

UN Permanent Forum twelfth session

PF13 Darreen 328
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Agenda item 8: Future work of the Permanent Forum, including matters of the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues.

Statement of Disability Caucus

29 May 2013

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Distinguished Chair, Permanent Forum Members, Elders, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Indigenous Caucus of Persons with Disabilities I will make a brief statement regarding the future work of the Permanent Forum. Since the formation of the Indigenous Caucus of Persons with Disabilities, our primary goal has been to promote and highlight the unique perspectives of Indigenous persons with disabilities within the Permanent Forum mechanism.

To this end we feel that our task is to not only speak to the current issues of this session, but also to look forward to our voice and inclusion in the Permanent Forum in its future sessions. In order to accomplish this, we of the Indigenous Caucus of Persons with Disabilities, first recommend that future agendas of the Permanent Forum opt for the creation of a specific half-day session on Indigenous persons with disabilities' issues.

The Study on the Situation of Indigenous Persons with Disabilities highlights the following issues: education, access to justice, violence, reproductive rights, and intergenerational trauma.

Therefore, a half-day session on Indigenous persons with disabilities would aid in the creation of a dialogue not only with members of the Permanent Forum, but also those attending future sessions. This would provide an opportunity for a focus on a rights based perspective of the many challenges and barriers facing Indigenous persons with disabilities and moving away from a *medicalized* or a charitable understanding of disability.

With this event we hope that the unique perspectives and issues regarding Indigenous persons with disabilities will be brought to mainstream attention, in much the same way as the those of Women, Youth, and Elders are now being included in the language of the Permanent Forum. With this unique perspective, we believe that the inclusion of those of us with disabilities will be a positive and enlightening force that will result in meaningful change and participation.

Second, we strongly recommend that all future planning and organizing of the Permanent Forum includes the Indigenous Caucus of Persons with Disabilities so that Indigenous persons with disabilities also have a seat at the table.