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United Nation Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Seventh Session  
New York, April 21 to May 2, 2008.

North America Indigenous Peoples Regional Statement

#1 ← Item 6: The Pacific

Presented on behalf of the North America Regional Caucus by Celeste McKay, Co-Rapporteur of the North America Region Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 7<sup>th</sup> Session.

Thank you Madame Chairman,

This statement is an excerpt of the written report submitted by the North America Region Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 7<sup>th</sup> Session (UNPFII7) held February 22 – 23, 2008, Coast Salish Territory, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, attended by 49 representatives from 38 Indigenous Nations and organizations from North America (United States and Canada). The report in its entirety is available as Conference Room Paper (CRP) 4 in the official documents for this session [E/C.19/2008/CRP.4].

Addressing agenda item 6, "*Half-day discussion on the Pacific*", the participants in this meeting from the North American region respectfully express the following to this session of the UNPFII:

The participants noted with concern the extreme effects of climate change and global warming on Indigenous Peoples in the Pacific. They noted the effects of rising ocean levels, which are creating "sinking States" such as Tuvalu, are also impacting Indigenous Peoples in the United States and Canada, particularly in the northern-most regions. This creates situations of forced relocation for Island and Sea Coast Peoples.

The participants urged the UNPFII7 to address these concerns with utmost urgency, and to recommend that the new Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples give high priority to the study of this issue in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples. This includes carrying out the recommendations made by the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which include encouraging States to complete the questionnaire on "The Legal Implications of Disappearance of States and Other Territories for Environmental Reasons, Including the Implications for the Human Rights of Their Residents, with Particular Reference to the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" and providing an assessment of the results and recommended next steps to the Human Rights Council, the UNPFII and other relevant UN bodies.

Thank you.