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UN system action for the implementation of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Statement by Ms. Joan Carling, Expert member, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

I wish to draw attention to the *“development of a system-wide action plan with existing resources, to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”*. This also includes the development of action plans and strategies at the national level. I believe this is a major step forward to strengthen the commitment of the UN-system to operationalize the rights of indigenous peoples. In this regard, let me highlight what I consider as key steps and good practices that can enhance an effective system wide action plan.

1. Development of institutional policies and guidelines by UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in promoting the UNDRIP and for effective engagement with indigenous peoples at all levels. The good practice for this includes UNDP, IFAD, UNEP and FAO.
2. The institutionalization of effective engagement mechanisms between Indigenous peoples, states and the UN-system at the global, regional and national levels. These mechanisms are necessary in order to develop and enhance better cooperation, and understanding, and to include indigenous peoples' perspectives, views and recommendations in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The good practice in this regard includes the IFAD Forum on Indigenous Peoples, the sustained engagement of FAO with indigenous peoples at the regional level, and the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Board of the UN Inter-agency Task Force on Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines.
3. The development of targeted and coordinated inter-agency programmes and plans at the international, regional and national levels, with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples. This is to ensure that these are in response to their needs, priorities and aspirations. It is critically important that these plans are fully supported by states and other relevant actors to ensure synergies, complementarity and effective implementation. The non-cooperation of some states are adversely affecting the work of the UN system in support of indigenous peoples. Capacity building is another crucial element to strengthen operationalization of action plans in a concerted manner.
4. The sufficient allocation of funds and human resources by each agency, fund and programme remains a huge challenge, as indigenous peoples are often not given priority. It is therefore urgent for the top-management as

well as the governing bodies to take action on this matter and designate specific and measurable budget allocations in support of indigenous peoples.

Finally, I believe there are many recommendations from the UN Permanent Forum on how the UN-system can deliver on its commitments to contribute to the realization of indigenous peoples' rights in line with the WCIP Outcome document. Let us step up our efforts by building on the gains and good practices as we continuously strengthen our partnership in achieving the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.