enforced were conceived of in a way that lacked transparency. Nevertheless, the free trade plan is quickly taking over so many areas of life that no one is able to escape its reach. Many States have such unmanageable debt to multilateral lending institutions that they choose to sacrifice the futures of Indigenous Peoples when development on their land promises to produce revenue for over-burdened treasuries. Indigenous People owe no external debt.

We believe that in order to reflect the actual political realities operating today, it is necessary that both the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund be present in future sessions of the Permanent Forum since they are the principal players whose policies are having such devastating impact on Indigenous Peoples around the world.

We also take note that, in general, when the Millennium Development Goals are discussed, women and children are incorporated as crosscutting issues. The Permanent Forum could serve to recast the debate within the United Nations by turning attention to the root causes of poverty for Indigenous Peoples, these being land and self-determination. Once Indigenous Peoples have control over their own affairs and over their land, they will be in a position to further the interests of women and children.

Recommendations for Future Work of the Permanent Forum:

1. That the issues of land and self-determination become the new crosscutting issues for the work of the next Permanent Forum.

2. That the Permanent Forum examine how it can be pro-active in recommending to ECOSOC that measures be taken in a timely manner to formulate a plan of action toward debt cancellation for the most overburdened nations and a restructuring of debt for the least developed countries in order to release funds needed to meet the MDGs. This debt relief should be contingent on States having a proven record of good governance as well as the commitment to invest appropriately in indigenous communities.

3. That a mechanism be put in place for the future Session of the Forum to insure that the protagonists of the current economic regime be present and accountable in discussion of the MDGs or any other issues as they relate to the concerns of Indigenous Peoples. Specifically we would like the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund to participate in a meaningful way. We hope that such a dialog will serve as a model for the United Nations System to be duplicated in all discussions of the implementation of agreements that contribute to reaching the MDGs.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson

Tamara Brennan, Ph.D.