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E.A. Daes

Madam Chairperson,

Distinguished Members of the Permanent Forum,

Distinguished Representatives of Governments ,

Eminent Elders and Representatives of Indigenous Peoples,

First of all allow me to express my warmest congratulations to you Madam Chairperson, on your election to the important post of the Chairmanship of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues .Your deep knowledge of the indigenous problems , needs and aspirations as well your long experience and involvement in indigenous issues , constitute guaranties for the successful and fruitful completion of the work of the present session of the P.F.

Let me also congratulate the new members of the P.F. as well as those who were reelected.

Madam Chairperson,

Please allow me also, to state that as one of the very few pioneers who systematically worked for the creation of the Permanent Forum , I am pleased to see the increasing and constructive role it plays within the framework of the United Nations system .

The item under discussion : “Millennium Development Goals : Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger ,” is one of the most important and acute subjects of the Agenda of the United Nations .

As it is provided for in section III , paragraphs 11 to 20 of the historic United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Member States of the United Nations are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want . To create an environment - at the national and global levels alike –which is conducive to development and to elimination of poverty.

How to achieve this of vital importance goal? In this respect, my delegation would like to recognize that many interesting

statements have already delivered by distinguished personalities, including in particular the Honorable High Commissioner for Human Rights and a number of relevant recommendations have been proposed. Therefore, and keeping in mind the very few minutes I have I will avoid as much as it is possible the repetitions.

Nevertheless, in this brief presentation, I would like to make some very broad observations about development strategy and sustainable use of nature. Important changes are taking place in the structure of the global economy, and the mandates and governance of international institutions in the fields of finance, development and trade. The effect of these changes on the present and future opportunities of indigenous peoples for development must be considered carefully, before we begin to discuss specific legal, and administrative measures or development policies or operational programmes, aimed at indigenous peoples' development.

Some of what applies generally to vulnerable people in developing countries. Other observations, in my opinion, relate to the particularities of indigenous peoples –above all, to the dialectical

relationship that exists, for indigenous peoples, between economic growth and the enjoyment and development of their unique cultures.

In this connection, the first point I wish to make is this: indigenous peoples' permanent control of their cultural and scientific heritage

will be absolutely central to their ability to benefit from access to world market. A development strategy based upon the large-scale

extraction of natural resources would fundamentally undermine relationships between the indigenous peoples concerned and their

lands –even if it succeeded in generating significant economic

revenue for them. A development strategy based upon

manufacturing would also tend to undermine the social fabric of

indigenous societies . One way that I can see a successful

development strategy involving the extraction and processing of

natural resources , in fact is where traditional knowledge provides a

solution to the problem of maintaining very high efficiency and

productivity in very small- scale , decentralized enterprises.

Personally , I have seen enough of the creative genius of indigenous

peoples to believe that this is possible. The protection and

development of the indigenous knowledge is the necessary the first step.

Art and scientific knowledge can continue to be produced in indigenous societies –as they have been produced for millennia, without the fundamental restructuring of indigenous peoples' relationships among themselves , and between themselves and their territories. I believe, that this would place the indigenous peoples in the forefront of the era of global economic transformation and development, when artistic innovation and ecological insights replace information sciences and materials engineering as the most valuable technologies.

Another aspect of development , which I should like to mention is the sustainable use of nature.

In 1992 Rio de Janeiro , ministerial level international agreements were approved, which clearly endorsed the general trend established , among others , by the Brundland Commission of sustainable development.

The underlying philosophy is that natures' resources may be

harvested as long as no species are threatened , and nature is left to operate with a reasonable balance of its own . The issue of non-cruel harvesting methods is identified as a valid concern, and is to be dealt with in the various cultural contexts, in which it occurs. The words' indigenous peoples are asked to make their voices heard, and the dominant societies are called upon to listen to them. In fact, for the first time in history, an international conference recognizes that indigenous peoples are entitled to co-decision in matters that touch upon their vital interests. That is specifically provides for by the Principle 22 of the Rio Declaration, which should be strictly observed.

Madam Chairperson,

We must seek guidance –extensively and respectfully – from indigenous peoples themselves.

Indigenous peoples constitute, now a days the driving force for development, which no one has the right to ignore.

In conclusion, Madam Chairperson , I should like to stress that my delegation, tried to comment on two aspect of development

and to suggest main outlines of an approach to indigenous peoples ' development that it is largely consistent with their most basic cultural concerns, as well as reflecting the realities of the new global economy and development within the framework of the new Millennium.

Madam Chairperson, I thank you for your kind attention,

End- E.A. Daes