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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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**UNITAR Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacemaking Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives**

Thank you. UNITAR is pleased to participate in this ninth session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

The UNITAR Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives was created 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 intercultural dialogue with partners at multiple levels. 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.

As marginalization from political and economic processes, and conflict over land and resource issues are two 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 the capacities of indigenous representatives to analyze conflict, and engage in negotiation and intercultural dialogue with Governments, the private sector and other communities to address the priorities of their communities and resolve conflict in a mutually beneficial and sustainable manner; a manner that promotes well being while preserving identity and culture.

The training programme invites UN Special Rapporteurs and Permanent Forum Members and other senior indigenous experts to conduct sessions on successful negotiation processes on land and resource issues and on political participation. Initiatives to facilitate dialogue between indigenous representatives, Governments and the private sector are also highlighted. Regional organization mechanisms and other dialogue processes are reviewed. Senior indigenous experts present on UN and international conventions, mechanisms and policies that promote and protect human rights and facilitate dialogue among concerned parties.

UNITAR actively seeks the participation and contribution of indigenous women both as resource persons and participants. Women compose over 40% of participants. In the most recent regional training programme for indigenous

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*Managers*

representatives of the Pacific held in Australia last August, women composed 62% of participants, including a Paramount Chief from Bougainville, an Attorney-General, a Traditional Chief from the Cook Islands, Presidents of Provincial and National Women's Councils, Advisors and other leaders and practitioners. Male participants included two Traditional Chiefs from Palau, advocates, managers, and community workers. We were most pleased to have the opportunity for a dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of indigenous people, Professor James Anaya, who has contributed to each of the 12 UNITAR training programmes both at the international and regional levels. We also appreciated the important contribution of UN Permanent Forum Member Mick Dodson to the regional training programme. We are grateful to the Governments of Denmark, Finland and Sweden for making the 2009 regional training programme for the Pacific possible.

Three-hundred seventy-four representatives from around the world have been trained to date. Two alumni of the training programme have served or been nominated as expert Members of the Permanent Forum, and one alumna serves as a Member of the UN Expert Mechanism. Three graduates taught in the regional training for the Pacific: a Maori treaty claims negotiator, an Aboriginal Senior Lecturer, and an environmental specialist from Fiji. Indigenous representatives are working effectively at multiple levels to communicate needs, concerns and aspirations and engage in dialogue with partners to forge mutually-beneficial solutions to challenges.

Funding support is being sought to organize the 2010 international training programme for indigenous representatives from around the world in July in Geneva at the time of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

UNITAR contributes to the Inter-Agency Support Group and UN efforts to promote the increased effective involvement of indigenous peoples in decision-making and development processes at multiple levels, and looks forward to continuing to work with the Permanent Forum and other indigenous experts and partners to contribute to the realization of peace, security and well-being for the indigenous peoples of the world.