

Sixteenth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

United Nations Headquarters, New York

28 April, 2017

Agenda Item 11 Follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples:

Statement of National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF)

Madame Chair, distinguished representatives, indigenous sisters and brothers,

I am Yasso Kanti Bhattachan from Nepal. I am honored to share our experience in this august gathering as a representative of the National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF).

In Nepal, indigenous peoples and indigenous women are systematically made invisible and excluded through constitution, laws, policies, plans, and programs of the Government. Such practices restrict indigenous peoples and indigenous women's meaningful political participation and empowerment. Multiple discrimination based on race, language, religion, culture, gender and region disempowered indigenous peoples. Lack of priority to collective rights, lack of direct political participation, lack of follow-up and review of The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and lack of State's political will for time bound effective implementation of UNDRIP and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, keep indigenous peoples left behind. Nepal Government has yet to develop and implement national action plan for effective and meaningful implementation of the UNDRIP and the Outcome Document.

Therefore NIWF makes the following recommendations to UNPFII:

1. Call upon the UN member states to ensure indigenous peoples' meaningful participation at the General Assembly (GA) with a permanent observer status and at all other levels including its subsidiary bodies.
2. Call upon the General Assembly to establish a separate, unique observer status to indigenous peoples tailored specifically to indigenous peoples' representative institutions with attendance and right to express voice and views in both oral and written at all formal as well as closed meetings of the General Assembly, at all conferences convened by it and its subsidiary bodies effecting indigenous peoples, and at all UN fora.
3. Call upon the UN member states to establish a new independent body under General Assembly representing indigenous peoples' representative institutions and states, with equal numbers of representatives of indigenous peoples and states, from the existing seven geo-cultural regions, to determine its accreditation.
4. Call upon the UN member states to take relationship with lands, territories and resources, cultural distinctiveness, exercise of collective rights, practice of self-government, treaties, and agreement and in the South Asian context, those who are outside the fourfold Hindu Varna and caste system.
5. Call upon the United Nations for meaningful implementation of UN System Wide Action Plan (SWAP) on indigenous peoples in line with UNDRIP.
6. Call upon the UN not to leave any indigenous peoples behind.

Thank you.