

Explanation Before the Vote  
On the Draft Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Mr. Chairman,

We had hoped that there would not be any vote on this subject. In fact, as late as last week, there was no indication that a decision would be required in this Council Session. However, as the matter is to be put up to a vote, we are obliged to explain our position on this subject, before the vote.

*We deeply appreciate the efforts of the Chairperson of the Working Group to arrive*

Mr. Chairman,

The text before us is a Chair's text, which he was authorized to produce. It was our understanding that this text would be discussed. Unfortunately, we now find that the text has not followed the usual procedures required before a document becomes mature for a decision.

Bangladesh fully supports the rights of any group that is disadvantaged. All efforts must be made to enable them to enjoy the privileges that the mainstreams of society enjoy. As required, they must be helped with special and differential treatment. ~~This is what we are doing in respect to the tribal groups in Bangladesh.~~

We are all aware of the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. They affirm the fundamental importance of some of the issues that are being addressed in this Draft Declaration.

Mr. Chairman,

This draft Declaration is a most important document. In fact, if one looks at the text of the report of the Working Group, in Paragraph 29, it is been stated, and I quote: "They expressed the view that a Declaration that does not enjoy consensus amongst States would not be of real and practical benefit to indigenous peoples." End of Quote. We fully share the sentiments expressed in this statement.

We feel that there are elements of the text that need attention. We should adopt a clear procedure for settling this matter, and bringing the Draft Declaration back to the Council either at its next Session, or immediately thereafter, for ~~adoption~~ unanimous *adoption*.

Under such circumstances, we are obliged to abstain in the vote on this subject.

I thank you.