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**Statement by South Asia Indigenous Women Forum, SAIWF
4th Session of UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
United Nations Headquarter, New York,
May 16th till 27th, 2005**

Item 4 (a)

**Human Rights with special emphasis on an interactive dialogue with the
Special Rapporteur of the Commission of Human Rights on the
situation of the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of
Indigenous Peoples**

Presented by Moloya Chisim,

Madam Chair,

I am Moloya Chisim making this intervention on behalf of South Asia Indigenous Women Forum, SAIWF.

Madam chair, for us MDGs mean peace, security, justice and living with dignity. Without these, we cannot talk about MDGs. Peace and Security is the prime basis for MDGs.

Armed conflicts is going on in most part of South Asia and is having adverse impact on indigenous peoples, specially the women and the children.

Compounding militarization in South Asia is the war on terror and the passage of national policies or laws restricting the exercise of democratic rights and freedoms of the indigenous women and communities. Our indigenous peoples' organizations are regarded by the state to be engaged in terrorist activities and therefore the indigenous activists are arrested, tortured and killed. Our leaders suffer persecution and our elders are criminalized for asserting customary practices in defence of our land and resources.

Indigenous peoples have been, and are still being, discriminated against and deprived of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and consequently, the preservation of our culture and our historical identity has been and still is jeopardized. For us the whole process of

globalization and privitisation is the feminization and indigenization of poverty.

Madam Chair, hundreds of children under 16 years old are kidnapped from schools and disappeared for three four days without letting the parents know where they are and how they are and their safe return being uncertain. Due to armed conflict, more and more girls are being deprived from going to schools.

National Human Rights Commissions are weak. It is unfortunate to mention and many of us are all aware of, the National Human Rights Commissions are politicized and are failing to protect the rights of indigenous peoples. In stead it has become a rubber stamp to validate the human rights violation.

Recommendation:

1. Request Permanent Forum to invite Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples to visit South Asia, especially Nepal to study the situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of indigenous peoples,
2. Request the conflicting parties for the immediate withdrawal of military and armed forces from indigenous land,
3. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to request the states to curtail their budget to buy arms and ammunitions.
3. Request UNICEF and UNESCO in taking initiative to free the schools from being recruiting and training children to join armed forces.
4. To recommend UN Human Rights Commission for the inclusion of indigenous representatives including indigenous women in the Human Rights Commission at all levels of the commissions,
2. Request the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in particular in the examination of reports of States parties on the situation of indigenous peoples to pay great attention and concern and that the Committee calls in particular upon States parties to:

(a) Ensure that indigenous communities can exercise their rights to practice and revitalize their language, cultural traditions and customs and to preserve and to practice their languages.

4. Urge all government to recognize and protect the rights of indigenous peoples to own, develop, control and use their communal lands, territories and resources and, where they have been deprived of their lands and territories traditionally owned or otherwise inhabited or used without their free and informed consent, to take steps to return those lands and territories.

5. Welcoming the setting up of UNDP Indigenous Peoples Program in Asia Region and having indigenous women for the position, request UNDP that it be duplicated in other regions of the worlds and that it be applied at the national levels too,

4. Respecting the convention on the rights of the child, declare children as the zone of peace and implement it.

5. Call the Governments of the countries having armed conflicts for peaceful resolution,