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**United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**  
Item 3: Study on indigenous peoples and the right to participate in decision-making.

Individual Statement: Bangsa Adat AlifUru  
Geneva, July 14th 2010

Presented by: Ghazali Ohorella

Tablea Mr. Chair, respected Members, Delegates, Indigenous Brothers and Sisters, and since I'm not that old, Indigenous Uncles and Aunts.

The AlifUru people welcomes this agenda item because history states that there has never been an opportunity for the AlifUru people to participate in the decision making process whether it is to exercise our right to self-determination, or to pursue cultural, economical and social development.

For example: Paragraph 34 of the study (A/HRC/EMRIP/2010/2) relates to the current situation of a Huaulu village situated in the mountains of Seram, where the locals have been expropriated by the Indonesian government from their lands without their Free Prior and Informed Consent for, a shrimp farm.

We, the AlifUru people have our own traditional decision making systems, the so called Adat system, which is based on involvement of the Indigenous community and sustainability of our environment.

This system can be identified on local and on national level, and the decisions made by the AlifUru council have the support of the entire community.

Mr. Chair,

As custodians of our ancestral lands the decisions made here include more social and environmental responsibilities than the ones made by the government.

Which brings to the attention that in decision-making processes, participation is not the only important aspect, but the government's way of implementing their decisions is equally important.

Hardly a year ago, the Indonesian military had their sights set on a piece of land on the island of Ambon, to build a new military outpost. Several families were living on this piece of land, and were forcibly removed from their lands without the acknowledgement of their rights.

Therefore, Mr. Chair, we recommend that the study should also reflect the military involvement in decision-making processes.

Lastly, participation of Indigenous Peoples in regional, national and international decision-making processes is vital for our existence as Peoples, and can only contribute to Indigenous Peoples if we are treated as equal partners, and are able to integrate our traditional decisions in these processes.

Horomate,

Thank you Mr. Chair.

