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Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva

Ch. Louis-Dunant, 15 - 1202 – Geneva / Switzerland

Phone: (+41) (0)22 332 50 00 / Fax: (+41) (0)22 910 07 51 E-mail:
delbrasgen@itamaraty.gov.br

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

7th Session - Item 3: World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

Brazil is committed to the success of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to be held in New York next September. We favor extensive indigenous participation both during the preparatory process and in the Conference itself. From a substantive point of view, Brazil understands that the main reference for the work of the Conference should be the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), a document that resulted from an all inclusive process of negotiation.

Hence, we believe that the main objective of the Conference should be the adoption of an outcome document with guidelines that contribute to the implementation of the Declaration. This document could have a thematic structure similar to the outcome document of the preparatory meeting of indigenous peoples held in Alta, Norway, in June 2013, covering the following four areas:

- i) "Territory and Natural Resources";
- ii) "International Institutions and Co-operation";
- iii) "Implementation of Indigenous Peoples' Rights"; and
- iv) "Development Policies".

Brazil does not favor any questioning or revision of the consensual content of the Declaration, particularly concerning the balance between, on the one hand, the autonomy of indigenous peoples in the management of local affairs and, on the other, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, in line with paragraphs 3-6 and 46 of the Declaration.

A similar balance is established by the Brazilian Constitution (Arts. 210, 215, 231). This balance has been vital to realizing the rights of nearly one million indigenous persons belonging to more than three hundred peoples who live in Brazil, while maintaining a harmonious relationship between these individuals and groups and the remainder of our society.

In the same vein, it should be noted, that the rights and guarantees foreseen in the Declaration have been agreed upon on the understanding that "the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples in this Declaration will enhance harmonious and cooperative relations between the State and indigenous peoples, based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination and good faith" (PP 18). Balance is a key element to be kept in order to advance the cause of indigenous peoples worldwide.

I thank you, Mr. President