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Statement by UNITAR to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations
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The Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research has been providing training in conflict prevention and peacebuilding for diplomats and UN staff since 1993 and for indigenous peoples' representatives since 2000. The indigenous training programme was developed based on requests by indigenous representatives at a consultation in Geneva with UN agencies where they identified capacity building in conflict prevention and resolution as one of three priority areas for international assistance. The programme was also established based on the recommendations of UN Special Rapporteurs for strengthening capacity in the constructive resolution of conflict, including in particular the seminal study of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Miguel Alfonso Martinez.

The UNITAR Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives provides advanced training in conflict analysis and negotiation to representatives of indigenous peoples.

The main objectives of the UNITAR training are: to strengthen participants' capacities to analyze conflict; to identify the needs, fears, concerns and aspirations of all the parties to a conflict; and based upon this and engaged in dialogue with partners, to formulate mutually beneficial options to address problems. The focus is on the process of analyzing and dealing with conflict in a constructive manner. With strengthened tools of conflict analysis, negotiation and relationship-building, indigenous representatives are further equipped to engage in dialogue on issues to address the priorities of their communities and to improve the lives of their peoples.

After identifying a range of sources of conflict, two approaches to negotiation are reviewed, the rights-based approach to negotiation including a review of the relevant mechanisms and conventions indigenous representatives may draw upon, and an interest-based or problem-solving approach. This negotiation methodology seeks to examine the root causes of the conflict and identify each party's underlying interests so that mutually satisfactory options may be generated to address the conflict in a sustainable manner-- and in a way which strengthens the relationship, making the constructive resolution of future conflict more likely. Cases studies from different regions representing some of the key concerns of indigenous peoples, including on land and resources, and inclusive models for participation are presented. Participants engage in small group work and in negotiation simulations where the interest-based methodology is practiced and reviewed.

Feedback from participants from each region indicates they are applying these strategies in their communities and in dialogue with governments and other partners at the local level and in international fora. An East African participant stated that as a result of the training, and his subsequent analysis of the root causes of the conflict in his region, he had established with his community, the Committee on Peace and Conflict Resolution to deal with conflicts which have become violent over land and other resource issues. A senior indigenous participant from South Africa was appointed as one of eight people in the country to serve on the Selection Panel for the South African Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. He continues to have a positive impact on developments at multiple levels through his work, and has served as a resource person for UNITAR's sub-regional training programme for government officials from Southern Africa.

A representative from the Pacific applied the constructive dialogue skills immediately after the training when she attended the Permanent Forum in New York. She held a meeting with a UN agency representative to discuss issues of priority for her community, and engaged the diplomatic representative, and then the Ambassador to the UN of her country, in a fruitful dialogue on issues of key concern to her people.

Resource persons for the programme are primarily indigenous experts, including Members of the Permanent Forum. Other experts, such as the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples, representatives of regional organizations, and other specialists, also serve as resource persons for the training programme.

The international training programme is conducted annually at the time of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations. A regional training programme is conducted in a different part of the world each year. Regional trainings have been held to date in Mexico for indigenous peoples' representatives of the Americas, and in Thailand for indigenous representatives of the Asia-Pacific. The 2004 regional training programme is planned for Africa. Indigenous women compose 40% of training participants.

UNITAR was also asked to organize the Seminar for Members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to help Members prepare for their important mandate in advance of the first session of the Permanent Forum in 2002.

UNITAR receives no funding from the regular UN budget and must raise all of the funding for its programmes and staff from Governments and foundations. We are grateful to the Governments of Germany, Sweden and Switzerland for their contributions to this year's international training programme, and to the Government of Norway for its contribution towards the regional training programme for Africa. We invite other contributions in order to make this first requested training programme in Africa available for indigenous representatives later this year.

The need for capacity building among indigenous leaders in negotiation to build constructive relationships with governments and other parties to prevent and resolve conflict remains strong. This UNITAR training programme was established to help address that need. Strengthened capacity to analyze the root causes of conflict, negotiating in a problem-solving manner with governments and maximizing opportunities for joint benefit and mutual understanding are the key concepts and goals. The programme seeks to build on indigenous capacity and provide additional tools for representatives to address their needs in dialogue with states and other



partners.

Each innovation, each contribution made to this overall process helps demonstrate that constructive engagements between governments and indigenous representatives are taking place, and though much remains to be done, that mutually-beneficial solutions are possible.

Thank you.