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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

**Twelfth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
UNITAR Statement delivered by Trisha Riedy, Manager  
Programme in Peacemaking and Conflict Prevention**

Thank you. UNITAR is pleased to participate in this twelfth session of the UN Permanent Forum and looks forward to continuing collaboration with the Expert Members.

The UNITAR Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacemaking Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives was developed in 2000 based on the requests of indigenous representatives for strengthened capacities in the resolution of conflict, and on the recommendation of UN Special Rapporteurs to enhance indigenous abilities to engage in negotiation and the realization of rights. The programme provides training for indigenous representatives in conflict analysis, negotiation and conflict transformation, coupled with information on UN and regional human rights mechanisms to further the promotion and protection of their rights, and to help contribute to the realization of the implementation of the UN Declaration.

As identity and culture, marginalization from political and economic processes, and conflict over land and resource issues are some of the most challenging areas indigenous peoples continue to face, the majority of cases and negotiation simulations focus on these. The programme reviews both rights-based and problem solving negotiation processes to strengthen indigenous capacities to analyze root causes of conflict, and engage in negotiation and dialogue with governments, the private sector and other communities to address priorities and resolve conflict in a mutually-beneficial, sustainable manner.

The training programme invites UN Special Rapporteurs and Permanent Forum Members and other senior indigenous experts to conduct sessions on successful negotiation on land and resource issues and on political participation. Initiatives to facilitate dialogue between indigenous representatives, governments and the private sector are also highlighted. Staff of the World Bank and ILO also regularly contribute to the programme.

UNITAR actively seeks the participation and contribution of indigenous women both as resource persons and participants. Women compose over 40% of participants. Some of the senior indigenous women who have taught in programmes at the regional or international level include UN Permanent Forum Members and Chairs, Ministers, and Parliamentarians. Female participants have included a Paramount Chief, an Attorney-General and a

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Traditional Chief from the Pacific, Presidents of Provincial and National Women's Councils in Africa, the Americas and the Pacific, advisors and other leaders and practitioners, advocates, managers, teachers and community workers from around the world.

The UN Special Rapporteur, Professor James Anaya, who has contributed to 12 of the 13 UNITAR training programmes at both the international and regional levels, before his nomination, has also engaged in important dialogue sessions during several programmes. We also appreciated the important contribution of Ms. Megan Davis as Permanent Forum Member to the previous international training programme. This was of special significance as she was a graduate of the first UNITAR training programme in 2000.

Four hundred and thirty three representatives from around the world have been trained to date. Five alumni of the UNITAR training programme have served or been nominated as expert Members of the Permanent Forum including three currently serving members. Two alumni have been named Members of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Twelve graduates have served as resource persons in the training programme. Alumni worked at the national, regional and international levels towards the adoption of the UN Declaration and continue to work at multiple levels to communicate needs, and concerns and to engage in dialogue with partners to forge mutually-beneficial solutions to challenges.

We are grateful to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden for their support for 2013 international training programme for indigenous representatives from around the world to take place in Geneva at the time of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in July. We appreciate this longstanding commitment to strengthen indigenous capacities for the promotion of rights and for sustainable peace.

UNITAR has contributed to the Inter-Agency Support Group and Permanent Forum from the beginning, as well as UN efforts to promote the increased effective involvement of indigenous peoples in decision-making, promotion and protection of rights, and development processes at multiple levels. We look forward to continuing to work with the Permanent Forum and other indigenous experts and partners to help contribute to the realization of peace, dignity and well-being for the indigenous peoples of the world. Thank you.