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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

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Agenda item 7

Half-day discussion on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

Draft recommendations of the Permanent Forum for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

Introduction

1. The Permanent Forum acknowledges that the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 was a milestone in the recognition of the human rights of indigenous peoples. The Declaration was the result of an open and inclusive process of dialogue and negotiations among Member States and indigenous peoples. The high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples provides an opportunity for the United Nations to continue this established practice, and to ensure the implementation of the minimum standards set by the Declaration, by securing the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at all stages of the World Conference, including in the preparatory processes.

Participation

2. In “a spirit of partnership and mutual respect”, the Permanent Forum emphasizes the important standards set out in articles 18, 19 and 41 of the Declaration. Article 18 provides that “(i)ndigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures”, and article 19 provides that “States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them”. Such equal, direct and meaningful participation by indigenous peoples throughout all stages of the World Conference is essential for the international community’s achievement of a constructive and comprehensive outcome which will genuinely improve the status and conditions of indigenous peoples worldwide.



3. The Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment of the international global coordinating group and its efforts to realize the principle of full, effective and direct participation of indigenous peoples in the preparatory processes leading up to the Conference, as well as throughout and after the Conference.

4. The Permanent Forum also welcomes the decision of the President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly to appoint the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Luis Alfonso de Alba, and the international representative of the Sami Parliament of Norway, John Henriksen, to conduct inclusive informal consultations on his behalf, with a view to determining the modalities for the World Conference, including the substantive participation of indigenous peoples.

5. The Permanent Forum calls upon the President of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly to share with its members the main conclusions and recommendations emanating from the half-day dialogue on the World Conference held by the members of the Forum within the framework of its eleventh session.

Modalities

6. The Permanent Forum reiterates its call to all Member States to intensify their efforts to adopt the modalities for the World Conference as soon as possible and before the end of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

7. The Permanent Forum recommends that the World Conference consist of plenary meetings, round tables and interactive dialogues, to be co-chaired by representatives of Member States and indigenous peoples.

8. The Permanent Forum recommends that the accreditation, including of nations, councils, parliaments and governments, as well as traditional governments, for the preparatory conferences and the World Conference reflect the principle of full and effective and direct participation of indigenous peoples, as set forth in articles 18 and 41 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, building upon the established practice of accreditation and inclusive participation followed in other United Nations processes related to indigenous peoples.

Preparatory processes

9. The Permanent Forum reiterates the importance of preparatory processes at all levels for bringing different perspectives to the World Conference and building a spirit of partnership, inclusion and respect, and calls upon Member States, indigenous peoples, and United Nations organizations, funds and programmes to work together at the national, regional and international levels.

10. The Permanent Forum welcomes the invitation of the Governments of Guatemala, Guyana and Mexico and all other States to discuss the preparations for the World Conference and all other invitations related to the preparations for the World Conference.

Indigenous regional preparatory conferences

11. The Permanent Forum welcomes the seven indigenous regional processes that have been initiated preparatory to the Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference, to be held in Alta, Norway, in June 2013.

Joint regional and/or thematic preparatory conferences

12. The Permanent Forum recommends that joint regional and/or thematic preparatory conferences, workshops or other events be organized with the support of Member States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and indigenous peoples, with the full participation of indigenous peoples and Member States, as well as the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Forum.

Preparatory conferences

13. The Permanent Forum recommends that the President of the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions, convene thematic interactive hearings, with the participation of Member States and representatives of indigenous peoples, as well as the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Permanent Forum, in order to facilitate the development of a concise and joint action-oriented outcome document.

14. The Permanent Forum recognizes that it is uniquely qualified to play a central role providing input on the outcome document and in this regard, the Forum decides to hold discussions on the World Conference within the framework of its twelfth and thirteenth sessions.

15. The Permanent Forum recommends that the President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly convene, immediately following the high-level meetings of the Assembly and prior to the World Conference, two-day thematic interactive hearings, with the participation of Member States and representatives of indigenous peoples, as well as the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, in order to build commitment from Member States, the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and other stakeholders, and the Forum.

16. The Permanent Forum recommends that the themes for the round tables of the World Conference be decided by Member States and indigenous peoples through the preparatory processes. The United Nations Declaration provides a substantial framework for the development of the focus of the World Conference.

17. The round tables, workshops, hearings and preparatory conferences should focus on action-oriented outcomes based on inclusive and participatory processes, to be accorded official status. A drafting committee could be appointed by the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States and indigenous peoples, to accomplish this purpose.

The global conference

18. The Permanent Forum considers that the two-day high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

should be held in New York in September 2014, during the week leading up to the opening of the general debate, in order to encourage the highest level of participation of Member States, in particular Heads of State or Government, and with the full participation of indigenous peoples, heads of United Nations organizations, funds and programmes and non-governmental organizations.

19. The President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States and representatives of indigenous peoples, should appoint co-chairs from among Member States and indigenous peoples to preside over the plenary meeting of the Assembly.

Recommendations to the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and Member States

20. The Permanent Forum recommends that United Nations organizations, funds and programmes, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, prepare a special report for the Conference on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, the objectives of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015, which should contain disaggregated statistics in relation to indigenous women, youth and children as well as address associated thematic issues such as economic sustainability and youth employment.

21. The Permanent Forum recommends that United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies actively engage in the process leading up to the World Conference by prioritizing the development of concrete means of providing support for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the World Conference, including technical and financial support.

22. The Permanent Forum reiterates its call to all Member States, intergovernmental organizations, the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the Inter-Agency Support Group, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to cooperate fully with the preparatory processes and the World Conference.
