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WORKING GROUP ON PROPOSED PERMANENT FORUM

MANDATE :NEW ZEALAND STATEMENT

- The question of mandate is fundamental to our consideration of the proposal for a permanent forum within the UN system;
- - the nature of the agreed mandate will, in the end, determine such other key issues such as type of body, membership and placement within the UN system. Everything flows from the mandate, and it will indeed be difficult for us to have a sensible discussion on these other key issues, without some common understanding having been reached on mandate
- In terms of its scope of subject matter, New Zealand considers that the permanent forum would have a broad, cross-cutting mandate including, but extending beyond, human rights, reflecting the breadth of issues of concern to indigenous people across the work of the UN, such as health, education and environment;
- As for its powers, New Zealand would see the permanent forum as an advisory, rather than policy-making, body, with the overall task of seeking to ensure that the interests, priorities and concerns of indigenous people are reflected more effectively in the work of UN agencies.
- Specifically, we see its functions as being broadly three-fold, to:
 - provide expert *advice* to the Secretary General and other UN bodies on indigenous issues;
 - *coordinate* system-wide efforts on indigenous issues within the UN
 - act as a *focal point* - a "one stop shop" - for indigenous people at the United Nations. It would provide a forum for dialogue, and facilitate the provision to indigenous people with information on UN indigenous programmes and activities, while also receiving and disseminating information to relevant UN agencies on the conditions, needs and concerns of indigenous people
- It follows from our support for an advisory and coordinating mandate that we would not support the forum having a jurisdictional role in areas such as dispute settlement or monitoring compliance with international instruments

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