

Permanent Mission of Albania
Permanent Mission of Andorra
Permanent Mission of Argentina
Permanent Mission of Armenia
Permanent Mission of Austria
Permanent Mission of Belgium
Permanent Mission of Bolivia
Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Permanent Mission of Brazil
Permanent Mission of Bulgaria
Permanent Mission of Chile
Permanent Mission of Costa Rica
Permarment Mission of Cuba
Permanent Mission of Croatia
Permanent Mission of Cyprus
Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic
Permanent Mission of Denmark
Permanent Mission of Dominica
Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic
Permanent Mission of Ecuador
Permanent Mission of El Salvador
Permanent Mission of Estonia
Permanent Mission of Fiji
Permanent Mission of Finland
Permanent Mission of France
Permanent Mission of Germany
Permanent Mission of Greece
Permanent Mission of Guatemala
Permanent Mission of Haiti
Permanent Mission of Honduras
Permanent Mission of Hungary
Permanent Mission of Iceland
Permanent Mission of Ireland
Permanent Mission of Italy
Permanent Mission of Latvia

Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein
Permanent Mission of Lithuania
Permanent Mission of Luxembourg
Permanent Mission of Malta
Permanent Mission of Mexico
Permanent Mission of f Moldova
Permanent Mission of Monaco
Permanent Mission of Montenegro
Permanent Mission of Nauru
Permanent Mission of Netherlands
Permanent Mission of Nicaragua
Permanent Mission of Norway
Permanent Mission of Palau
Permanent Mission of Panama
Permanent Mission of Papua New Guinea
Permanent Mission of Paraguay
Permanent Mission of Peru
Permanent Mission of Poland
Permanent Mission of Portugal
Permanent Mission of Romania
Permanent Mission of San Marino
Permanent Mission of Serbia
Permanent Mission of Slovakia
Permanent Mission of Slovenia
Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands
Permanent Mission of Spain
Permanent Mission of Sweden
Permanent Mission of Switzerland
Permanent Mission of the Former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia
Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste
Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Norther Ireland
Permanent Mission of Uruguay

Excellency,

We have the honour of referring to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the Human Rights Council during its first session, on 29 June 2006, and to General Assembly Resolution 61/178, which decided “to defer consideration and

H.E. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa
President of the 61st Session of
the General Assembly
United Nations
New York

action on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to allow time for further consultations thereon”.

As you will be aware, the Declaration is the result of a very long and difficult process that included more than ten years of hard work among member States and representatives of indigenous peoples and groups. The participation of both governments and indigenous representatives made this process unique. In order to reach an end result, many compromises had to be made by all stakeholders. In our opinion, the text of the Declaration as adopted by the Human Rights Council is the best compromise that realistically could be achieved.

In order to take into consideration the views of those States that did not participate in the above mentioned process, we have respected the decision to allow time for further consultations on the Declaration. In this regard, we appreciate the efforts undertaken by the African Group to present their concerns in a consolidated form.

At the same time we are increasingly worried by the amount of time that already has passed, as well as by indications of numerous amendments to the Declaration. We remain convinced that reopening the text may lead to yet another lengthy process with an uncertain outcome, since it would make it necessary to renegotiate the entire Declaration. We believe that this was not the intention of the General Assembly when it decided to postpone its consideration of the Declaration.

Given the urgency of the situation, the co-signatories of this letter consider the alternative of a new resolution to the Declaration, that takes into account the concerns expressed by many, as a practical and constructive solution.

Mindful of GA Resolution 61/178 and its decision to conclude consideration of the Declaration "before the end of its sixty-first session" and in spirit of compromise, we have the honour of enclosing a copy of a first draft for a new resolution that was prepared among the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/61/L.18/Rev.1.

We stand ready to engage with concerned countries to discuss this proposal, which we hope will pave the way towards the adoption of the Declaration.

We take this opportunity to renew to you, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration and esteem.

New York, May 14, 2007