

Statement at the Third Session of
Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
Human Rights Council, United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland
July 12th to 16th, 2010

Item 4. United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

Statement by Jason Pan, Director of TARA-Ping Pu, A Member Organization of Asia
Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

Thank you Mr. Chairperson for this opportunity to speak on Item 4.

I am taking the floor for the first time in this session. Mr. Chairperson, Please let me congratulate you on your election to the role Chairperson of the current Expert Mechanism meeting.

My name is Jason Pan, of TARA-Ping Pu organization. I am representing the lowland plains (also known as Ping Pu) Indigenous peoples on the Taiwan Island, and I belong to the Pazeh people of the Taba community of Luyutan Village in the central plain and hills area. Our people have our own culture and languages which belong to the same Austronesian family of Indigenous peoples of Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.

In our society, the existence of our Indigenous culture and our languages are not recognized, we are as of yet the unrecognized people. Despite decades of struggle, and demand for the recognition for our indigenous rights, still yet we do not have Indigenous status, and do not have the protection of Indigenous rights as we are entitled to have. In short, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has not been followed, and has not been implemented with regards to my people, and this situation is found in many Asian States.

Mr. Chairperson, We hope these situation can change for the better. We hope you and the Expert Mechanism can bring about good dialogue with the States, in guidance and engagement with the States for implementation regarding the protection of rights for Indigenous peoples.

There have been the global movement for the promotion of indigenous rights with much achievements, and recognition fo rights as outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, however the authorities still deny our rightful status as Indigenous Peoples.

Despite the many difficulties, we wish to share the positive achievements for the lowland Ping Pu indigenous peoples, as have taken positive steps and held meetings to promote the UN Declaration on

the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at our local setting. We have undertaken action programs to record and document the nearly dying out languages of the Lowland Ping Pu Indigenous Peoples. We have undertaken community projects to revive and preserve our culture and traditional worship practices, which are under threat of being lost after centuries of colonial conquest and forced assimilation. We have taken up legal challenges in court, and have tried to register our "Indigenous Status" with the authorities.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Unrecognized Indigenous Peoples is one of the most urgent issues in Asia, because as of yet we do not have the protection to our indigenous rights as outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

It is most important for the States to fully recognize that rights Indigenous Peoples is protected, and to recognize that their indigenous rights should be promoted and enhanced under the framework of UN DRIP.

Regarding this, it is essential for the States to recognized the indigenous rights as outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as in Article 6 (the right of Indigenous individuals to have a nationality), Article 8 (the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture) and Article 9 (the right to belong to an Indigenous community or nation and that "no discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right")

In conclusion, with regards to implementation of UN DRIP, we ask the Expert Mechanism to undertake the following,

1. We call on the full implementation of UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and under this framework for the States to fully recognize all the Indigenous peoples groups within their jurisdiction, without prejudice and discrimination to any of the indigenous peoples, and with equality treatment to all groups of Indigenous Peoples.
2. We urge the United Nations human rights mechanism, indigenous organizations, and international civil society to provide expertise guidance, conduct training program and assistance for the implementation of UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with regards to specifically to address the issue of the Unrecognized Indigenous Peoples in Asia.
3. We ask the Expert Mechanism to undertake an evaluation study in around the Asia region on the issues of non-recognition of Indigenous Peoples, including the lowland Ping Pu Indigenous peoples in the Taiwan area. This evaluation study can help to engage with the Asian State Governments to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenosu Peoples, with equal application for both the recognized and the the non-recognized Indigenous Peoples groups.