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BRAZIL

XIII Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

H. E. Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota

Permanent Representative

Mission of Brazil to the UN

May 21, 2014

(Agenda item 7)

Madam Chairperson,

As stated in Article 23 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, these societies have the prerogative "to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development". Therefore, indigenous peoples' aspirations are to be taken into consideration in the context of sustainable development goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. *In addition,*

One of the most distinctive features of indigenous peoples is the relationship they have with their local environment. Among Brazilian indigenous peoples, the land, rivers and lakes, the flora and fauna are an integral part of their worldview. The natural environment is crucial to their survival, and its elements permeate their spiritual life and their cultural activities.

Consequently, and without prejudice to broader sustainability issues, special attention should be given to the integrity of the local environment in any development strategy that concerns indigenous peoples.

It was in this spirit that the National Policy for Environmental and Territorial Management of Indigenous Lands (PNGATI - Dec. 7.747/2012) was launched in Brazil two years ago.

The process of elaborating this policy was an achievement in itself, due to its inclusive nature. The proposal was prepared by a 12-member working group, half of whom were indigenous, and went through five consultation sessions. These public hearings had the participation of over 1,200 representatives from 186 indigenous peoples. The main objective of this policy is to protect, recover and foster the sustainable use of natural resources in indigenous territories. This goal is pursued through the elaboration and

implementation of territorial and environmental plans for each indigenous land (PGTAs). A call for proposals has recently been launched to fund the preparation of such plans, always with the participation of the communities concerned. ~~Up to US\$ 30 million from the Amazon Fund were made available for this purpose.~~

The implementation of these plans will also be monitored by indigenous peoples' representatives. This activity will be carried out by more than 40 regional committees, ~~which are currently being set up.~~ Notwithstanding this focus on local issues, the policy also provides for the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples in institutions in charge of regional and national environmental policies that affect their territories, such as river-basin committees and the Brazilian Climate Change Forum.

The National Policy for Environmental and Territorial Management of Indigenous Lands is therefore a key element in Brazil's pursuit of a sustainable development pathway for indigenous peoples. In an inclusive manner, we are designing and implementing strategies aimed at promoting environmental preservation, economic development and social inclusion in a way that respects the diversity of indigenous peoples.

We believe this experience may also be of use to other countries. ~~We are ready to share it.~~

Madam Chairperson,

^{concluding} Before closing, I would like to take this opportunity to make two announcements. First that, starting this coming November, Brazil will hold a year-round consultation with indigenous peoples, local governments and civil society in preparation for the National Conference on Policies for Indigenous Peoples. The Conference will take place in 2015 and is intended to gather elements to improve public policies on the many complex issues

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that have been dealt with in the last days. ^{have in 2014} ~~The Conference also aims at broadening the participation of indigenous peoples in the elaboration of these policies.~~

The second announcement refers to the I World Indigenous Peoples' Games, to be held in the city of Palmas, Brazil, in mid-2015. The Games will be jointly organised by the Inter Tribal Committee (ITC) and the Brazilian Ministry of Sports. The initiative was endorsed by a large and diverse group of indigenous peoples in the 2013 Mato Grosso Declaration. The precise date and additional details ~~about~~ ^{on} the Games will be made available in the near future.

Thank you.