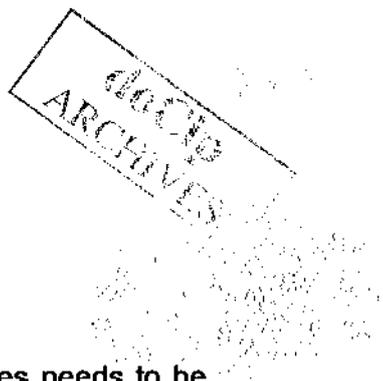


3rd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
United Nations Headquarters, New York
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Agenda Item : 4a
Social and Economic Development

Presented by Ina Hume

Statement On behalf of
Asia Caucus



Indigenous peoples collective ownership and use of natural resources needs to be an essential part of development programming. Without the acknowledgement of indigenous land rights and the right to self-determination, such programmes will continue to marginalize, displace and build dependence, therefore failing to provide meaningful assistance to the very people they are aimed at.

Mr. Chairperson, the Asia Caucus would like to make the following recommendations to the Permanent Forum:

1. to urge all UN agencies, states and Bretton Woods institutions, in accordance with the Millennium Declaration
 - a. to work actively with indigenous peoples and organisations as equal development partners and facilitate their inclusion in all stages of the development cycle, in order to build their capacity and develop culturally appropriate programmes
 - b. to mobilise the financial and human resources for sustained and meaningful representation for indigenous people and organisations in the development process

2. The situation of indigenous internally displaced persons (IDPs) is of grave concern to all. We support the findings of the Norwegian Refugee Council Global IDP project 2003. In general the UN is the main international provider of assistance and protection to IDPs. In Asia alone indigenous IDPs receive little or no meaningful assistance from the UN in Bangladesh, Burma, India, Nepal and Pakistan. The current collaborative approach does not work as envisaged. We recommend the UN agencies and states:
 - a. report back to this forum on the situation of indigenous IDPs in each country
 - b. establish or strengthen coordination mechanisms to monitor and report on indigenous IDPs
 - c. negotiate humanitarian access and develop indigenous IDP response strategies, clearly defining IDP related responsibilities of UN agencies involved
 - d. mobilise financial and human resources to ensure meaningful participation of indigenous IDPs in design of relief and rehabilitation interventions

3. We also note the UN WGIP legal commentary on the principle of free, prior and informed consent and current understanding of this concept within the UN

system. We call on the Permanent Forum to request the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the UN WGIP and the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples to give highest priority to the elaboration of the principle of free, prior and informed consent in full cooperation with indigenous peoples organizations and indigenous experts

4. To support the findings of World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) to establish a multi-stakeholder portal to enable the communication of indigenous people at national and international level. We recommend UN agencies, states and financial institutions:
 - a. provide adequate resources for the meaningful participation of indigenous people and organisations in the next Summit in Tunis in 2005

We believe that unless indigenous peoples are taken seriously as development partners then all programmes taking place on our lands will lead to our further marginalization, and the ultimate failure of such programmes.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.