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H.E. Ms. Tine Mørch Smith  
Ambassador  
Deputy Permanent Representative

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Madame Chair,

Norway would like to thank you for the comprehensive and enlightened introduction to the preparation process so far.

Norway has actively supported the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council (A/RES/65/198 and A/HRC/18/L.23) regarding indigenous issues, which have highlighted that the preparatory process for the World Conference on indigenous peoples should be conducted in partnership between Member States and indigenous peoples.

In this regard, we also want to highlight that it is positive that indigenous peoples have made efforts to organize themselves in an open and representative process, through the global coordinating group, in order to participate in the upcoming preparatory process.

Norway welcomes the appointment of Mr. John Bernhard Henriksen, a representative of the Sami Parliament in Norway, by the President of the General Assembly to conduct inclusive informal consultations together with Ambassador de Alba.

The establishment of a global coordinating group, that elected Mr. Henriksen as the indigenous representative, has been established independently from Governmental involvement. This independent process underscores the role of Mr. Henriksen as a true representative of indigenous peoples.

(Check against delivery)

We want to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador de Alba and Mr. Henriksen on the important role in this process of conducting inclusive informal consultations on behalf of the President of the General Assembly. We are confident that their able leadership will ensure a constructive and positive process.

Madame Chair,

Norway also want to inform, in this context, that we have contributed NOK 600 000 to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations for 2012. This contribution is to secure a wider participation by indigenous peoples representatives to the UN meetings were the preparatory discussions towards the World Conference in 2014 will be on the agenda, including here at the permanent forum and at the EMRIP in July.

Thank you.