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**Indigenous World Forum on Water and Peace
Joint Intervention**

We, the International Advisory Committee for the Indigenous World Forum on Water and Peace are in support of the establishment of Water as a theme for its thirteenth session in 2014.

In recognition of the Rights of Mother Earth we are here today to present a call to action for an Indigenous World Forum on Water and Peace to be held within a location to be determined. UNICEF has expressed its support and UNESCO has expressed interest. Since 2007, 60 Indigenous organizations have expressed their support. This call was recommended in the 2007 UNPFII final report.

Water is sacred, water is life. It is a human right, a right of all of nature, and is everyone's responsibility. It is also necessary for health of all people, plants and animals, and will be increasingly scarce with climate change. Today, billions of people are without clean water and sanitation.

We are a community of members of Indigenous Peoples' Organizations and Indigenous communities. Our Secretariat's office is based at British Columbia, Canada and are working internationally to have an Indigenous World Forum on Water and Peace addressing Indigenous issues regarding water. The intent of the Indigenous World Forum on Water and Peace (IWFWP) is to bring together a diverse Indigenous knowledge network that integrates multi-disciplinary approaches to water and peace. From a foundation of indigenous leadership from regions of Mother Earth, this initiative will include invited non-Indigenous and like-minded groups. The IWFWP will develop innovative water solutions, seek new opportunities for positive adaptation, Indigenous resiliency, applications for recognition of our water rights and lead the way to the preservation of our sacred world of water.

Our main objectives include:

- understanding the magnitude and patterns of destruction of water sources and its impacts;
- evaluating the physical, economic, legal and social implications;
- assessing mitigation and adaptation options and developing policy and social solutions;
- evaluate and strengthen educational and capacity-building strategies to address water issues; and
- communicate indigenous rights to water and other related issues to government, industry and the general public.

We are in concert with the need to give voice to the Indigenous perspective of guardianship of all sources of water. We as Indigenous Peoples understand this as our sacred duty to protect our relationship to all the elements. As our Elders have told us, Water has its own life force. Rivers and streams are like the arteries and veins of Mother Earth. The oceans are the sacred mat that links all Life. However, governments, corporations and many in non-Indigenous civil society do not consider the Indigenous teachings of water. We feel it is imperative that the consideration be given to the points that have been raised by the Indigenous communities regarding the protection, conservation, safety, and access to clean water and sanitation is a priority in any discussion of Indigenous issues.

- As Indigenous Peoples who view Western privatization as unsustainable. Furthermore, the establishment of water as a commodity violates in the basic human right to water and sacred principles of water.
- Decision-making in water policies developed by Indigenous Peoples must always be informed by traditional laws and our Elders.
- Those Indigenous Peoples who are the most removed from the existing policies and governmental decision-making in regard to access and rights to water are the most impacted requiring mechanisms for active and meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples in all water policy decisions. These peoples are not informed, nor are they included in the establishment of policies, or agreements that involve the sale of their water sources. The right of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) must be recognized in all situations where water policy decisions affect Indigenous Peoples.
- Indigenous Peoples are fighting for water rights; where water is scarce, they are fighting for jurisdiction and access. Some have become concerned with how to litigate those rights. Some communities want to protect their waters any way they can. The implementation of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be implemented at all levels of government.
- Indigenous peoples exercise their sacred responsibilities and to practice their culture. Governments and corporations have been making decisions about water that have created a legacy of water and ecological degradation and violations of human rights.
- We will share our success stories and solutions; and set our own water quality standards, while practicing our own laws

Guiding principles – All Indigenous peoples believe that water is sacred. It is the natural law that we need water to live. Water is SACRED, is a living entity for all peoples, and has a sacred use and function. This work is not just about Indigenous Peoples: it is for all of humanity, all plants and animals, our children and future generations.

We respectfully request that this intervention be included in the final report, as it addresses the following issues: water as a human right, human health and sanitation, droughts or floods with climate change, food security, and poverty alleviation. Water should be assessable to everyone and all plants and animals, clean and safe, without any contamination.

Supported by Four Peoples of Gonawindua, the Kogui, Arhuaco, Wiwa and Kankuamo Mama of La Sierra Nevada, Columbia, Global Youth Caucus, Indigenous Environmental Network, And International Council of the 13 Indigenous Grandmothers, Andes Chinchasuyo (Ecuador), Red de Mujeres Indígenas en Biodiversidad RIMB-LAC, La Red Xicana Indígena, Coastal band of the Chumash Nation, Papua New Guinea Mining Watch Group Inc., Open Society Initiative of South Africa, Native Women's Association of Canada