



WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

THIRTEENTH SESSION

GENEVA 24-28 JULY 1995

**ITEM 7: INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE
WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

**STATEMENT BY THE
NEW ZEALAND OBSERVER DELEGATION**

28 July 1995

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STATEMENT BY THE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT OBSERVER DELEGATION

Mr Chairperson

New Zealand was pleased to participate in the Technical Meeting last week on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. New Zealand strongly supports the aims of the Decade, and is happy with the general shape of the amended Draft Programme of Activities for the Decade developed by the Technical Meeting.

We would like to comment briefly on the administration of the Fund for the Decade and on current developments in New Zealand to mark the first year of the Decade and prepare for later activities.

We note from the Secretariat's note (E/CN.4/1995/TMIP/3) circulated last week that it is proposed that a Board of Trustees be appointed to advise the Coordinator of the Decade and make recommendations on projects selected for approval by the Secretary-General. While establishment of a Board requires a reasonable investment of Decade funds, New Zealand has no difficulty with the proposal as we expect that a Board would provide the best accountability for Decade funds and enable a range of useful and forward-looking activities to take place. It will be important, as the distinguished observer Government of Denmark has said, for the Fund to have clear guidelines and to operate in a transparent manner with clear accounting and reporting procedures.

Finally, we support the following of the precedent set by the Board for the Fund for the International Year in including indigenous representatives on the Board and would wish to see an early decision on this administrative question, in order to encourage further contributions to the Fund.

Given pressure of time, I shall not outline in any detail the programme of activities in New Zealand to celebrate the beginning of the Decade. I would just mention that we have begun the Decade with action to celebrate and preserve the Maori language. We are happy to provide further details on specific activities to interested delegates. As regards longer term action in New Zealand to fulfil the objectives of the Decade, Te Puni Kokiri/the Ministry for Maori Development intends to convene a meeting of Maori community representatives to coordinate Decade activities and establish criteria for disbursement of funds.

Thank you