

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Sixteenth Session – New York
24th May – 5th May 2017**

Agenda Item 3.

Follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum:

b) Indigenous youth

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Delivered by the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the UNPFII and our network of Indigenous communities, organisations, institutions and experts work with UN agencies to support the End Violence Against Children - The Global Partnership, and the global campaign '*It Takes a World to end violence against children*';
2. That the UNPFII and IPOs urge Member States to support, participate and contribute to the Global Partnership and global campaign to end violence against children; and
3. That Member States consider their participation in global efforts to eliminate violence against children as part of an integrated response to their commitment to the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

BACKGROUND

Madam Chair, Brothers and Sisters,

World Vision reports that there are over 1 billion children worldwide, and that more than half of those children are affected by violence in some form. The global cost of violence against children is close to \$7 trillion per year.

Forms of abuse include neglect; physical assault; sexual violence; trafficking; removal from family, country and culture; forced marriage; slavery; forced conscription to conflict; and exposure to interpersonal, family and community level violence. The impacts are diverse and often devastating, and can be direct or indirect, life long and intergenerational. We know that the effects of violence include impaired development (physical, psychological, emotional), mental health issues (e.g. self-harm, suicide, post-traumatic-stress-disorder), impaired learning, and limited economic opportunities and social participation.

Indigenous children and young people are particularly at risk - vulnerable to individual and systematic acts of violence for which we are already experiencing negative intergenerational impacts. Our children and young people are disproportionately affected, and data confirms that Indigenous children and young people are overrepresented in national statistics for forced removals, children in out-of-home care, juvenile incarceration and other forms of institutionalisation.

Numerous human rights instruments make specific reference to the rights of children and young people to be protected from violence. For example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 19, 'protection from all forms of violence', is obvious, however Articles 4, 11, 20, 21, and 22 are also directly relevant.

Article 22.2 of the UNDRIP pays particular attention to the protection of Indigenous children and youth, affirming their right to be protected from violence and discrimination. We also argue that assimilation, and the oppression and resultant loss of positive cultural influences and practices as a result of forced removal, incarceration and institutionalisation of our children and young people are also acts of violence.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the SDG Targets also promote the rights of children and young people to be free from all forms of violence. For example, Target 16.2 is to 'end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children'.

Through the UN, the **End Violence Against Children Global Partnership** is bringing together stakeholders from around the world to develop an agenda for action. Current Member State signatories include:

Pathfinding Partners - Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Sweden, Tanzania, El Salvador, Montenegro, Jamaica, Paraguay, Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka, Uganda; Supporting (Donor) Partners - Switzerland, United Kingdom; and Supporting (in-kind) Partners – Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, Sweden, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom.

Indigenous Peoples and our organisations must also be a part of this.

On Monday 24th April, here at UNHQ, The Global Partnership and World Vision convened a high level event on ending violence against children to launch a global campaign. The campaign is focused on 'everyone playing a part, everyone taking action, and scaling up what works'. A number of Member States gave examples of new legislative frameworks and constitutional amendments that prioritise the rights of children and young people, guarantee more appropriate preventive measures for protection from violence, and ensure reparative care and integrated services that respond more comprehensively to children and young people affected by violence.

The elimination of all forms of violence against Indigenous children and young people, and of course all children, is a human rights and public health priority of the highest order. As Indigenous Peoples, we have such a profound appreciation of the sanctity of our children, such a depth of connection to the elements of creation and balance, and such an unwavering commitment to the preservation of life and earth that our leadership in efforts to eliminate violence against children is essential and will greatly enrich all current and future generations.