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**Geri Wisner-Foley
Muskogee (creek) nation
Ambassador to the united nations**

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STATEMENT TO THE PERMANENT FORUM OF THE UNITED NATIONS

NEW YORK CITY, 13 MAY, 2004.

Mr. Chairperson, members of the Permanent Forum, Representatives, Indigenous

Brothers and Sisters:

-My name is Geri Wisner-Foley. I am from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, from the Rvwarle Tribal town, Tallahassee ceremonial grounds and from the deer clan. I am here today serving as the Muskogee (Creek) Nation Ambassador to the United Nations. The Muskogee (Creek) people are a sovereign nation located in Oklahoma within the United States.

-As Indigenous Peoples located within the United States, we have paid a significant price to maintain our self-governing laws, sovereignty, structure and culture that have been with us since the birth of our Mother Earth. We have been actively engaged with international trade, treaties, and negotiations long before the United States was ever formed.

-The history of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation includes the tragedies committed upon us as a result of the inhumane policies of the United States. Today, the our government and laws have been recognized by the United States. All negotiations and issues involving Indigenous peoples of the United States are supposed to be conducted on a Government to Government relationship.

-The Muskogee (Creek) Nation recognizes the significant work going on within the

United Nations Permanent Forum and the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples. As a result, our nation appointed an Ambassador to the United Nations with a mandate focusing upon the Permanent Forum, the Working Group and the development of Indigenous issues that ^{may} effect the Muscogee Nation.

-The focus of my statement today is the culture of the United Nations and this Permanent Forum in relation to Indigenous governmental representatives. When registering for my UN badge, I was not recognized as an Ambassador for my Nation because there was no such category for an Indigenous Government. Instead I was required to register as a non-governmental organization, an NGO.

-When I approached the SECRETARIAT to place my name on the speakers list, I realized the list was limited to states members, UN bodies, Specific Agencies and International Governmental organizations. Again there is no such category available for an Indigenous Governmental representative. We request to be recognized as who we are, a sovereign **INDIGENOU** nation with a territory, constitution, culture, language and citizenship.

-The United Nations culture has expanded greatly, evidenced by this Permanent Forum and Working Groups, and is giving increasing importance to indigenous issues at the international level. However, we request that the wisdom and knowledge of this Forum recognize the governmental status of Indigenous Nations. Such recommendations were made at the first Permanent Forum and have not been followed up.

-Furthermore, we respectfully request and join the many other suggestions that the Decade for Indigenous Peoples be extended ~~for another decade~~. In Oklahoma, there are over 39 tribal nations. Only one tribal nation is represented today. We feel this lack of representation ^{is} evidence ^{that} of the continued work and attention needed for Indigenous peoples and issues.
↳ and the non-fulfilment of many goals established for the decade ~~with the implementation of the decade~~