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**8<sup>TH</sup> SESSION: PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK, USA**

**18-29 MAY, 2009**

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER 4 (A)

HUMAN RIGHTS: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

JOINT STATEMENT BY

ORGANIZATIONS: 1. JHARKHAND INDIGENOUS YOUTH FOR ACTION  
2. MUNDARI LITERARY COUNCIL

Respected Chair, distinguished officials and Dear indigenous brothers and sisters from all around the globe.....

We bring heartiest salutations from the indigenous peoples of Jharkhand, India

In our region the major concern that needs immediate attention is the pacifying of the armed movement of Naxalites, a group of people who have taken up to aggressive means to fulfill their demands. Naxal movement originated as peasants' uprising at Naxalbari in Darjeeling district of West Bengal when tribals were denied their land rights. The basic ideology of the movement has transformed lately but its endurance over time clearly indicates that the basic human rights are still not being realized in our region.

As anthropologists, we had the opportunity to work for UNICEF India chapter as social worker cum social scientist in the intense (naxal) terror infected area of Dornapal village in Chhattisgarh. This stay with the indigenous population outlined a fair understanding of the vital factors that promote naxalism. The reasons that we ascertain during our research for the cause of coming up of naxalism in our region were many. The government red-tapism, corruption, delayed justice, faulty perception of indigenous socio-cultural aspects, confiscation of land and forest resources by the MNCs without the consent of indigenous populations could be considered the major ones.

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The government has come up with various repressive as well as restitutive measures to deal with the situation. In our region what we have observed is that the policies and the efforts applied have failed to come up with any appreciating results. The restitutive measures such as surrender policy is just like healing the manifesting part of the disease but the actual cause of the disease remains intact. The government instead has to come up with measures that should uproot the causes of such social unrest. The surrender policy can definitely bring some change but that is short lived as the new members will keep on joining the squad until the motive for joining itself is not sorted out.

In our region thousands have been killed, many rendered homeless and many more migrated to other places and among these the most affected are the indigenous populations. The Naxals have a huge influence in our region. They are so effective that the administration almost succumbs whenever they act. The naxals or the terrorist group would dictate their statement and that becomes the law of the land. The indigenous populations are bound to follow it. Might it be restriction to use the forest produce, communication to wider world, forced union with the naxals or be it forcibly consent of the indigenous to act anti government; the indigenous populations are left with no choice and are sandwiched between government forces and the naxalites. The government has set up army base in the indigenous area to combat the situation. During each conflict the indigenous populations are the worst sufferers.

The UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous peoples, articles 7 (right to life), Article 10 (indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their territories) & article 30 (military activities shall not take place in the indigenous region unless requested by the people themselves) concerning the above issue are largely being violated. In this light we would like to place a strong recommendation to consider the matter very seriously as this is jeopardizing the very existence of the indigenous populations.

Thank you for your kind attention.

STATEMENT BY: **MINZ** Abhay Sagar & **MUNDA** Meenakshi