

16/05/05, # 3 (a), ~~2~~ 2

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The World Bank

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Statement on
Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals:
Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Statement by

Navin K. Rai

Indigenous Peoples Coordinator
Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Network
The World Bank

Economic and Social Council
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Fourth Session
Mandated Area: MDGs
May 14, 2005

Madam Chair, Members of the Permanent Forum and Distinguished Delegates:

This Forum is assuming a greater role in bringing Indigenous Peoples' issues to the attention of international financial institutions. As it does so, the World Bank, which works closely with the Forum, is benefiting from this opportunity to transform its relationship with Indigenous Peoples—and their organizational allies—into a partnership to discuss, plan, and move forward on a mutually agreed upon agenda and in cooperation with host countries' governments.

I take the floor on behalf of the World Bank today to make a brief statement touching on the substantive efforts of the World Bank to address Indigenous Peoples issues in implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

On May 19, the World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development, Mr. Ian Johnson, will make a more comprehensive statement on this subject to the Forum. He will also outline the World Bank's methods of engagement and alliance-building with Indigenous Peoples' communities as well as the steps that the World Bank has taken to ensure that the development process fosters full respect for the dignity, rights and uniqueness of Indigenous Peoples.

On May 20, the World Bank will make a separate statement on the Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals: "Achieve universal primary education." As indicated by the recently updated findings of the World Bank 1994 study on *Indigenous People, Poverty and Human Development in Latin America: 1994-2004*, the poverty rate has changed little for Indigenous Peoples and they continue to lag behind in education and accessing health care. During this Fourth Session, a parallel event will be sponsored by the World Bank on "Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Human Development in Latin America.

Indigenous Peoples and the Millennium Development Goals

A recent World Bank report, *Partnerships in Development, Progress in the Fight Against Poverty*, found that the goal for eradicating extreme income poverty is within reach. However, it also concluded that uneven progress was being made in terms of meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For many non-income development goals – such as universal primary education, promoting gender equality and reducing child mortality – the progress is slow.

Madam Chair

The World Bank supports all eight MDGs and is committed to pursuing a comprehensive approach to achieve the MDGs by 2015. To accelerate progress, the World Bank is scaling up its efforts in support to countries and its inhabitants in several critical areas. These include protecting the environment, combating communicable diseases, achieving universal primary education, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. World Bank experience has demonstrated that when development programs are built on or complement pre-existing subsistence patterns and social institutions, the chances for success improve. As the global leader in the field of education, financing and sharing of

knowledge across regions the World Bank is very actively pursuing Goal 2 of the MDGs, to “achieve universal primary education.”

The World Bank recognizes the real possibility that, while countries or regions may be able to achieve Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals: “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,” the goals may not be reached for the majority of Indigenous Peoples in these countries or regions. The World Bank is also concerned that the programs to achieve MDGs may not be designed in ways that meet the aspiration of Indigenous Peoples for “development with dignity.” For example, Indigenous Peoples seek not only greater access to education but also education that recognizes their distinct culture and language.

Indigenous Peoples must be afforded a greater role in formulating and implementing strategies for attaining the MDGs. Development agencies must help strengthen Indigenous Peoples’ networks and their existing social and cultural organizations. In this way, Indigenous Peoples’ wealth of social, biological, and cultural diversity can be protected, while livelihood options and access to healthcare, education, and security are expanded.

Madam Chair

I would like to draw the attention of this forum to the World Bank’s new policy on Indigenous Peoples (Operational Policy 4.10), endorsed by the World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors on May 10, 2005 (i.e., last Tuesday). This endorsement brings closure to a seven year process of policy revision. The new World Bank policy on Indigenous Peoples is a key instrument to ensure that the voices of Indigenous Peoples are heard in World Bank-financed projects, and that these projects address their interests. The World Bank is currently financing 237 projects involving Indigenous Peoples and is expected to finance 97 more by fiscal year 2008. These projects, designed to ensure that culturally appropriate benefits accrue to affected Indigenous Peoples’ communities, constitute a solid base of experience on which to build and enhance operations. The new policy reflects an increased awareness of the need to promote indigenous participation in development-related activities and to protect Indigenous Peoples’ rights to their lands, resources, identities and culture. For all proposed projects that affect Indigenous Peoples, the World Bank will provide project financing only where free, prior and informed consultation results in broad community support for the project by the affected Indigenous Peoples.

Thank you.