

United Nations



HAUDENOSAUNEE

MOHAWK - ONEIDA - ONONDAGA - CAYUGA - SENECA - TUSCARORA
ONONDAGA NATION - VIA BOX 319-B NEDROW NEW YORK 13120



CoCip
ARCHIVES

WGIP 87/NAM.USA/5

UNITED NATIONS
WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS
FIFTH SESSION, AUGUST 1987
GENEVA
Position Paper No. 2

UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

August 7, 1987

Haudenosaunee Position Paper No. 2

Madame Daez, distinguished members of the Working Group, Observer Delegates to states and representatives of indigenous peoples and nations. Greetings.

We the delegates of the Haudensaunee wish to make some additional remarks, observations and suggestions concerning this weeks presentations by the various delegations to the Working Group. We will be brief.

1. a) The development of, or the recognition of independent indigenous nations need not, nor should not, be viewed as a hostile act against a nation state. Cooperation and support of the indigenous nations by states would insure that the social, economic and political development would be mutually beneficial to both parties.
1. b) States who have deep concerns over the emergence of indigenous nations should enter into dialogue with these nations as early as possible to insure that mutual interests can be served. At this point we are addressing our ultimate aspirations, we understand that the spectrum of emergence is extreme, however, the United Nations via the Working Group should know what goals we seek for our peoples.
2. Madame Chair, we aspire to seats in the General Assembly of the United Nations for the indigenous nations. A common platform that would allow us voice in momentous decisions facing human beings and the health and welfare of this natural world. Seats that would enable us to make positive contributions of ideas and philosophy to the common good of the world. Seats that would allow us to defend principles of life that we have adhered to from the beginning of the Great Law of Peace; especially the principle of equality.

Madame Chair, if this statement sounds presumptuous, unrealistic and far-fetched, it is merely a continuance of the fundamental

principle that all life is equal and relates directly to the struggle of this Working Group, to bring indigenous nations forward within the world community. The vision of world peace was a message of the Great Peacemaker, who founded our nation long before the coming of the whiteman, and planted the Great Tree of Peace on the Great Turtle Island.

3. Treaties between states and indigenous nations are international agreements and should carry the full weight of the standards of international law. Indigenous nations have historically upheld their obligations under these treaties, and governments have nothing to fear establishing relationships with indigenous peoples, based upon negotiation and consent.
4. Self-determination is just that, we understand that some indigenous delegations are satisfied with autonomy and of course that is their right, because the essence of self-determination is consent. The Haudenosaunee has been a nation of democracy long before the whiteman came to our shores; each generation carrying these principles on to the next, and so, we are here representing one of the oldest continuing governments in the world, for us, we cannot be anything less than a nation. The nation states of Canada and the United States have grown up around us, and we have treaties of international status with them.
5. Madame Chair, and respected delegates, at this time we would urge that the suggestion of regional meetings of the Working Group be carried through. The prohibitive costs to indigenous peoples to travel to Geneva prevents their valuable participation and input.

We take this time to thank those states who have contributed financially to the voluntary fund, Australia, The Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, also those states who have shown continued interest and support of this Working Group. It is our observation that they are the vanguard of states who will come to recognize the importance of the Working Group. And the beginning steps towards the recognition of equal status of all peoples.

We thank you Madame Deaz for unflagging interest on our behalf and to the distinguished members of the Working Group for their interest and work in fifth session of the Working Group.

Madame Daez, one last observation please; We have noticed that when indigenous delegations speak of self-determination they imply sovereignty, when Working Group members and Observer delegates of states speak of self-determination, they speak of autonomy, something less than sovereignty.

As a member of our delegation observed, " it sounds like we are being offered ice cream without the cone."

If that is the case then; we suggest that at the sixth session of the Working Group, we work on the cone.

We thank you all for your kind attention to our words.

DAHNAITTO,

JOAQUIN

The Delegation From The
Haudenosaunee