

**Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
Fifth Session  
United Nations, New York  
15-26 May 2006**

**Agenda item 4(g) The Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples**

**STATEMENT – On Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) Strategies and Programmes of Indigenous Peoples**

**Presented by Joji Carino, Tebtebba Foundation  
on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) Working Group of  
Indigenous Educators and the following organizations:**

**Na Koa Ikaika o ka lahui Hawai'i; Asociacion Napquana; Fundacion para la Promocion del Conocimiento Indigena (FPCDI); Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP); RAIPON; Andes Chinchasuyo; INET (Indigenous Network on Economics and Trade); Tin-Hinan; Indigenous Information Network;**  
(present during the 5th Session of UNPFII)

Madame Chairperson,

Awareness-raising and information dissemination is an important mandate area in the work of the UN Permanent on Indigenous Issues. Effective education and public awareness work on Indigenous Issues is a cross-cutting activity which underpins the success of all our work at international, regional, national and local levels. With respect to closing the implementation gap between international processes and local realities, Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) activities are very important tools towards bridging policy and action, while addressing the political marginalization of indigenous peoples in many countries.

Noting further, that the Draft Programme of Action for the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, is to be promoted within the framework of major UN conferences and summits, including the implementation of Agenda 21, and within the framework of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, the International Decade for Action "Water is Life" (2005-2015) and the World Programme for Human Rights Education - a closer reading of the current Draft Programme of Action for the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples shows a noticeable gap in this area. Whilst important actions promoting bi-lingual education, human rights education and cultural issues are covered, education for sustainable development, as well as public awareness and information activities on indigenous issues do not feature strongly in the programme. We hope that this gap can be addressed through additional recommendations by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, before the draft Programme is finalized. Indigenous issues should feature strongly in educational programmes on human rights and sustainable development.

Therefore, I am happy to inform this forum about important advances recently made by Indigenous educators to adopt a Strategy and Action Plan on Communication, Education and Public Awareness under the auspices of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

Earlier strategy meetings of indigenous peoples had identified Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) activities as a priority under CBD Implementation. On the occasion

of the of COP8 of the CBD in Curitiba, Brazil held in March 2006, Tebtebba Foundation, under its Indigenous Peoples' Capacity-Building Project for CBD Implementation, convened a 3-day workshop of Indigenous Educators, in close collaboration with the Indigenous International Forum on Biodiversity. At the workshop, educators framed a basic educational module on Indigenous Peoples and the CBD, shared educational methodologies and resources, and adopted a CEPA Strategy and Action Plan.

We wish to highlight, some elements in this CEPA Strategy and Action Plan relevant to the Programme for Action for the UN Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. These recommendation can be adopted by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as part of its report on its 5<sup>th</sup> Session, and also incorporated into the Draft Programme of the UN Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

1. A key message to be conveyed is *“the vital role that indigenous peoples play in biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and sustainable development”*. An associated key message is that *“recognition and respect for indigenous peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources, as well as support and promotion and customary management of resources and sustainable use practices of indigenous peoples are viable strategies for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals..”*
2. We call upon the UNPFII to support the decision of COP8 of the CBD calling upon the UN General Assembly to declare an International Day for Biological Diversity. An International Day on Biodiversity, given a focus on Indigenous Peoples, Biodiversity and Cultural Diversity, can be added to August 9 - the International Day of Indigenous Peoples, in the calendar of activities of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.
3. National mechanisms established for the implementation Agenda 21, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, Millennium Development Goals and activities for the Second Decade for the World's Indigenous Peoples are encouraged to include a focal point for indigenous issues, including responsibility for communication, education and public awareness activities.
4. Strategies and Action plans for communication, education and public awareness on indigenous issues should be elaborated and developed during the Second Decade, addressing different audiences. Toolkits should also be developed for use in the implementation of such plans.
5. Strengthen the necessary communication, education and information infrastructure and support networks of educators on indigenous issues. Information and Communication Technologies for Indigenous Peoples must be supported to close the technological and information gap.
6. Strengthen formal and informal education for sustainable development, on indigenous issues and on biological and cultural diversity.
7. Donors are encouraged to provide additional resources for communication, education and public awareness activities during the UN Second Decade for the World's Indigenous Peoples, with a priority given to initiatives of indigenous peoples.