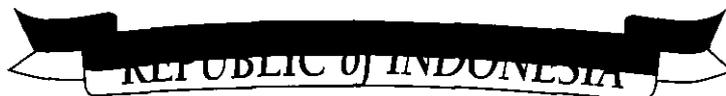




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Statement by

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Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia  
to the United Nations

before the Second Session of  
the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

on Agenda Item 4(e)  
Mandated Area: Culture

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*Check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,

Cultures, both physical and spiritual, are inherent part<sup>of</sup> the life-styles of Indigenous peoples. Through cultures, indigenous peoples express not only their identities but also their cognitive and affective essences. Obliteration of Indigenous peoples' cultures will mean destruction of their existence.

Indonesia pays particular attention to protection and promotion of Indigenous peoples' cultures. We give emphasis to the spirit of Article 2.2 of the ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (No. 169) concerning the promotion of the full realization of the social, economic and cultural rights of indigenous peoples. In this regard, we encourage the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to promote awareness of the crucial importance of the protection of traditional knowledge and artifacts as well as customs and traditions pertaining to indigenous peoples.

For countries composed of multi-indigenous peoples like Indonesia, cultural dialogue between indigenous peoples is essential not only to self-identification of each indigenous group but also to nation building. Our cultural policies promote creative diversity upholding the cultural rights of each indigenous group within the context of the unitary state of Indonesia.

Mr. Chairman,

Before I conclude, I would like to say a few words in response to the statements made by some NGO delegations under agenda item 4 (d) mandated area: human rights.

Indonesia attaches great significance to the promotion and protection of human rights of indigenous peoples. Within the context of our country, promoting their human rights denotes promotion of the human rights of all Indonesians, as all Indonesians are indigenous.

With more than 500 ethnic groups, Indonesia consists of diverse indigenous peoples. I am an indigenous person myself. Nevertheless, we recognize that, in terms of development achievement, some indigenous groups in Indonesia are less developed than others. In addressing this issue, we promote the economic, social and cultural rights of indigenous peoples through autonomy and special autonomy such as what obtains in West Papua.

In the implementation process of autonomy and special autonomy, we note some obstacles, not only human resources and institutional capacities but also policy coordination. We stress the importance of coordination and communication between government and their constituents at the local level and we are committed to make autonomy and special autonomy a viable mechanism and to address their impediments and work on their shortcomings.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.