

AFRICAN REGION



Statement by Francis Ole Sakuda on behalf of Africa 2nd Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Item 4 (a): Economic and Social Development

Mr. Chair Sir, honorable delegates, governmental and non-governmental representatives. I am happy to address this gathering today on behalf of my community and the African continent specifically.

The African region can be divided into three main regions: the desert, tropical forest and semi arid sub Saharan Africa. In all three regions, problems are more or else the same in relation with Indigenous peoples living in Africa. We have the Nomadic Pastoralists, the Hunters and Gatherers, Fishermen, and a few practicing hoe agriculture, blacksmithing and pottery.

The problems facing the Indigenous peoples of Africa are historical by origin. Other communities invade Indigenous peoples' lands and introduce new ways of life while forcing Indigenous peoples out of their ancestral land.

Most of these problems are as follows:

- (a) All African government and policy makers practice a Top Down planning program that does not favor the Indigenous peoples.
- (b) Most and in fact the majority of African Nations have a stereotype feeling for Indigenous peoples and see them as non-progressive, backward and primitive. This has led to imposition of new ways of life that are leading to assimilation, loss of language and Indigenous peoples' culture.
- (c) Most African states believe that sedentation is the best way to develop a community. This notion has led to destructions of the ecosystem through over extraction of natural resources such as minerals, forest logging, wild animals and herbal medicines. (ii) This has also led to illegal acquisition of Indigenous peoples' lands and (iii) a non-equitable share of the economic resources accrued by the government.

The following are our recommendations and intervention strategies to address Indigenous peoples' problems in Africa.

- (a) African government to review the Top Down urban bias agricultural policies that favor cash crops as the best way for development.

- (b) Review the models of ecological developments that impact negatively on the social, political and economic sustainability of the Indigenous peoples.
- (c) The Permanent Forum to lobby with the African states for the recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights on land, political representation on policy development on areas that affect them and use of Indigenous knowledge for developments by Indigenous peoples.
- (d) Indigenous peoples' children, women, and youth to equally have access to water, food, sanitary health centers for treatment and immunization.
- (e) Last but not least, Indigenous peoples to have a legal protection against eviction by the government and foreign investors.

Thank You