Thank you, Madame Chair. I speak on behalf of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, and we would like to first acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we gather, the Lenape Peoples.

Having regard to the limited time to discuss all the central issues related to Indigenous youth within the framework of the six mandated areas, the GIYC proposes to focus on the following priority issues:

**First**, the alarming rates of suicide of Indigenous youth are considerably the highest reported demographic globally, particularly at risk are youth living in regional and remote areas, those who are Two-Spirit, and those who identify with the LGBTIQ+ community. Addressing the causes of Indigenous youth suicide must be an urgent priority for Member States and their governments.

**Second**, and tied to the first issue, Indigenous Peoples, must have access to culturally appropriate and safe health services. Our people have survived and thrived through traditional and spiritual practices that have sustained our cultures since time immemorial and we need to have the opportunity to continue to maintain those—so that our spirits may be healthy along without our physical body. Pursuant to articles 23 and 24 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous peoples have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as well as the right to develop and administer health programs affecting them.

**Our third priority** is the health of the environment, we remind Member States that the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 simply cannot be achieved without the involvement of Indigenous Peoples, and the protection of their traditional lands and resources; the continued invasions of our lands, their exploitation, and development, has
resulted in the environment’s declining health. We cannot be the future of our peoples if current unsustainable practices continue to rob all peoples of Mother Earth.

As such, the GIYC, makes the following recommendations:

(1) The Permanent Forum prioritize and focus its discussion in their Expert group meeting in early 2020 on Indigenous youth suicide epidemic, in collaboration with the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus. We recommend the Permanent Forum begin this discussion with a follow up and review of the Permanent Forums recommendation to Member States from the 13th session, paragraph 44. The Permanent Forum shall provide an update of actions taken by Member States regarding this mentioned recommendation at the 19th session.

(2) Additionally, the Permanent Forum shall identify pathways within existing UN funding regimes that enable these funds to prioritize their resources to address the Indigenous youth suicide epidemic. In particular UN Funds shall restructure their funding priorities to include support for the development of youth-led capacity building projects that will then enable the self-determined development of replicable models such as the one in Kimberley region of Western Australia which provides holistic health care for Indigenous Peoples based on cultural identity.

In closing, we refer to Articles 3 and 41 of the Declaration which outlines the UN’s responsibility to promote the “full application” of the Declaration via technical assistance and financial cooperation to support our self-determined efforts in addressing the suicide epidemic in Indigenous youth.

On behalf of Indigenous Youth, thank you, Madame Chair.