

On the subject of economic and social development

United Nations
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues



Dear chairman, delegates and male and female traditional leaders I ask for your permission to speak. Although some organizations have contributed to the education of indigenous people many indigenous people are still leaving their communities and countries and thus become subservient to non-indigenous systems. For example, in Bolivia over 30 percent of the national population has left the country and the number keeps growing. This is due to failures and gains that come with failures of projects aimed to help indigenous people. Let us solve the problem at its core. Indigenous people have become dependent on non-indigenous economic systems. There is a need for a resurgence of what we Andean people call Ayni. Ayni is cooperation without the need for monetary transactions. Ayni is community assistance. Ayni is reciprocity. Ayni is freedom from the slavery of the dollar or other monetary systems. Ayni is not a dream it is a historical necessity. We have heard from the Maya that globalization will fall on 2012. I ask that NGOs and UN entities that truly care about the welfare of indigenous populations shift their focus on monetary initiatives that only indebt indigenous people and indeed such initiatives that can be the worst killers of indigenous cultures by globalism. We do not want to be 'pongos,' By this I mean that we do not want to be house servants, indigenous people will understand what I mean. Rather I ask well-meaning organizations to assist us in reviving our traditional economic systems. Yesterday at the reception the Aymaras and the Quechua Aymaras danced tinku. Tinku is a dance that has a lot of cosmic significance which we do not have the time to fully explain right now. We will explain one aspect of the tinku. It is the aspect of resistance. Thus I call for more resistance, and yes we indigenous people need to adapt to current times but with sincere respect for our traditional ways and not with hypocrisy. Being indigenous is not just to dress in colorful clothes on special events or weekends my friends. Being indigenous is in the depth of the soul.

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