

10.7.2017

EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, 10TH SESSION

Agenda Item 3:

STATEMENT ON BEHALF ON THE GLOBAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH CAUCUS

SPEAKER: Petra Laiti, co-chair

Thank you Mr. Chair,

My name is Petra Laiti and I'm honored to deliver this statement on behalf of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus.

Distinguished experts, representatives of member states, indigenous sisters and brothers,

The GIYC wishes that the Experts take note of the increasing trend of indigenous youths emigrating outside of indigenous territories. Indigenous youths are often forced to emigrate in search for education and work and are thus put in a difficult position as they try to maintain a double identity. Indigenous youths face enormous social pressure solely from the stigma that comes with being indigenous, but also through negative media coverage and other forms of discrimination. The transmission of traditional knowledge is also at risk, since many practices, rights and recommendations are often tied to the specific indigenous territories, not taking into account these leap years that indigenous youths are often forced to take.

- The GIYC **recommends** that the Experts pay specific attention to difficulties and discrimination faced by indigenous youths outside of traditional indigenous territories. Land rights in particular and indigenous rights in general should take into account youths who move away, so that it would also be easier for youths to return to traditional territories. No youths should be punished for wanting to achieve a higher level of education or work.

The GIYC wishes to highlight to the Experts the difficulty for youths to participate and engage in land ownership. While many indigenous youths move out of indigenous territories, it can be equally difficult for remaining youths to take part in land ownership and practices. As stated before, a significant amount of indigenous rights and best practices are tied to land use and land governance, yet there seems to be no space for youths to be effectively engaged in these mechanisms.

- The GIYC **recommends** that the Experts identify and promote ways in which indigenous youths could directly be involved as part of land-based self-government, as well as ways to grant indigenous youths direct access to land and agriculture projects in their areas.

The GIYC expresses their concern for indigenous youths who belong to minorities within indigenous communities. As you are all well aware of, minority languages, cultures, gender and sexualities within an already minority-status indigenous community can be the cause of additional discrimination. The GIYC points out that no clear data exists on the levels of discrimination that these minorities within minorities face.

- The GIYC **recommends** that the Experts prepare an annual study and collect data on possible double and triple discrimination that indigenous youths face while trying to maintain a minority language, culture, gender or sexuality within a larger indigenous community.

The GIYC wishes to express a deep concern for indigenous youths and women that are subjected to trafficking. The caucus wants to express solidarity with targeted families and we hope that all participants during the 10th session of EMRIP take a moment to remember the victims of trafficking.

The GIYC also wants to express our concern for the status of self-determination rights across the world and encourage our indigenous brothers and sisters to hold on to that right. The only way to achieve self-determination is to determine it yourself.

On behalf of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, olu giitu, thank you very much.