

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Eighth Session
New York, 18 May – 29 May 2009

Agenda Item 8: Draft Agenda for the ninth session

JOINT STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF
The Indigenous Peoples Organisations of Australia
Presented by Les Malezer, FAIRA

Thank you Madam Chair.

We would like to make the following suggestions to the members of the Permanent Forum regarding the agenda and organization of work for the next session.

We note that this body is intended to be a ‘permanent forum’ for Indigenous Peoples. In that aspect many delegations are still using these sessions as an opportunity to present their concerns at the community level, even though these concerns might not align with the formal agenda or themes. We want to support the opportunity for open statements so that the Permanent Forum remain susceptible to community concerns and crises.

Can the discussions be ordered to an agenda item entitled ‘Development’ or ‘Human Development’ with sub-items for ‘Cultural Development and Identity’ and ‘Human Rights’ but including also a sub-item for ‘General Statements’?

To ensure the delegates stay involved in the dialogue with UN agencies we suggest that one UN agency might be reviewed each day, in the first two hours of the morning meeting, thus ensuring that the Indigenous delegations are likely to gain from this reporting procedure. Further, can time be managed to ensure that adequate time remains at the end of each review to allow questions to be raised from the floor without the need to pre-register on the speaker’s list? Can the questions to be asked by the PF members be seen at the beginning of the day to inform the indigenous delegations and avoid duplication of questions?

We note that the proposed theme for 2011 might be ‘Addressing Racism against Indigenous Peoples’. Can this be headed ‘Eliminating Racism against Indigenous Peoples’?

We thank the secretariat for their good work in organising the side events for this session. They have been very interesting and successful. We would like to encourage the use of side events to advance our interests during the PFII session. Confirmation of side events earlier would make our work in preparing panels, circulating notices etc easier. Also next year we should be assured that there will be enough suitable rooms for side events.

The next session of the Permanent Forum might be difficult if the UN building is being renovated. If the PFII is to be held in another location we, in the Pacific Region, would like to renew the call for the PF session to be held in the southern hemisphere, perhaps Bangkok. Given the building renovations we consider there is justification for the meeting to be held there rather than in Geneva, and that budget considerations which impeded the previous attempts to meet in Bangkok might be reevaluated.

Thank you, Madam Chair