

SUMMARY NOTES ON THE 20TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

19–30 April 2021, New York City

The summary notes are reports of the most important UN meetings on indigenous rights and are issued twice a year. They are only available in an electronic version and sent by email.



Information and Methodology

This summary is based on the notes taken during the conference and the statements collected by Docip services, available [here](#). The discussions communicated in that document entail the entirety of the conference. The panel discussion of Tuesday, April 27, is conveyed in this document. The discussions of Monday, April 26, and Wednesday, April 28, are not included in this document as only closed meetings were held on those days.

The complete list of the current Permanent Forum Members is available in Annex I, and the list of abbreviations used in this document is available in Annex II.

1. Executive Summary

The theme chosen for the twentieth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was: “Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16”.

The format of this year’s session was modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In-person meetings took place at the opening and closing meetings, with limited in-person participation of Permanent Forum Members and Member States. For the rest of the participants, the Permanent Forum Members and the Secretariat decided to hold the sessions in a virtual format, with a session of 2 hours each day.

The discussion that raised the most interest was discussion agenda item 4 on “the six mandate areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. The statements highlighted the persistent inequalities faced by Indigenous Peoples, such as lack of access to education for women and youth, human rights violations (pollution of their environment, land grabbing and killings, especially of indigenous women, etc.) and the need to preserve their indigenous languages. In light of this, they recommended the full implementation of UNDRIP and the strengthening of their participation in UN meetings. The dialogue over agenda item 3 on the theme, “Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16”, also raised a lot of interest. The interventions outlined the need for Indigenous Peoples to uphold their land rights, as their territories have been at the center of continued militarization and invasion by extractive industries. The declarations also expressed the wish that Indigenous Peoples would see their right to self-governance and autonomy fulfilled. In addition, Member States were recommended to strengthen their participation in decision-making processes.

2. Details

Monday, 19 April

- *Opening of the session, election of officers, adoption of the agenda and organization of work*

At the opening of the session, **Mr. Elliott Harris, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist, Department of Economic and Social Affairs**, welcomed all the participants and invited **Mr. Todadaho Sid Hill, Chief of the Onondaga Nation**, to deliver a traditional message, which stressed Indigenous Peoples' link to natural resources and land as a spiritual matter and the urgent need for recognition of those rights. Then, at the request of **Mr. Harris, Mr. Phoolman Chaudary and Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth, Members of the Permanent Forum**, nominated **Ms. Anne Nuorgam** as the Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for its twentieth session.

H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General, gave a statement in which he explained how Indigenous Peoples have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. He also urged Member States to include them in their decision-making processes, to promote a healthy and sustainable environment and to implement the UNDRIP, without which the SDGs will not be achieved. **H.E. Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75th session of the General Assembly**, asked Member States to disseminate the vaccine in a proper and culturally respectful manner in indigenous communities, in order to leave no one behind. He also urged Member States to respect UNDRIP in order to fulfill SDG 16. **H.E. Ambassador Juan Sandoval Mendiola, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council**, highlighted how indigenous communities have been deeply affected by the pandemic's impact on their health, culture and day-to-day life, and he further expressed the wish that the vaccination campaigns be based on FPIC.

Members of the Permanent Forum Members **Ms. Lourdes Tibán Guala** and **Mr. Sven-Erik Soosaar** then elected **Mr. Vital Bambanze, Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago, Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev** and **Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth** as **Vice-Chairs**, and **Ms. Tove Søvndahl Gant** as **Rapporteur**, of the twentieth session by acclamation. All the Permanent Forum Members and the Economic Council then approved the postponement of sub-items 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) to next year's session.

The session continued with a statement by the **Chair of the Permanent Forum**. She stressed that the theme of this twentieth session cannot be achieved without respecting Indigenous Peoples' individual and collective rights, which includes enhancing their participation in the UN system.

A message from the **Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Liu Zhenmin**, was delivered by **Mr. Elliott Harris, the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist**, who highlighted how SDG 16 is one of the most crucial objectives for Indigenous Peoples' fundamental rights, especially since they are often victims of violations. He also spoke of "2022–2032, the International Decade of Indigenous Languages" and called for their promotion. **H.E. David Choquehuanca Cespedes, Vice President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia**, urged all Member States to prevent the destruction of Indigenous Peoples' environment, as they play a crucial role in preventing the effects of climate change. **H.E. Pekka Haavisto, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland**, reiterated the importance for Member States to do everything to achieve the 2030 Agenda. He also expressed his gratitude for the work of human rights defenders and condemned the incidences of murder against them. **H.E. Debra Haaland, Secretary of the Interior of the United States of America**, spoke as the first Native American elected to the U.S. president's cabinet. She pointed out that indigenous knowledge can help the world to achieve SDG 16's targets. For this reason, UNDRIP should be seen as a guide for Member States to improve their laws in order to ensure the protection and respect of Indigenous Peoples' rights.

- *Discussion on the theme, "Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16"*

Ms. Anne Nuorgam, Chair of the Permanent Forum, introduced the theme of the session by explaining that an Expert Members' meeting was held in Chiang Mai in November 2019 to discuss this year's theme, with the participation of Mr. Brian Keene, former UNPFII Expert, and Ms. Zhang Xiaoan, UNPFII Expert, as well as the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz. **Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz** then took the floor and pointed out how important SDG 16 is for the progress of Indigenous Peoples' rights, especially as they lack access to legal support, even though their lands and territories are often at the center of human rights violations. For this reason, she urged Members of the Permanent Forum to address these conflicts.

Afterwards, **Ms. Tove Søvndahl Gant, UNPFII Expert**, briefly introduced the study of **Mr. Jens Dahl, former UNPFII Expert**, on the theme, "indigenous peoples' autonomies: experiences and perspectives" and gave him the floor. He explained that the study was a follow-up of an international expert group meeting held in 2018 in New York, a seminar held in 2019 in Mexico, and the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. It focuses on the forms of autonomy chosen by or available to indigenous communities. He further explained that he made a distinction, in his study, between territorial autonomy and functional autonomy, noting that States sometimes determine a territory over which Indigenous Peoples are granted specific rights. This model of autonomy is often preferred when they include a majority of a population living within a specific border. When this is not the case, Indigenous Peoples may wish to develop functional autonomy, as he said, with two types: ethnic or cultural. Although limited, this model can give Indigenous Peoples a platform for further claims. Finally, he concluded that the study recommends that the Forum facilitate an inclusive process aimed at developing guiding principles for Indigenous Peoples' rights to self-reliance, focus on institutions that can be created to promote dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and Member States, and facilitate dialogue between the UN and Indigenous Peoples' right to autonomy.

Several **Experts of the Permanent Forum** were invited to offer their questions or remarks regarding the study of Mr. Jens Dahl. **Mr. Grigory E. Lukiyantsev** thanked Mr. Dahl for his study and asked him how he analyzed the recommendations in a report written by Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz on strengthening intercultural dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and States. He further asked him whether he had requested any information from Member States in conducting his report. He also expressed surprise at the report's descriptions of the models of autonomy, noting that in the Russian Federation, Indigenous Peoples were characterized as being "practically forced" into autonomous districts. **Mr. Simón Freddy Condo Riveros** pointed out that, as long as Indigenous Peoples do not have full access to autonomy, the study will be a work in progress; he took the example of his country, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, to make his point. **Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev** came back to paragraph 3 of the study, which talks about the importance of forests for Indigenous Peoples. He said that, since forests are at the center of industrial projects, it is even more crucial to establish a dialogue between companies and indigenous communities and to include them in decision-making processes. **Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo** underlined how relevant the topic of the study is, as indigenous communities have been the victims of numerous violations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To conclude, **Mr. Jens Dahl** answered some of the questions or remarks that were raised by the Members of the Permanent Forum. He stressed that the aim of the study is to see what kind of autonomy is available to Indigenous Peoples. He recommended the Permanent Forum to organize dialogue between indigenous communities and Member States in order to work on their guidelines.

Tuesday, 20 April

- *Discussion on the theme, "Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16" (continued)*

Ms. Anne Nuorgam, Chair of the Permanent Forum, introduced the organizational aspects. She then gave the floor to the panelists.

Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, UNPFII Expert, introduced the report she wrote for the Permanent Forum in relation to the topic of climate change. She shared how it has numerous effects on indigenous communities, such as: food insecurity (heat waves, drought, flooding); loss of land (sea level rise, deforestation); and biodiversity losses, which have an impact on traditional medicine and increase tension over natural resources. She also underlined the point that, since the Paris Agreement recognized the role of Indigenous Peoples to fight climate change's effects, it is important to include them in the decision-making processes.

Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, pointed out how decisive is SDG 16 for Indigenous Peoples, as it could help them with achieving the recognition of their rights and lead them to their own governance. She added that the solution is deeply linked to the theme of Mr. Jens Dahl's study, *i.e.*, autonomy. **Mr. Jaime Enrique Arias Arias, member of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia**, denounced the fact that armed conflicts are too prevalent in indigenous territories and that if Member States do not face them, it will be impossible to achieve peace. He then took the example of the peace agreement in Colombia between the Government and the FARC, noting that conditions have not improved for indigenous communities. **Mr. Albert Barume, United Nations Security Council Expert on Mali**, spoke about the concept of peace and said that Indigenous Peoples also have to face the risk of radicalization. This is due to the fact that indigenous lands and territories are in many cases occupied by extremist groups, making them much more vulnerable to radicalization. He added that their knowledge is in many situations used by the local government and by these groups, and so it is crucial for Member States to engage with these indigenous communities instead of ostracizing them by labelling them as "terrorists", "extremists" or "radicalized communities".

States took the floor to express their views under this agenda item. **Australia** spoke about "Closing the Gap", a strategy that aims to reduce discrimination faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the country. The **USA** welcomed the new cabinet appointment of H.E. Debra Haaland and shared the U.S. Government's commitment to help indigenous communities eradicate the pandemic through a donation of 4 billion dollars to vaccination campaigns. **Canada** reiterated its commitment to strengthen the participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes. **Guyana** explained how their Government has been working to recognize the land rights of its indigenous communities, for example, by revising the *Amerindian Act* of 2006. **Guatemala** shared how studies have been conducted in order to understand and protect the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. **Spain** repeated its commitment to fight climate change and recognized the role played by indigenous communities in doing so. **The Russian Federation** said that the Government has developed a set of targets in order to help Indigenous Peoples, who live in remote areas, and to achieve the 2030 Agenda. **Denmark**, together with **Greenland**, welcomed Mr. Jens Dahl's study, especially as Greenland is an autonomous territory within Denmark.

The following **indigenous organizations** made statements: **RAIPON** spoke about the implementation of an indigenous council that meets 4 times a year to discuss important topics for indigenous communities in the Russian Federation. **NSWALC** recommended the Permanent Forum to support an initiative for self-governance and to strengthen shared decision-making with Member States, especially regarding decisions that will have a direct impact on the lives of Aboriginal People. The representative added that the "Uluru Statement from the Heart" has not been recognized and is still denied by the Government. The **Nation of Hawai'i** highlighted that reconciliation is needed in Hawai'i in order to achieve peace; to do so the U.S. Government has to recognize the right to self-sovereignty of its indigenous communities. **Chirapaq – ECMIA** recommend Member States to demilitarize indigenous territories and to include indigenous women in decision-making processes, especially since they have been and still are the main victims of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. **COICA** declared a state of emergency in the Amazon region, especially in relation to the ongoing murder of indigenous land rights defenders. The **ICC** shared the situation of the Arctic polynya, which is an area shared between Greenland and Canada which has been deeply affected by climate change. The representative added that they created the Pikialasorsuaq Commission in order to preserve the area. The **Union of Indigenous Peoples – SOYUS** explained how a traditional economy can help maintain and sustain the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples. The **Association Tin Hinane** brought up the situation of pastoralists in the Sahel region, where they live in a hostile environment since armed conflicts continue in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

Other Members of the Permanent Forum took the floor. **Ms. Hannah McGlade** urged the Australian Government to reform its Constitution, as there are still hundreds of cases of indigenous people being killed in police custody and their number is also the highest among the prison population. **Ms. Lourdes Tiban Guala** shared how indigenous communities in Ecuador have their own administration and judicial system; however, when they demand to access it, they are marginalized and discriminated against. She therefore asked Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz for her advice. **Ms. Tove Søvndahl Gant** recommended the Permanent Forum to facilitate the dialogue between Member States and Indigenous Peoples, including guiding principles for the implementation of their right to self-determination.

The panelists closed the session. **Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz** observed that numerous participants mentioned the need to increase and enhance the participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes. She also recommended for Member States and Indigenous Peoples to have a very constructive dialogue. **Mr. Albert Barume** reiterated the role that indigenous communities can have in fighting extremist groups. **Mr. Jaime Enrique Arias Arias** expressed his gratitude for the willingness to act expressed by Member States, but he also underlined that the killing of Indigenous Peoples is still going on at a significant pace. **Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim** pointed out that indigenous communities' governance can help to build strong institutions. She added that Member States could also learn from how Indigenous Peoples are contributing to food systems and natural resources restoration.

Wednesday, 21 April

- *Discussion on the future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues, specifically challenges related to pandemics and responses to them*

Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth, UNPFII Expert, introduced the report of the international expert group meeting on "Indigenous peoples and pandemics". The document, as he explained, aims to study the impact of diseases and pandemics on indigenous communities, especially as the world has been facing the COVID-19 pandemic. He also made recommendations to Member States, which called on them to include Indigenous Peoples in the vaccination strategy to ensure that they do not face discrimination, and to end human rights violations and violence faced by indigenous communities, especially women and children, etc. The whole list of recommendations is available in the report, as he noted. **Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo, UNPFII Expert**, presented the study on, "The rights of indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of the exceptional measures adopted during the pandemic". He said that Member States have been strong and effective in establishing mechanisms of territorial control, but not in recognizing ethnic and cultural diversity. Thus, he condemned the lack of inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also denounced the fact that extractive industries carried on their activities, which had an impact on indigenous communities in many ways. Indeed, they became the victims of violence (in particular indigenous women), land grabbing, contamination, lack of access to education, etc. He therefore strongly advised Member States to act accordingly.

Several Members of the Permanent Forum asked questions and made remarks regarding the study. **Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago** recommended that Member States set up special funds to help indigenous communities during difficult times, such as during pandemics. **Mr. Vital Bambanze** suggested adding information regarding the impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples in the African and Asian regions. **Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev** recalled that corporations should focus on the scientific and health aspects of the vaccine rather than on any political ramifications. **Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim** recommended that the response to COVID-19 include indigenous communities. For this, information should be disseminated in their indigenous languages. **Ms. Lourdes Tibán Guala** underlined the need for Member States to recognize indigenous medicine. **Mr. Bornface Museke Mate** expressed the wish that information be disseminated in indigenous languages, especially for those living in remote areas. **Mr. Grigory E. Lukiyantsev** shared his support for all the recommendations made by his colleagues, especially regarding the politicization of the vaccination campaign. He added that he hopes that if there will be a vaccine passport, it should not be a new way of discriminating against indigenous communities.

The following States made statements: **Canada** expressed its willingness to work with indigenous communities to ensure that they are safe during the pandemic. **Mexico** explained that data had been collected that allowed the Government to have reports on the pandemic, even for indigenous communities, who live in remote areas. **Venezuela** said that indigenous knowledge and medicine was rather privileged over Western medicine. **Peru** indicated that a strategy had been put in place to access Indigenous Peoples in remote areas in order to provide them with public services. **The Russian Federation** stressed that expert meetings should be organized to exchange experiences on how to handle the effects of COVID-19. **Guatemala** said that coordination had been put in place to help indigenous communities during the pandemic, for example, by translating official documents into indigenous languages. **Australia** shared that an emergency response plan was effective in the country to fight COVID-19, through a partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organizations. **Brazil** highlighted measures adopted by the Government to help indigenous communities in remote areas. **China** encouraged Member States to adopt concrete measures to protect Indigenous Peoples, such as establishing funds, integrating their special needs and ending the discrimination they face. **Colombia** explained the measures taken in the country to eradicate the pandemic, such as the translation of informative documents into indigenous languages, inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in vaccination plans and dialogue with indigenous organizations. **New Zealand** said that Māori organizations have worked with the Government to support indigenous communities in the long term. **Chile** stressed the importance of sharing healthcare information in indigenous languages. **Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries: Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Greenland and Denmark)** expressed concern over the dramatic increase of violence against indigenous women and girls during COVID-19. **The Philippines** mentioned that Indigenous Peoples are part of the priority group for the vaccination campaign. **Ukraine** denounced the fact that Crimean Tatars are discriminated against by the Russian Federation.

Numerous indigenous organizations took the floor to express their views under this agenda item. **FILAC** recommended Member States to take into account indigenous languages and indigenous healthcare into vaccination campaigns and to include their leadership in implementing strategies. **COICA** urged States in Latin America and the Caribbean to prioritize the Escazú Agreement, which will guarantee rights of access to information, public participation, and environmental justice for indigenous communities. **ICC** said that there is an urgent need to help indigenous communities, especially given the lack of proper infrastructure, which has contributed to the spread of the pandemic and increased mental health issues. The **Nation of Hawai'i** spoke out against the lack of internet access on the island and explained how they use their time during the lockdown to expand their traditional system of land management by growing their traditional foods and medicines. **RAIPON** shared the need to inform indigenous communities in remote areas on how they can be protected from the pandemic by getting vaccinated. The **Sámi Parliament in Norway** recommended that States whose borders cross indigenous homelands coordinate and harmonize pandemic regulations and restrictions. **CSUTB** denounced the massacre of 36 indigenous persons in the Plurinational State of Bolivia during the revolution in 2019. **Land is Life** condemned the situation for Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon region because they have been deeply affected by the pandemic, and therefore risk being exterminated if no help is provided. **Associação Dos Povos Indígenas Karipuna** spoke out on how the indigenous territories of Brazil were further invaded during COVID-19 and how the Government failed to provide them with proper healthcare. **Mujeres Indígenas por la Conservación, Investigación y Aprovechamiento de los Recursos Naturales – RED LAC** explained how indigenous youth suffered from inequalities during the pandemic and called on Member States to look into policies and their special needs. The **Forest Peoples Programme** discussed the IPBES Global Assessment, which summarized the important contributions of Indigenous Peoples regarding the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The **United Confederation of Taino People** stated that UNDRIP is not sufficiently implemented in the Caribbean region, which is why the Permanent Forum should establish an expert group to discuss non-self-governing and non-incorporated territories. **Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation** denounced the fact that Vietnam has contributed to the ongoing discrimination and violence faced by the Khmer People. The **Asian Caucus** urged the Permanent Forum to adopt for its future work an increased mobilization for the strengthening and institutionalization of the protection and conservation of indigenous land and resources.

The panelists closed the session. **Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo** underlined the fact that there are similar issues in all the indigenous regions, especially with regard to access to appropriate healthcare services. **Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth** thanked ICC for raising the issue of mental health and suicide among indigenous communities and said that it is important for Member States to tackle it. He also spoke about the need for Indigenous Peoples to receive official documents in their indigenous languages and to be involved in decision-making processes regarding the vaccination campaign.

Thursday, 22 April

- *Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

Mr. Francisco Calí Tzay, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, explained how he took on his role in May 2020 in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. He received more than 150 reports on the situation, which highlighted that Indigenous Peoples are more vulnerable to the disease due to a lack of access to appropriate health infrastructure and to their more fragile condition. He further denounced the increase of inequalities, discrimination and human rights violations such as: land grabbing, increase in poverty, destruction of their environment by extractive industries, sexual violence, etc. Regarding land rights, he referred to the report prepared by Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, and welcomed the fact that she had contributed to land rights litigation. On this note, he recommended that Member States continue to accept country visits. Finally, on the vaccination campaign, he called on Member States to involve Indigenous Peoples in the decision-making processes. **Ms. Laila Susanne Vars, Expert of the EMRIP**, underlined the fact that COVID-19 has exacerbated the inequalities between indigenous communities and non-indigenous communities. She shared that a report will be prepared on the individual and collective rights of indigenous children and that a first draft will be available before the EMRIP session. She added on the subject that Indigenous Peoples should be capable of meeting their children's needs, but this depends on their ability to access their right to self-determination. Regarding the country visits carried out by the EMRIP Experts, she explained that they were postponed due to the pandemic, but that they still managed to do one remotely with Brazil. She strongly encouraged other Member States to accept their invitation and added that the next one will be in Canada. Finally, regarding the report on reconciliation and the repatriation process, she explained that progress had been made and referred to the example of the Yaqui People. **Mr. Pablo Miss, Board of Trustees, Voluntary Fund**, said that the Voluntary Fund has had the capacity to enable thousands of indigenous people to participate in many UN conferences since its establishment in 1985. He added that, since 2020, they have decided to expand their mandate and help beneficiaries to participate in UN climate change processes. In addition, he explained that e-learning tools have recently been developed to help Indigenous Peoples study their rights in conformity with UNDRIP. Finally, he thanked the Member States that had donated funds to the Voluntary Fund, without which they could not fulfill their mandate.

Members of the Permanent Forum reacted to the panelists' presentations. **Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago** expressed concern about human rights violations in the Latin America region and urged Member States to implement ILO Convention 169 and UNDRIP in all policies and standards. **Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim** called on Member States to share informational materials on contraceptive methods, especially in the African region, as pregnancies have increased among indigenous women and girls. She also referred to the situation of pastoralists in the Sahel region, as they live in a conflict zone. **Ms. Hannah McGlade** shared that in New Zealand and Australia children have been taken from their families for decades; thus, better laws involving child custody are needed. She also spoke about the minimum age for applying criminal charges in Australia and recommended that the Government increase the minimum age from 10 to 14 years old. **Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev** asked Mr. Francisco Calí Tzay how the Permanent Forum could cooperate regarding the upcoming decade for indigenous languages. He also asked Ms. Laila Susanne Vars if the Permanent Forum could help the EMRIP with countries who do not respond positively to requests for country visits. Finally, he asked Mr. Pablo Miss if the Voluntary Fund could be more flexible with regard to Indigenous Peoples living in remote areas.

A few **States** took the floor: **Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries: Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Greenland and Denmark)** asked the EMRIP whether Member States could contribute to the process of reconciliation and repatriation by facilitating contacts between Indigenous Peoples and museums. The **European Union** submitted a question to the Special Rapporteur on what is the biggest challenge in ensuring that Indigenous Peoples' struggles are respected. **Chile** shared that a constitutional reform has been passed that will allow indigenous representatives to secure 17 seats in the 155-seat Convention. **Canada** said that the country recognizes that UNDRIP is crucial for working on reconciliation and recognition. **Ukraine** denounced the constant aggression against the Crimean Tatars by the Russian Federation. **Guatemala** called on the EMRIP to continue to suggest studies that will support the rights of Indigenous Peoples and to initiate dialogue between them and Member States. **Australia** expressed its willingness to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in order to change the judicial system. **Brazil** explained that the Government has encouraged indigenous communities to use their traditional medicine to eradicate the pandemic, and they added that the Government is also taking action to prevent the invasion and degradation of indigenous lands.

The following **indigenous organizations** made statements: **IITC** described how the Yaqui People have successfully repatriated sacred objects to their community, and they asked if the Special Rapporteur would prepare a follow-up study on COVID-19. **FILAC** called on Governments to prioritize Indigenous Peoples in their vaccination campaigns and asked them to ensure respect for their collective rights during the process. **AIPP** denounced the increase in militarization and land grabbing in Asia during the pandemic. **Organisasi Pribumi Papua Barat** called on Member States to promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples so that the UNDRIP could be fully implemented. The **Saami Council** stated that the implementation of three important decisions did not go as planned: a decision of the Supreme Court in Sweden; a decision of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination regarding a mining project in Sweden; and a Human Rights Council decision on the electoral role of the Sami parliament in Finland. **Associação dos Povos Indígenas Karipuna** explained how the indigenous territories of Brazil were further invaded during COVID-19 and urged the Government to respect their land rights. **Human Rights Watch** said that indigenous communities in Venezuela have suffered disproportionately from COVID-19, which is why the Government should urgently vaccinate them. The **New Zealand Human Rights Commission** thanked the EMRIP for its visit in 2019 and discussed the establishment of a working group as a result, which produced a report focusing on the Māori People's right to self-determination.

Panelists made closing remarks: **Mr. Francisco Calí Tzay** said that Member States must take into account the decisions that will prevent pandemics. He further informed the participants that the next study will focus on the theme of water and will be released in 2022. **Ms. Laila Susanne Vars** encouraged those Member States that are already developing National Action Plans to carry on their work, and she further encouraged the other States to take up the task as well. She also thanked and welcomed the help of the Permanent Forum with country visits. **Mr. Pablo Miss** explained that the Voluntary Fund is thinking outside of the box to continue supporting all indigenous communities.

Friday, 23 April

- [Follow up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)
 - [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

Ms. Joan Carling, Tebtebba Foundation, referred to the [2019 Global Sustainable Development Report](#), and stressed that not a single goal will be met by 2030. On the contrary, the situation has declined, citing the worsening of climate change and the loss of biodiversity. According to her, this situation has resulted in Indigenous Peoples being left behind and even actively pushed behind. She further denounced the unsustainable economic growth that is underway as governments are prioritizing the activities of extractive industries over a sustainable economy. In this regard, she explained that, although renewable energy projects are also carried out on indigenous territories, the indigenous are not the ones who benefit from

them. Finally, she highlighted the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the inequalities already existing for Indigenous Peoples. **Ms. Janene Yazzie, International Indian Treaty Council**, recommended the Economic and Social Council to ensure that Indigenous Peoples participate in the High-Level Political Forum, with access to interpretation, as English is not the lingua franca of all the indigenous delegates. She added that a seat should be included for them at all High-Level formal and informal meetings.

States expressed their views under this agenda item. **Sweden (on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)** said that the Nordic countries are finalizing with the Sámi parliaments the “Nordic Sami Convention”. **Mexico (on behalf of GoFIP)** stressed that Governments should work with Indigenous Peoples in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda and to eradicate the pandemic. **Guyana** explained that the country supports the rights of indigenous communities, as it could be a solution to help their economic growth. **Nicaragua** said that considerable progress has been made in recognizing Indigenous Peoples’ rights in the Constitution. **Chile** spoke about some of the ongoing initiatives to reduce the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous communities, such as the design of a housing program. **El Salvador** shared measures taken to combat the pandemic, such as food packaging and enrolling elders in the vaccination campaign. **Australia** reiterated its willingness to include Aboriginal and Torres Islanders Peoples in their decision-making processes to achieve the 2030 Agenda. **Nepal** explained that the Constitution guarantees special measures for disadvantaged communities such as Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous organizations also took the floor. **FILAC** expressed the commitment of Indigenous Peoples in the Latin American and Caribbean region to promote dialogue with the private sector, in order to encourage them to carry out energy projects so that their rights are not violated. **Asian Indigenous Peoples’ Caucus, AIPP and IPMG** urged the Permanent Forum to mobilize political support and resources to undertake data disaggregation by ethnicity in monitoring and reporting on the SDGs to make Indigenous Peoples visible and included. **RAIPON** said that the Far Eastern region of the Russian Federation is trying to gain an autonomous status. **Indigenous Peoples Organisation - Australia** called on the Permanent Forum to request Member States to publish an annual report on their practical efforts to address the implementation of the SDGs, including support with indigenous-led outcomes, and with special attention to women and children. **Aty Guasu Kaiowá Guarani** condemned the ongoing killings in Brazil and denounced the lack of action from the Government to prevent them. **Kola Sami Association** underlined the urgent need for the Sámi People to protect their language. **Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation** referred to the fact that Vietnam does not recognize UNDRIP or Indigenous Peoples’ rights. **CEM-Aymara** called on Member States to place greater value on indigenous knowledge in order to combat climate change.

- *[Follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples](#)*

Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev, Member of the Permanent Forum, introduced the study he co-wrote with Mr. Sven-Erik Soosarr and Mr. Grigory E. Lukiyantsev, entitled “Representative institutions and models of self-governance of indigenous peoples in Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia: ways of enhanced participation”. The aim of the report is to identify good practices in Indigenous Peoples’ participation in decision-making, representation, self-organization and self-governance in the region, and to propose ways in which indigenous communities can strengthen their own institutions and processes of influencing decision-making at the national, regional and global levels. The results from this study are that the authors found that the principle of self-organization of Indigenous Peoples in the region largely coincide with the approaches adopted in other socio-cultural regions. The report also revealed that the legitimacy of these autonomous bodies stems from their inherent cultural and human rights, rather than from their recognition by outside actors. He further explained that the absence of legislation on Indigenous Peoples’ organizations does not prevent them from interacting with authorities, citing the example of congresses in the Russian Federation. **Ms. Mariam Wallet Mohamed Aboubakrine, member of the Temporary Committee for the Indigenous Coordinating Body for Enhanced Participation in the United Nations**, explained that enhancing the participation of Indigenous Peoples in UN meetings is not new, as it was started a century ago with the visit of Chief Deskaheh to Geneva in the 1920s. She added that the General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled, “Enhancing the participation of indigenous peoples’ representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them.”

This decision stems from a process that began in 2014 with a commitment made by Member States at the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to consider the participation of Indigenous Peoples at the UN. Finally, she urged Member States to consider allowing their participation in the General Assembly as permanent observers. **Ms. Daria Egereva, member of the Temporary Committee for the Indigenous Coordinating Body for Enhanced Participation in the United Nations**, recalled that the committee held a first informal meeting in 2016, in Bangkok, followed by a second meeting in Quito in 2020, which aimed to provide indigenous representatives and experts with the opportunity to consolidate their positions and strategies on the processes. She then endorsed the candidacy of Dr. Claire Charters and Mr. Estebancio Castro-Diaz¹, Kuna indigenous from Panama, to fill the role of indigenous advisers to the President of the General Assembly. Finally, she urged Member States to request a meeting with the Secretary-General and Assembly President to set out their views on the appropriate processes for the Assembly to consider the enhancement of Indigenous Peoples' participation in the UN meetings.

A few **States** took the floor: **Canada (on behalf of Australia, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia, Denmark, Greenland, Estonia, Finland, Guatemala, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru and the United States)** welcomed the decision in the 75th General Assembly Resolution on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to continue their efforts to enhance the participation of indigenous representatives in relevant UN meetings on issues affecting them. **Guatemala** reiterated its willingness to work with the indigenous communities in the country and shared its conviction that there must be FPIC to ensure Indigenous Peoples' rights in accordance with ILO Convention 169. **The Philippines** explained that its National Commission on Indigenous Peoples is responsible for the design of policies, programs, activities and projects for the well-being of the indigenous communities, taking into consideration their beliefs, customs, practices and culture. **Paraguay** shared that the country had adopted its National Plan for Indigenous Peoples in compliance with UNDRIP. **The Russian Federation** advised the Permanent Forum to take data from official bodies regarding the indigenous communities in the country. **Ukraine** denounced the constant aggression against the Crimean Tatars by the Russian Federation.

The following **indigenous organizations** made statements: The **Sámi Parliament in Finland** asked the Permanent Forum to encourage Member States to include indigenous representatives in their delegation, in relation to strengthening their participation in UN meetings. **IITC** called for the recognition of the vital role that Indigenous Peoples' knowledge system has in the global effort to address climate change. **RAIPON** said that indigenous languages are crucial for maintaining their cultural heritage. The **Assembly of First Nations** spoke about Bill C-15, which is a framework for the full and effective implementation of UNDRIP in Canada. The representative added that he hoped this would lead to the development of a National Action Plan.

The other co-authors of the report made concluding remarks. **Mr. Sven-Erik Soosarr** said that the Russian Federation provided special indigenous status and benefits only to the communities whose number is less than 50,000 people, and he insisted that the country should provide similar protections to all. He also shared the case of an Udmurt language rights activist who set himself on fire in protest against Moscow's language policy, to show that there are deep problems in the Russian Federation. **Mr. Grigory E. Lukiyantsev** explained that UNDRIP is not the only legal framework for Indigenous Peoples' rights; according to him, the decisions taken by the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council also constitute a framework. Regarding the study, he agreed that it is not perfect and that more dialogue is needed on certain issues.

Tuesday, 27 April

- *Discussion on the six mandate areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

¹Unfortunately, Mr. Castro-Diaz passed away during the session of the Permanent Forum.

Mr. Geoffrey Roth, UNPFII Expert, read a report prepared by **Mr. Bornface Museke Mate, UNPFII Expert**, who was not present due to technical difficulties. **Mr. Bornface Museke**, in his document, summarized what was said during the regional dialogues of the Permanent Forum that took place from October 2020 to April 2021. He underlined the fact that most of the issues concerned the 7 indigenous regions. The COVID-19 pandemic has indeed disproportionately affected Indigenous Peoples in all regions, particularly in North America. He added that there was a particular concern regarding indigenous children, who already had inadequate access to education. Indigenous Peoples have thus expressed the need for opportunities to “build back better” in a post-COVID-19 world with the full and active participation of women and children. He also shared that Indigenous Peoples in all regions expressed the need for active and meaningful participation in the decision-making processes in order to exercise their right to development. Moreover, they are deeply and disproportionately affected by climate change; thus, the protection of their land rights and self-determination is a top priority. Their traditional knowledge systems should be utilized in order to combat climate change. Furthermore, Indigenous Peoples expressed deep concerns with ongoing militarization of their territories in several countries, especially in Asia and Africa. They thus called for recognition and protection of their self-rule government and customary justice system to establish justice and the rule of law for a sustainable peace and inclusive development. Finally, with regard to the “International Decade of Indigenous Languages”, it was recognized that languages are a key to the realization of the human rights of Indigenous Peoples as they are essential for building identity.

The following States made statements: **Finland (on behalf of Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Finland)** expressed their wish to have higher standards of physical and mental health for Indigenous Peoples. **Canada** shared its willingness to develop a National Action Plan in order to give a response to the national inquiry regarding the disappearances and murders of indigenous women and girls. **Paraguay** explained how the country had developed measures to preserve, promote and revitalize indigenous languages. The **Philippines** said that, since the implementation of the “Indigenous Peoples Right’s Act” in 1997, the Government has stepped up efforts to empower Indigenous Peoples. **Namibia** briefed the Forum on the status of the “White Paper on the rights of indigenous peoples in Namibia”, which was drafted in 2014 and communicated to the Cabinet in April 2021. **Bangladesh** described how, although the Government does not recognize the term “indigenous”, the State continues to develop strategies to protect ethnic culture. **Guatemala** explained how, with UN support, indigenous women have been encouraged and helped to increase their agricultural production in order to enhance food security. **Cuba** expressed support for the claims of Indigenous Peoples and called on Member States to ensure that their rights are respected. **Australia** stressed the importance of empowering Indigenous Peoples with economic opportunities both in business and employment.

Indigenous organizations also took the floor: **FILAC** spoke about the creation and work of the “Instituto Iberoamericano de Lenguas Indígenas (IIALI)”, a center that was set up in Latin America to promote, preserve and revitalize indigenous languages. **RAIPON** explained how the Russian Federation has funded the training of teachers of indigenous languages in order to preserve them. The **Asia Indigenous People’s Caucus** requested UNESCO to urge Member States to recognize all indigenous languages and give them the status of official languages. The **Indigenous Information Network** urged Member States to eliminate barriers to education and sexual and reproductive health services for indigenous women in the African region. **IITC** underscored the urgency of dealing with missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in North America. **Mujeres indígenas por la Conservación, Investigación y Aprovechamiento de los recursos naturales – RED LAC – Global Indigenous Youth Caucus** recommended that the Permanent Forum urge the CBD secretariat and UNESCO to ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples, especially young people, at their meetings. **Indigenous Peoples’ Organisation - Australia** called on Member States to report annually on the implementation of UNDRIP, in particular on self-determination, land rights and FPIC, and to make efforts to prevent state and corporate violence against Aboriginal people. **Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS)** denounced the fact that the Bangladeshi Government does not properly implement UNDRIP and protect the rights of indigenous communities. **OGIEK PEOPLES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (OPDP)** requested the Kenyan Government to put in place a sustainable system of equitable land tenure to prevent forced evictions and to develop and enact dedicated legislation to expand specific protection for Indigenous Peoples.

- *Discussion on the thematic dialogues, “International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032)”*

Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago, UNPFII Expert, opened the thematic dialogue by reading a poem in her indigenous language. **Mr. Sven-Erik Soosaar, UNPFII Expert**, introduced the theme of this dialogue. He explained that the “International Decade of Indigenous Languages” is directly linked to the 2019 “International Year of Indigenous Languages”, as a year was not enough to prevent, promote and revitalize indigenous languages. He further added that the pandemic has deeply impacted some of the last speakers of indigenous languages, which is why it is important to address this issue. **Ms. Aili Keskitalo, President of the Saami Parliament in Norway and Member of the Global Task Force for the preparation of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032**, said that the International Year was a promise of lasting change for Indigenous Peoples’ languages, and that they are committed to work at the local, regional and global levels to bring about this change during the decade. She then explained that the Sámi language is endangered. For this reason, the Sámi People took the opportunity to create a joint cross-border linguistic institution called “Sámi giellagáldu” as part of the “International Year for Indigenous Languages” in 2019. She added that language technologies would play an important role in the promotion of indigenous languages. Finally, she urged Member States to engage with Indigenous Peoples in the preparations for the decade. **Mr. Xing Qu, Deputy Director-General – DDG UNESCO**, said that the “International Year for Indigenous Languages” helped raise awareness of the importance of indigenous languages for sustainable development, peace-building processes and reconciliation. The COVID-19 pandemic has, however, further exacerbated the inequalities already existing between indigenous communities and non-indigenous communities, including linguistic diversity. He added that the protection of indigenous languages is crucial as it is associated with unique knowledge, heritage and practices, often seen as key resources in addressing environmental and socio-economic challenges. To express UNESCO’s full commitment to promoting indigenous languages, a Global Task Force composed of Member States, Indigenous Peoples’ organizations and UN mechanisms, was established. Members aim to prepare and implement activities within the framework of the International Decade, as well as to continue to encourage the inclusion and participation of Indigenous Peoples. Finally, he mentioned that a multilingual website for the International Decade is currently being developed and will be launched later this year.

States took part in the interactive dialogue: **Norway (on behalf of Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Sweden, and Norway)** stressed the importance of Member States cooperating and making joint efforts to preserve and promote Indigenous Peoples’ languages, and in the process, incorporating modern language technology as an important element. **Latvia** suggested Member States to provide a report with data for all indigenous regions. **Australia** expressed its commitment to support Aboriginal and Torres Islander Peoples in leading the way to preserve indigenous languages to ensure that this resource will be available for future generations. **Peru** explained that, in an effort to move from a monolingual to an intercultural state, 455 speakers of indigenous languages were trained as interpreters and translators of 37 indigenous languages; in addition, an ethnolinguistic map for providing public services in the relevant indigenous languages was approved.

Representatives of the following **indigenous organizations** also participated: **ICC** called for the Inuit language to be recognized as an official language in Inuit lands as it is crucial for the political, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual rights of the Inuit. **RAIPON** spoke about overfishing on indigenous territories, giving the example of salmon, which has a profound impact on indigenous communities. **Congrès Mondial Amazigh** explained that indigenous languages do not compete with dominant languages, which is why they should be considered as a right of Indigenous Peoples and as an asset for States in North Africa. **Tebtebba Foundation** pointed out that the loss of a language can have wider repercussions, such as the loss of knowledge about biodiversity and ecosystems management. The representative therefore urged Member States to effectively recognize Indigenous Peoples’ rights to lands, territories and resources.

FAO has expressed support for UNESCO’s initiative. The representative also pointed out that the achievement of SDG 16 is essential to preserve indigenous languages and traditional culture.

Two Members of the Permanent Forum made statements: **Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev** stressed the importance for Member States to take measures that will revitalize indigenous languages and support information technologies. He also asked how quickly UNESCO could bring in specialists to the Global Task Force. **Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago** urged Member States to engage with Indigenous Peoples to ensure that measurable results are visible in the preservation of indigenous languages. She also encouraged them to fund projects that aimed at preserving, promoting and revitalizing indigenous languages.

Panelists made closing remarks: **Mr. Sven-Erik Soosaar** shared Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago's remark that it is important to have measurable results. **Ms. Aili Keskitalo** said the most important lesson learned from the "International Year of Indigenous Languages" was that Indigenous Peoples should participate in decision-making processes. She added that Member States should help indigenous organizations fund their events, especially regarding translation and interpretation.

Thursday, 29 April

- *Discussion on the six mandate areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (continued)*

States took the floor to express their views under this agenda item: **Mexico** referred to Article 2 of the Constitution, which recognizes Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, including the right to speak their mother tongue. **Vietnam** explained that the multi-ethnic country respects all groups, and for this reason poverty has been reduced in areas inhabited by these groups. **Japan** pointed out that the Ainu People were recognized as an Indigenous People in 2008, and that in 2019 the Government enacted legislation on the full promotion of their culture. This led to the establishment of a national center for the revitalization of Ainu culture in July 2020. **The Russian Federation** shared how reindeer herding is supported and encouraged by the Government. The representative of **Ecuador** highlighted the public policies implemented to help Indigenous Peoples, such as bilingual teaching and the prevention of violence against women. **Panama** said that, although the country recognizes the fundamental rights of indigenous communities, such as their FPIC and their right to bilingual education, they are still among the most vulnerable groups. **Chile** shared that a constitutional reform has been passed that will allow indigenous representatives to secure 17 seats in the 155-seat Convention. **Ukraine** denounced the fact that, although the Russian Federation has recognized Tatar as an official language, the Crimean Tatars are still being discriminated against in the country. **Nepal** welcomed the "International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032". **Guyana** explained how indigenous communities have been included in many programs, such as the allocation of land titles and the low carbon development strategy. **El Salvador** reiterated its commitment to Indigenous Peoples and indicated that various programs have been organized to provide them with appropriate health services and to preserve their indigenous languages through bilingual education. **Nicaragua** explained how it had incorporated ancestral indigenous knowledge into educational curricula. **China** said that Chinese companies are guided by the Government to respect human rights and the environment.

Numerous indigenous organizations made statements. The **International Union for Conservation of Nature** explained that the World Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nature to be held in September will highlight the contributions of Indigenous Peoples to nature conservation and enhanced measures for Member States, conservation organizations and development agencies to act. **Tebtebba Foundation** called on the Permanent Forum to urge Member States to ensure that indigenous youth and children have access to adequate resources to help them continue their education and provide them with appropriate health services, especially in matters of mental health and reproductive health. **Escuela Global de Liderazgo de Mujeres Indígenas** encouraged UN Women and United Nations Development Programs to set up training mechanisms with indigenous women. The representative also requested Member States to provide access to appropriate health services for Indigenous Peoples, and especially for LGBTQIA+, women, and those with disabilities. The **ADPI – Elatia Partnership** called on the Permanent Forum to establish and support mechanisms to collect disaggregated data on violations of the rights of Indigenous Peoples. **Confederación**

Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales Originarios de Bolivia (CSCIOB) asked the United Nations Secretary General and the Permanent Forum to lead support for an investigation into the murder of 36 Indigenous persons in 2019. The **Native Council of Prince Edward Island** has stated that Canada is not respecting Article 9² of UNDRIP, because they are deprived of their right to self-determination and self-government. **AMAI Asociación de Mujeres Abogadas Indígenas** urged Member States to provide consultations to Indigenous Peoples regarding extractive industries' activities. The **NGO of KhMAO-Ugra "Save Ugra", Ethnographic Open Air Museum "Torum Maa"**, explained how the organization aims to preserve the traditional way of life of people of the North, through the opening of an ethnographic open air museum called "Torum Maa", for example. **Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation** urged the Vietnamese Government to recognize Khmer Krom People as an Indigenous People, not as an ethnic minority. **Semilla Warunkwa** denounced the continued criminalization of human rights and environmental defenders, and she added that the murder of Cristina Bautista Taquinas, in Colombia, has not been resolved by the Government. **COICA** expressed that, without a tripartite dialogue, Indigenous Peoples' rights will not be fully protected. **Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales-DAR** denounced the activities of Chinese extractive industries in the Amazon region and called on China to respond. The **Asia Indigenous People's Caucus** shared the important role Indigenous Peoples play in protecting biodiversity and their environment in a sustainable manner, which Member States should recognize. **Sámi Parliament of Sweden** urged countries in which Sámi people live to stop the activities of extractive industries before irreparable damage is caused to the environment.

The **ILO** drew attention to the Indigenous Navigator³, which is a set of tools for Indigenous Peoples to systematically monitor the level of recognition and implementation of their rights.

Several Members of the Permanent Forum made statements: **Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago** urged WIPO to tackle the misappropriation of Indigenous Peoples' intellectual property, pointing out that extractive industries are taking their resources. **Mr. Phoolman Chaudhary** highlighted the lack of participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes. He also called for attention to the disappearance of indigenous languages and urged Member States to remove chemical waste from indigenous territories. **Mr. Vital Bambanze** declared that Indigenous Peoples should benefit from the achievement of the SDGs. He added that, in some countries, it seems that their participation in decision-making processes is seen as a gift to them, when it should be treated as a right. **Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth** spoke of a landmark decision in North Dakota to make the teaching of Native American history compulsory in elementary schools. He also said that WHO and the Permanent Forum should sit together to discuss the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, he expressed the wish for the Permanent Forum to be held in person in the future, as he insisted on the fact that Indigenous Peoples need to meet face to face. **Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev** stressed the need to protect the rights of indigenous children, and he thus urged the Permanent Forum and the United Nations Children's Fund to develop a strategy on education of indigenous children. He also mentioned the importance of regional dialogues, as regions with active participation from indigenous representatives are seeing better results in practice. **Ms. Anne Nuorgam** pointed out that few indigenous youths participated in the session; therefore, she stressed the need for their involvement as they are the future. **Mr. Simón Freddy Condo Riveros** said that vaccination is a human right and all people must have access to it. He then called on the UN to heed the call to investigate the massacre of 36 indigenous individuals in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, as mentioned in the CSCIOB statement.

Friday, 30 April

- *Closing of the session*

The Permanent Forum sent the Economic and Social Council three draft decisions contained in document E/C.19/2021/L.3, the first of which would authorize a three-day international expert group meeting on the

² *Article 9*: "Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right."

³ <https://indigenavigator.org/>

theme, “Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent”. The second draft decision set the dates for the Permanent Forum’s twenty-first session, at the UN Headquarters in New York from 25 April to 6 May 2022. Finally, the third decision set the provisional agenda for that meeting.

Several other documents (E/C.19/2021/L.2; E/C.19/2021/L.4; E/C.19/2021/L.5; E/C.19/2021/L.6; E/C.19/2021/L.7 and E/C.19/2021/L.8⁴) were approved by the Members of the Permanent Forum, after being presented and/or orally revised by the session’s **Rapporteur, Ms. Tove Søvndahl Gant**.

At this point, **Ms. Anne Nuorgam, Chair of the Permanent Forum**, made concluding remarks. She thanked all the participants for their presence, as it showed the resilience of Indigenous Peoples. She then pointed out that strengthening their participation in UN meetings is a process that began a century ago, with the journey that Chief Deskaheh of the Iroquois Confederacy undertook to Geneva in the 1920s. Over the next decades, Indigenous Peoples took up the charge and led this effort, which eventually produced positive results, such as the creation of ILO Convention 169, UNPFII, the Special Rapporteur, EMRIP and UNDRIP. However, she added that Indigenous Peoples still face many inequalities worldwide. For this reason, as she pointed out, the constant criminalization of Indigenous Peoples must end and their participation must be enhanced. She also expressed her willingness to hold the Permanent Forum in person in the future, as it allows thousands of indigenous representatives to come together and share their concerns, successes and good practices. Regarding the theme of the session, “Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of Indigenous Peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16”, she said that dialogues with Member States must address, among other issues: rising inequalities, climate change, biodiversity loss, indigenous incarceration, forced displacement and sexual exploitation. Finally, she stressed that, throughout the Forum, the negative effect of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples was raised numerous times. To this end, she urged Member States to take their needs into account in national programs and policies, and to ensure their voices are heard in national, international, regional and global dialogues. She concluded by reaffirming Indigenous Peoples’ commitment to the struggle of life.

The closing ceremony was then performed by **the Deputy main priest of the Central Religious Organization of Mari Traditional Religion, Albert Ivanovich Rukavishnikov**.

⁴ All the draft documents are available here: <https://bit.ly/3vMFbLS>

ANNEX I – LIST OF THE CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE UNPFII

Below is the list of the current Members of the Permanent Forum, whose mandate will expire at the end of 2022:

Indigenous Experts

Ms. Anne Nuorgam (Arctic)
Mr. Phoolman Chaudhary (Asia)
Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim (Africa)
Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo (Central and South America and the Caribbean)
Mr. Simón Freddy Condo Riveros (Central and South America and the Caribbean)
Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth (North America)
Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev (Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia)
Ms. Hannah McGlade (Pacific)

Experts nominated by States

Ms. Lourdes Tibán Guala (Ecuador)
Mr. Grigory E. Lukiyantsev (Russian Federation)
Mr. Bornface Museke Mate (Namibia)
Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago (Mexico)
Mr. Sven-Erik Soosaar (Estonia)
Mr. Vital Bambanze (Burundi)
Ms. Tove Søvndahl Gant (Denmark)
Ms. Zhang Xiaoan (China)

ANNEX II – LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIPP	Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CHIRAPAQ	Centro de Culturas Indígenas del Perú
COICA	Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica
CSCIOB	Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales Originarios de Bolivia
CSUTB	Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia
EMRIP	Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAIRA	Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)
FILAC	Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean
FIMI	Foro Internacional de Mujeres Indígenas
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GoFIP	Group of Friends of Indigenous Peoples
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Council
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IWGIA	International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
NSWALC	New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council
OHCHR	Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RAIPON	Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WHO	<u>World Health Organization</u>

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This document has been edited by Priscilla Saillen. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact her at: priscilla.saillen@docip.org