

Tenth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

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Item 8 Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues of the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues.

Special Rapporteur's study on the status of implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 1997.

Statement by the Government of Denmark

Delivered by Counsellor Steen M. Hansen

Madame Chair, distinguished members of the Permanent Forum, representatives of Indigenous Peoples and member states.

Let me begin with congratulating the Special Rapporteur on his report on the status of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord 1997. We find the report to be thorough and we welcome the recommendations and encourage the relevant stakeholders to follow up accordingly.

Denmark is a long standing development partner of Bangladesh and Denmark remains committed to the promotion of indigenous peoples' rights, which is a priority in our foreign policy.

Denmark commends the Government of Bangladesh for signing the Peace Accord in 1997 and for reiterating its political commitment to its implementation when assuming power again in 2009.

Denmark would also like to commend the progress in implementing the Peace Accord. Among the most significant achievements are the withdrawal of a number of temporary military camps from Chittagong Hill Tracts, the formation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord Implementation Monitoring Committee, the appointment of indigenous representatives to important development fora and the formation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs. These are all very important and impressive achievements.

However, as pointed out by the report of the Special Rapporteur there are human rights issues pertaining to the indigenous peoples in Chittagong Hill Tracts that need to be addressed.

Failure to implement the Peace Accord could cause renewed instability in the region. As pointed out in the Special Rapporteur's report, Denmark hopes that there will be no further delay in the implementation of the Peace Accord. For this purpose Denmark would like to encourage the Government of Bangladesh to set-up a roadmap with a timeframe to implement the remaining parts of the Accord.

Finally, I would like to stress that Denmark will remain steadfast in providing support to the Government of Bangladesh and the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts for an effective implementation of the Peace Accord.

Thank you.