



Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Thirteenth Session

19 May 2014

Agenda Item 6:
World Conference on indigenous peoples

H.E. Ms. Tine Mørch Smith
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

Madame Chair, Excellencies and Forum Members,

Norway would like to thank you for your engaging and constructive leadership over the last week.

Norway puts great emphasis on a successful World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. We have actively participated in the preparations of the conference ever since the idea was first launched in 2010.

Our position has been clear all along: the preparatory process needs to be in line with the modalities resolution which was adopted by consensus in the General Assembly on 17 September 2012.

Madam Chair,

I would like to highlight two key decisions agreed by all member states in this resolution-A/RES/66/296:

First, that informal interactive hearings would be held no later than June 2014 with participation of indigenous peoples, the UN system, academic institutions, national human rights institutions, parliamentarians, civil society and NGOs. These hearings shall provide input to the preparatory process of the World Conference.

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1

Second, that the World Conference shall result in a concise, action-oriented outcome document. This shall be based on inclusive and open informal consultations with Member States and indigenous peoples.

It is only four months until September and we have yet not started the preparatory process that is supposed to lead up to the World Conference. We take note with interest the roadmap presented by Ambassador Gregoire, on behalf of the PGA, this morning. We have yet to receive the proposal in writing, but look forward to study it in detail.

Our preliminary reaction is that it is unfortunate that a date for the interactive hearings has not been announced. We do however note that the first consultative meeting will take place on Thursday next week, 29 May. It is important to us that the fundamental principle is full and effective participation for indigenous peoples is maintained. In order to deliver on this principle a full calendar must be shared without delay in order for indigenous people to make arrangements to participate.

Norway would again like to commend the indigenous peoples for their important preparatory work. We believe it is an unprecedented achievement. Since the adoption of the modalities resolution in 2012, conferences have been held in all indigenous caucuses. Representatives of the indigenous people's regional caucuses also met in Alta, Norway last year to agree on an outcome document. Norway believes that this document provides an important platform for dialogue between member states and indigenous peoples. It must be brought in to the process and treasured as a valuable contribution to the Outcome Document of the World Conference.

Madam Chair,

We urge all member states and indigenous representatives to work together so that we can proceed with the preparatory process without further delay. As a major donor, we also encourage all member states to contribute financially to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples in order to meet some of the practical challenges which were highlighted earlier today regarding participation in the World Conference.

I thank you, Madame Chair.