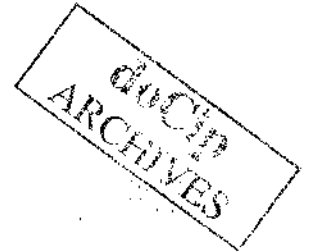


Item 4b 18/05 #16



Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Third Session
United Nations, New York
May 10-21, 2004

Agenda item 4(b): Environment

**Joint Statement by the
INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S CAUCUS and the
INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S BIODIVERSITY NETWORK (IWBN)**

**3rd Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
18 May 2004, United Nations, New York, New York**

This joint statement is made on behalf of the International Indigenous Women's Caucus and the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN).

We, Indigenous women, continue to affirm our cultures, histories, perspectives on creation and ancestry, our views of life and the world, and ways of being. These ways of being are essential for the perpetuation, promotion and development of the world's biodiversity. As Indigenous women, we have a fundamental role in environmental conservation and preservation throughout the history of our Peoples. Our weavings, music, songs, costumes, and our knowledge of agriculture, hunting or fishing are all examples of some of our contributions to the world.

The International Indigenous Women's Caucus, gathered together on the 6 & 7 of May in order to contribute to this session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) with the Substantive theme of "Indigenous women". As such, we divided ourselves into working groups around each of the Permanent Forum mandated areas. This statement reflects our contribution to this Agenda item of "Environment"

The Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN), is an open network of Indigenous women interested in the area of environment initiated in 1998 at the 4th Conference of the Parties (COP IV) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The IWBN was founded by Indigenous women to draw attention to our role in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity within our communities, as well as our rights. The IWBN has actively participated in the work of the CBD and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, learning, networking and lobbying governments for the inclusion of Indigenous women in official decisions and programmes of work of the CBD and for our full and effective participation. The IWBN last met on 4 & 5 March on Manukan Island, in Sabah, Malaysia, prior to COPVII of the CBD and prepared The Manukan Declaration, which we have submitted in full to the Permanent Forum members. The IWBN has also submitted its formal contributions to this session of the Permanent Forum in the official UN Document E/C.19/2004/8.

We call upon the UN Permanent Forum to make the following recommendations:

1. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues commends the Convention on *Biological Diversity* for the adoption of participatory mechanisms, which allow for the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples so that they may contribute to its various meetings and programmes of work.
2. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues notes with appreciation, decisions VII/16 A-I of the CBD and its ongoing work with respect to traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities covering many areas for future work to be jointly undertaken by the Convention and the Permanent Forum.
3. With respect to mechanisms to promote cooperation in order to address the causes of decline of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues would welcome an early meeting between the PFII and the CBD to identify opportunities to collaborate with other relevant bodies and agencies in addressing *this problem*.
4. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues urges the CBD to give due attention in the implementation of its various activities to the equal participation of Indigenous women, and to enable our distinct contributions towards the CBD's work programmes. A joint workshop on "Indigenous Women, Traditional Knowledge and the Convention on Biological Diversity", in collaboration with the Indigenous Women's Biodiversity Network (IWBN) and other relevant organisations, could contribute to gender mainstreaming in the work of the CBD.