

Statement by Urapinã Pataxó

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Good morning!

My name is **Urapinã Pataxó**, I'm a 15 years old Brazilian from the Coroa Vermelha Pataxó village, in Santa Cruz Cabralia, state of Bahia.

I am a "**citizenship agent**" promoting a better life for indigenous children and adolescents within my community.

We, better than anyone, as part of the day to day life in our village, know very well our history and reality. **Our main goal is to contribute** to the discussion of issues that affect our lives.

So I am grateful for the opportunity that **UNICEF** gave us **to attend** this prestigious **UN Permanent Forum** on Indigenous Issues.

I am here today, at United Nations Headquarters, as a representative of my people, **to say what can be done** to guarantee our rights, especially of children and adolescents.

We are following the development of the world, and as part of it, we want to participate in this process as equals.

We want the full **implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**, taking into account the particularities of indigenous communities.

- We want to secure the right to our **land**, because without it we cannot have health, education, leisure, playground and therefore live fully our lives. When lands are not defined and assigned to our people, the government won't build schools, clinics, parks and sports fields. It's from the land that we take our food, our rituals, we build our history.
- We want an **education** that will contribute to the ending of the discrimination of the indigenous peoples. We want education to the promotion and respect of our culture, language, rituals and traditional knowledge.
- We want that all **educational textbooks** to tell the real history of indigenous peoples, struggle and resistance against colonization, massacres and overcoming the maintenance of our history. In addition to it, we would like to have **teachers** that are better prepared and with that, to respect our differences.
- We want to secure the right to fight for our **rights**, and that our peaceful struggle should be respected. We keep losing our leaders due to the struggles. Our leaders are our greatest inspiration. They have always fought so that our culture can survive. We learn from them and we want to take our culture forward.
- We want to help end the **violence against children and adolescents**. We are seeking for entities that can identify and act against people who have committed acts of violence such as sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence, kidnapping and trafficking of

children. Many children and teenagers in my village have to sell handicrafts on the beach, and by doing so, are exposed to suffering and violence by tourists.

- We want support on the creation of **jobs and income** for families so that there is no need for child labor.

Children, adolescents and youth of my village, including myself, **are doing our part**. Raising awareness among children and adolescents about the risks to which they are exposed.

We produce signs, make speeches and debates in schools, marched through the main streets of the city, and host plays at the village cultural center. We want all children and adolescents to be aware and to know how to protect themselves. We also talk to families in order to bring awareness about their children's needs.

We hope that our voice is really heard and acted upon. I do not want the memory of being an ornament on this event. We trust the leaders here today and in the UN. We hope that our **recommendations** will be forwarded.

I commend the Permanent Forum for opening speech space for adolescents to be heard.

I feel honored to participate in an event of such proportion.

Thank you!