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**STATEMENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)
UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES, 14TH SESSION,**

**Agenda Item 3 (a) Outcome of the high level plenary meeting of the General
Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**

New York, 20 April 2015

Delivered by: Mr. Jamil Ahmad, Deputy Director UNEP New York Office

Madame Chair, Excellencies, colleagues and representatives of indigenous peoples,

It is my honour to address this year's UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme and following the successful First World Conference on Indigenous Peoples held last September here at the UNHQ.

The World Conference and its outcome document are important landmarks which will guide all relevant stakeholders including member states towards a successful implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. UNEP has joined the System Wide Action Plan working group and together with its sister agencies, partner organisations and member states and indigenous peoples UNEP is committed to support our common efforts to make the vision of the World Conference a reality in the future.

UNEP is continuously improving its engagement with its partners and Indigenous Peoples to ensure environmental sustainability and realize the goals and principles of the Post 2015 Agenda.

UNEP has also ensured Indigenous peoples' participation, including from previous and current UNPFII Forum members in relevant workshops, meetings and conferences throughout the year 2014 as also referred to in more detail in our submitted report to the UN Permanent Forum.

Further, there are frameworks in place, such as the recently approved UNEP Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability (ESES) Framework, which aims to ensure that UNEP projects respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and include Indigenous Peoples' perspectives and needs in all relevant project activities of UNEP.

These frameworks, guidelines and projects have greatly improved through the substantial and direct inclusion of Indigenous experts and their knowledge and expertise. UNEP will draw attention to its work with a focus on land rights and tenure during the panel discussion on Thursday morning on the Comprehensive Dialogue with UN agencies and funds on the post 2015 agenda. We would like to stress that secure tenure of common land is essential for Indigenous Peoples food security and consequently their overall well-being including traditional lifestyles and economies which contribute to food security and sovereignty as well as a healthy living.

The first Global Intergovernmental Multi-stakeholder Consultation last year on the GEO 6- the Global Environmental Outlook- established that the inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge is an imperative for ensuring scientific credibility. Indigenous peoples and local peoples are custodians of knowledge that serve as primary sources of data and information that may be of direct relevance to assessments such as the GEO.

Member states have highlighted that a robust and effective follow up mechanism will be critical to the successful implementation of the post 2015 development agenda. For this a mechanism of integrated measurements will facilitate assessing progress on the inter-linkages between the environment and other dimensions. UNEP is establishing quality assured environmental data flows and indicators in collaboration with member countries, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, UN agencies and programmes, businesses, experts etc. as a part of UNEP Live, a cutting-edge, dynamic new platform to collect, process and share the world's best environmental science and research. UNEP Live will provide data access to both the public and policy makers using distributed networks, cloud computing, big data and improved search functions.

UNEP is looking forward to work very closely and collaborate with the UN Permanent Forum, its members and the wider indigenous community and its experts as well as relevant partners, sister agencies and research institutions who have already the relevant expertise to create proper partnerships in order to include indigenous knowledge in environmental assessments in a very systematic way.

Thank you, Madame Chair.