

31 March 2014

H.E. John W. Ashe
President of the UN General Assembly
United Nations, New York
Email: fullerf@un.org

INDIGENOUS ADVISERS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Excellency,

We have the honor to refer to the letter of 20 March 2014, from H.E. Mr. Crispin Gregoire, Special Adviser of the President of the General Assembly and Focal Point for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to the five regional groups of Member States, requesting the regional groups' endorsement of the proposed adjusted framework of the President of the General Assembly for the informal consultations of the high-level plenary meeting of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP).

Indigenous Peoples from the six regions being Africa, Arctic, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific and Russia, and indigenous youth from the regions of Africa, Arctic, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific and Russia which cooperate within the structure of the Indigenous Global Coordinating Group (GCG), welcome this new framework. The new framework establishes a joint process of consultations of Member States and Indigenous Peoples, and affirms Indigenous Peoples' full, effective, direct and equal participation in the WCIP process. It respects Indigenous Peoples' right to be represented through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures. We take particular note of the establishment of a podium comprising of the President of the General Assembly or his designate, and two state advisers and two indigenous advisers, on an equal footing. We also take note with appreciation that the informal consultations will be open and inclusive, and that representatives of Indigenous Peoples will be able to attend and to take the floor during informal consultations.

We look forward to your final confirmation of the framework, as reflected in the letter of 20 March 2014, from H.E. Mr. Crispin Gregoire. Our involvement in the continuation of the WCIP process is contingent on this.

To date indigenous regions, peoples and organizations from seven regions, including indigenous women and youth, have informed you of their support of Mr. John Henriksen, International Representative of the Sami Parliament of Norway, to fulfill the role of co-facilitator along with a state appointed co-facilitator. Mr. Henriksen worked successfully with H.E. Ambassador de Alba, previous Permanent Representative of Mexico, during the negotiations on the modalities of the WCIP (A/RES/66/296). Unfortunately, Mr. Henriksen is no longer available to be considered as one of the indigenous advisers under the new framework.

In light of the above, six indigenous regions being Africa, Asia, Arctic, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific and Russia and indigenous youth from the regions of Africa, Arctic, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific and Russia have carried out consultations on nominations for the two positions of indigenous advisers to the President of General Assembly. As a result of the consultations, the six indigenous regions of Africa, Asia, Arctic, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific and Russia and indigenous youth from the regions of Africa, Arctic, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific and Russia are pleased to submit Dr. Mirna Cunningham and Mr. Les Malezer for the positions of indigenous advisers.

Dr. Mirna Cunningham is Miskita from the community of Waspam in Nicaragua. She was the first woman to graduate as a doctor of medicine from her community, and the first woman governor of an autonomous region in Nicaragua. Dr. Cunningham has worked as an indigenous advocate at the national, regional and international levels, including at the OAS and the UN. She sits on numerous international boards and is an advisor to indigenous groups on capacity building for indigenous women. Dr. Cunningham's work has resulted in the establishment of strategies and programs that facilitate indigenous women's access to education at all levels, including higher education. Dr. Cunningham has also served as member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and was the Chairperson of the Forum from 2011-2012.

Mr. Les Malezer is from the Butchulla/Gubbi peoples in southeast Queensland, Australia. He has extensive experience in campaigning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights at both the national and international level, and played a pivotal role in the negotiations on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007. In 2008 Mr. Malezer won the Australian Human Rights Award for his human rights work and advocacy. He is currently the co-chair of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, a national indigenous organization that advocates for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights.

We are pleased to inform you that Dr. Mirna Cunningham and Mr. Les Malezer have accepted our nomination. We are confident that with their extensive experience at the UN, along with their existing networks amongst Member States and Indigenous Peoples, the two nominated indigenous advisers will successfully carry out their responsibilities. We trust that you, and Member States, will extend your full cooperation and support to Dr. Cunningham and Mr. Malezer.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Ole Simel

Mr. Joseph Ole Simel
African region



Mr. Hjalmar Dahl
Arctic region



Ms. Joan Carling
Asian region



Florina Lopez M.

Ms. Florina Lopez
Latin-American and the Caribbean region

Ghazali Ohorella

Mr. Ghazali Ohorella
Pacific region



Mr. Rodion Sulyandziga
Russian region

Tuomas Aslak Juuso

Mr. Tuomas Aslak Juuso
Indigenous youth from the regions of Africa, Arctic, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific and Russia

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