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Aymara nation (Bolivia)

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Tenth Session  
May 16-27, 2011

**Global Indigenous Women's Caucus Statement**

**Agenda Item 3 (b)**

**Follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum:  
Environment**

Honorable Madame Chairperson, Members of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, distinguished representatives of Indigenous Peoples, sisters and brothers here today,

Indigenous women have a special relationship with and responsibilities toward Mother Earth and the well being of our communities, therefore, we are honored to share with you our perspective on the implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on environment, and we respectfully request that our recommendations be added to the final report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. We recognize the report of the first International Indigenous Women's Environmental Toxins and Reproductive Health Symposium held on June 30th – July 1st 2010, in Alamo, California, contained in CPR 9 for the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the Permanent Forum, which called attention to and proposed strategies to address the critical health, environmental and human rights impacts of toxic contaminants, which disproportionately affect Indigenous women, children, infants and unborn generations. We support and call upon the UN Permanent Forum to endorse and co-sponsor a second International Symposium on the same issues, as well as to include the presentation of the report of the first symposium and its recommendations in the final report of the 11<sup>th</sup> Session to the UN Permanent Forum. In addition, we call on the Permanent Forum to support the development of a strong legally binding international treaty to eliminate the introduction of mercury into the environment and that this process currently underway through UNEP include the full and active participation of Indigenous Peoples, including women.
2. Given that environmental degradation has an alarming impact on the health of Indigenous peoples, we call upon the Permanent Forum to follow up on its multiple recommendations to the UN system throughout the years by making Indigenous Peoples' health a special theme in an upcoming session, in which the following issues, among others, are addressed: infant mortality, reproductive rights, traditional midwifery, sterilization, domestic abuse, addiction, suicide and HIV/AIDS. We reiterate the importance of having disaggregated data on indigenous infants, children and mothers based on criterion relating to ethnicity,

cultural affiliation and language. We also reiterate the need to look at these issues as they relate to environmental degradation and the lack of access to traditional medicines and health systems, as well as to sacred sites for healing.

3. We recommend that the Permanent Forum reiterates to the UN system and states the importance of recognizing the unique contributions made by Indigenous women within their families, communities and Nations and at the international level regarding the possession and transmission of traditional knowledge amongst, and between generations, on the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable environment management, as it is stated in paragraph 106 of the Report of the Permanent Forum's 4th Session.
4. We urge the Permanent Forum to maintain the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, equity, social justice and sustainable development and development with identity as key principles underpinning the negotiations, policies and programmes on climate change (paragraph 10, Report of the Permanent Forum's 7th Session). The human rights-based approach to development and the ecosystem approach should guide the design and implementation of local, national, regional and global climate policies and projects. The crucial role of Indigenous women and Indigenous youth in developing mitigation and adaptation measures should also be included.
5. We urge the Permanent Forum to call upon the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and relevant parties to develop mechanisms for Indigenous peoples' participation, as appropriate, in all aspects of the international dialogue on climate change. As it is stated in paragraph 30 of the 7th Session's Report, we support that the Permanent Forum encourages dialogue and cooperation among Indigenous peoples, particularly Indigenous women and youth, states, conservation and development organizations and donors in order to strengthen the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples in dialogues on climate change, ensuring financing and appropriate translations.
6. We reject the proposed policies and initiatives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon stocks (REDD+) as part of the Green Economy Initiative as these compel us to safeguard the rights of women, including those enshrined in the UN Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

We would like to thank you for your time and consideration of these recommendations.