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Statement by  
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Realisation of Indigenous' Peoples Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Freedoms and Protection from alienating their Land and Resources.

This statement is made on behalf of the Zo Indigenous peoples, covering the Zo People known as Chin, Lushai, Mizo, Bomzo, Zomi, Chho, Achho etc. Clans living under the present administration of Bangladesh, Burma and India.

First of all, I, on behalf of my Organisation, would like to thank to the Chairperson and all distinguished personel and participants in this Forum.

To begin with, as we know the Zo kingdom had been established in 862 AD at Chindwin Valley, stretching up to Bay of Bengal in the west and Himalayan region in the North and remained as it were, till the final invasion by the British in 1888-90, in which the British conquered the ZO people and divided the country and the people therein, under three Administrative provincial divisions namely Bengal, Burma and Assam.

The British themselves tried to put the Zo people and the country together again under single administrative unit as resolved in their historic Chin-Lushai Conference held at Fort William Calcutta on 29th January, 1892.

But the resolution had been kept pending so far so long. As such the Fundamental Rights of Zo people had been deprived of, by way of administrative divisions, which had been the land mark of Political separate States subsequent divisions and the Zo Peoples claim to restore their Fundamental Rights by way of reunification under single administrative unit, rectifying the past errors of territorial division that had been done to the Zo people during colonial period.

Further, I would like to give thank to all speakers and distinguish personel who are advocating the realisation of the Fundamental Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, Political, Economical, Cultural and Land Rights.

In this connection, I would also like to comment on the Draft Declaration Art.3, concerning Self-determination, the basic Political Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in which OAS and some others who are advocating " Internal Self-determination

". In which I would like to intervene that, for Indigenous Peoples, living in divided administrative units during colonial periods seeking integration and solidarity of their nationality, limiting " Self-determination " to " Internal Self-determination " would not be accepted and Self-determination could only be " Comprehensive Self-determination ".

Besides, Art 27 of the Draft Declaration suggesting that Indigenous peoples' Land and Resources could be utilised on " Just and fair compensation ". At this phrase I would also like to intervene that the word " Compensation " should be replaced by Rental or Leasing terms.

Indigenous Peoples' have nothing valuable except their Land and Resources and they have to retain this property for their future generations. Forcing out of their ancestral land to become Refugee on the surface of this Earth is a crime and would not be acceptable to Indigenous peoples.

Therefore, all constructions of Dams, Gas pipe lines, etc, within the territory of Indigenous peoples under development agenda, but that alienating the Indigenous people from their ancestral Land and Resources should also be restricted instantly.

Thus I would like to request the Permanent Forum to take more concrete steps in order that the Indigenous People may soon realise their Fundamental Rights, enjoying their Fundamental Freedom through a peaceful process towards peoples' Self-determination.

Here I conclude my speech, Thank you once more, respected Chair.