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Guyana intervention in the Panel Discussion and Interactive Session  
Thursday July 12, 2012. Informal interactive

Guyana responsiveness to the UNDRIP standards are manifested in the manifestation and addressing implementation of the standards.

We believe we have a good model in the implementation of UNDRIP standards on land titling and demarcation of indigenous lands, ownership and management of land and resources, participation in decision making level at the national level ( in cabinet, parliament ) and at the local village levels and including adherence and practice of free prior and informed consent.

The government continue to admit that there is much more to be done, we recognized that challenges prevailed in overcoming, refining and advancing our implementation approaches.

We accept that we have to continue to seek improvements, while at the same time we are conscious of our peculiar historical development, more so that our nation is ethnically diverse, is a small developing country grappling to secure a very fragile democracy but yet with has the political will to attempt to address the issues of indigenous people

Guyana is always happy to share our experiences; indigenous peoples have an open door opportunity for engagement with the government. Guyana established the ministry of Amerindian affairs to support the indigenous peoples socio and economic development, to facilitate and represent effectively the responsibilities of government to discharge its responsibilities.

One good practice is that member states can firstly accept that indigenous peoples have special developmental needs and existing gaps in human rights and development in many countries need to be addressed.

A significant example is government approach to pursuing a low carbon economy, where the concept of keeping our forest standing was not forced onto the indigenous people.

However, indigenous are discussing an option in mechanism whether they wish to opt in to the low carbon strategy, the details will be submitted to government. I trust this will be done on August 6th 2012 a total of 188 village and community indigenous leaders are gathering in Georgetown to have the annual open forum with his excellency and sectoral cabinet members.

As there continue to be calls for member state to adhere to the principle of free prior and informed consent, our legislation the Amerindian Act 2006 provides self determination, however as a government we adhere to FPIC?. And would also support the empowerment of indigenous leaders to be able to exercise FPIC, I say this in the context of the implementation of the self determination by village councils and how the local governance system is exercised at the village level.

The issue of implementation of UNDRIP standards are under scrutiny, and I agree with UNDRIP for the consideration and offer to an extended period for member states responsiveness to the questionnaire and for those that have submitted that they consider the option to update their submissions.