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# Tetuwan Oyate

## MEMBER RESERVATIONS

**Pine Ridge  
Lower Brule  
Cheyenne River  
Standing Rock  
Rosebud  
Fort Peck  
Crow Creek  
Santee  
Canadian Sioux**

Commission on Human Rights  
Fifty-sixth session  
Open-ended inter-sessional ad hoc working  
group on a permanent forum for indigenous  
peoples  
Geneva 14-23 February 2000

**doCip  
ARCHIVES**

15 February 2000

Intervention of Kent Lebsock on Item 4 b – Membership

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Please indulge me as I introduce myself. Under the traditions of my people, I have been taught that when speaking publicly one should say who he or she is and where they are from so that those listening know who is talking. My name is Kent Lebsock. My Lakota name is Tetuwan Okshila and my family is from my people's aboriginal territory in northern Nebraska which has been acknowledged under the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. I am here as a delegate of the American Indian Law Alliance and the Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council.

On the issue of membership, our delegation is in agreement with the recommendations of the Indigenous consensus paper. However, we would like to emphasize a few particular points.

Number one, the Forum should be as large as possible in order to assist in reflecting the vast diversity of Indigenous cultures. As stated by many brothers and sisters, our diversity is not simply reflected by the geographic divisions endorsed by the United Nations.

Number two, the Forum must contain an equal number of representatives from Indigenous nations (and organizations) and nation states.

Number three, it is essential that the language creating the

Permanent Forum ensures the full and open participation of all Indigenous groups, nations, and organizations, with or without ECOSOC status. Without a body of representatives directly from Indigenous nations, there is a situation in which other people are speaking for our peoples. This is an unacceptable extension of the kind of paternalism that has hindered our peoples for hundreds of years.

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Finally, I would like to thank the representative of Spain for the specificity of her comments on the constitution of membership in the Permanent Forum. However, many of her comments seriously concern us. We cannot accept any kind of formula for membership in the Forum which somehow links Indigenous peoples with the countries "from which we come." Again, this is an unacceptable form of paternalism and would lead to the same kind of domination by nation states over Indigenous peoples that has brought us to the United Nations in the first place. Therefore Indigenous participation could not be tied to the participation of any particular nation states or give that nation state a role in the selection of Indigenous delegates.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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