

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Fourteenth Session
April 20 - May 2015
Global Indigenous Women's Caucus Statement

Agenda 4. Half day session on the Pacific region

Honorable Chairwoman Meagan Davis, on behalf of the GIWC, we celebrate your achievement. Esteemed Members of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, distinguished representations of Indigenous Peoples, sisters and brothers of the world

We the GIWC continue to stand on the principle that the provisions of the UNDRIP affirm the inherent rights on Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific to participate fully in decision-making that affects us in the reaffirmation of our indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices, which contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment. This includes the right of Free Prior and Informed Consent as well as full, equal and effective participation. Based on these principles we submit the following for your consideration.

We are concerned that Indigenous peoples in the Pacific are faced with social and cultural oppression and are often discriminated against, particularly when it comes to addressing domestic violence issues, including sexual and physical violence. Because of this discrimination, many crimes against indigenous women in the Pacific go unreported.

We support and emphasize the efforts of our Indigenous sisters of Australia. We condemn the proposed forced closure of Aboriginal Communities in Australia and stand in solidarity with the Kimberley region of North West Australia and the 150 Aboriginal communities who are currently facing forced closure. Such closures of Aboriginal Communities are direct violations of our Free Prior and Informed Consent where our lands and territories are concerned which are emphasized in Articles 8, 10, 26, 27, and 32 of the UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We support and emphasize the efforts of our Indigenous sisters of Aotearoa New Zealand. We recognise and support Indigenous Māori women and their communities under section 6 of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 who have been, and remain prejudicially affected by the Acts and other legislative measures, and by the policies, practices, acts and omissions of the New Zealand Government as agents of the Crown.

In solidarity with our family of the Pacific in acknowledging that protection of our waterway and marine life is a critical priority. We find that deep sea oil drilling or Fracking are a threat to our waterways and marine life and the ecosystems in which indigenous peoples are caretakers of therefore, we call upon the Permanent forum to urge the New Zealand Government to take adequate account of New Zealand Māori Indigenous Peoples concerns, including the concerns about the gross environmental attacks on Papatūānuku, Earth Mother, Ngā uri o Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, the oceanic children of Tangaroa, God of the Sea and freshwater ways. In summary, the urgent

environmental concerns of Ngā Ariki Kaiputahi, Te Whānau-a-Apanui and Te Rarawa, about the need to retain ownership and control of their lands and to be fully involved in decision-making that affects their lands and to also address adequately the conservation issues facing their territories and which have a major detrimental effect on their ancestral lands. We further say that the matters complained about were or are inconsistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

We support and emphasize the efforts of our Indigenous Hawaiian Sisters who are opposing the construction of the 14th telescope on Mauna Kea Mountain. From time immemorial Hawaiians have known of the sacredness of this location, the abode of the Hawaiian Goddesses Poliahu, Keeper of the Snows, Lilinoe, guardian of the mists, and Waiiau, who oversees the sacred waters of Maunakea.

We further call upon the Permanent Forum to urge the government of Canada to stop funding the Thirty Meter Telescope, and request the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples initiate an investigation into the ongoing human rights abuses occurring in Hawaii. We call on the Permanent Forum to urge the governments of Canada, France, Chile, Australia, the UK, Argentina, Brazil, China, Japan, South Korea and the United States to stop their use and development of Mauna Kea and enter into meaningful dialogue with Hawaiian practitioners as mandated by Articles 11, 12 and 25 of the UNDRIP.

We support and emphasize the efforts of our Indigenous sisters of Fiji. We are concerned that the so called 2013 constitution of Fiji is not a fair representation of the Indigenous women of Fiji. The Fijian peoples assert their right to self determination and we reject this document and strongly emphasise the principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent as well as Full, equal and effective participation in this matter. We call upon the Permanent Forum to urge the Fijian government review their processes to include the full equal and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the election and policy making procedures.

Reaffirming that indigenous peoples, have the right to live free from discrimination of any kind. We recommend the Permanent forum urge member states to develop, in partnership with indigenous peoples, policies and procedures that ensure protection of victims of domestic violence.

We further recommend that these policies and procedures are culturally relevant to indigenous peoples and mandated for public service officials including, but not limited to police officers, social workers and judges. Recognizing this will encourage an indigenous friendly and culturally appropriate environment in order to strengthen the trust of the indigenous peoples

We recommend that the Permanent Forum urge all States:

to acknowledge that Indigenous participation in decision-making and control over decisions affecting their land and communities is central to self-determination and the equal enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights;

to commit to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the protection of economic, social and cultural rights at all levels of government – national, subnational, and local;

to enable Indigenous communities to realize sustainable economic development, including through removing legislative impediments and properly resourcing Indigenous led development initiatives;

to protect and promote the social wellbeing of Indigenous people through strengthening support for Indigenous communities and giving effect to Articles 8, 10 and 21 of the Declaration; and

to affirm the right of Indigenous people to maintain, protect and strengthen their culture and to give effect to Articles 8, 11, 12 and 31 of the Declaration.

We further recommend that the Permanent Forum, through the Special Rapporteur, develop a report on the implementation of Article 8 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

All Member States have an obligation to facilitate the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of Indigenous people. This obligation extends to all levels of Government. We look to the Permanent Forum, to fellow delegates and observers to support us in our call for The United States of America, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji to comply with its obligations under the Declaration, and support the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of Hawaiian, Taiwanese, Australian, New Zealand Māori and Fijian, furthermore, all Pacific Indigenous women and peoples.

Nōu te rourou, nākū te rourou, ka ora ai ngā iwi. With respect to the Permanent Forum we are convinced that with your basket and our basket the indigenous peoples will live.

Thank you.