

**Address to the Second Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
by Janet Beaver, Alderville First Nation
Representing Education International,**

Agenda Item # 4(f) Theme: Education

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Mister Chairman, Members of the Permanent Forum, Distinguished Delegates and Guests, Indigenous Brothers and Sisters

Traditional Greeting

Education is a human right. The right to self-determination is also a human right enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. There is therefore no argument that Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine their own destiny, particularly in terms of education that is linguistically and culturally appropriate for their children. The skills provided by basic education play a crucial role in the enjoyment of other human rights and the elimination of social and economic barriers for Indigenous peoples.

Language is essential to the maintenance of culture and group identity. It is the living link to both past and future and grounds us in our social, emotional and spiritual vitality. Indigenous Peoples in Canada during the past century, have seen nearly ten once flourishing languages become extinct and at least a dozen more on the brink of extinction. This is unacceptable. The answer lies in education.

The following are the recommendations of Education International:

1. that the recommendations made by the Permanent Forum after the First Session be fully implemented
2. that the Permanent Forum designate a member to have full responsibility for Education issues and to work with relevant UN agencies to ensure:
 - that the goals originating from the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 and the Education for All campaign are achieved by Indigenous Peoples
 - the collection of disaggregated data related to achievements in education by Indigenous Peoples
 - to monitor the progress towards meeting the Millenium Development Goals related to education:
 - a) to achieve universal primary education and
 - b) to promote gender equality and empower women
3. That the Permanent Forum supports the Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/23 and commits to work with the Special Rapporteur on the right to education to ensure the implementation of recommendations made in the report (E/CN.4/2003/9)

4. That the World Bank and other Inter-Agency Support Groups for the Forum recognize and reaffirm the inherent right of Indigenous peoples to a high standard of education with the right to establish and have control over their own educational systems
5. That the Permanent Forum works with UN member states, Inter-Agency Support Groups for the Forum and other civil society organizations to guarantee Indigenous education as a public service with adequate funding, teacher training, recruitment, salaries, school facilities and resources
6. That the Permanent Forum encourage member states to develop legislation in full partnership with Indigenous Peoples that acknowledges Indigenous language(s) as the first language(s) of their country and to ensure adequate resources for delivery of Indigenous language and cultural instruction
7. That the Permanent Forum send a representative to Education International's Fourth World Congress Indigenous Round Table to be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in July, 2004.

Thank you very much Mister Chairman for this opportunity to address the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.