

doCip

(19) 16.2.99 pm.
Jenmark

(14:11:11)

5 February 1999

THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The ad hoc working group on the establishment of
a Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples within the UN

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation believes that the time is now ripe to consider in substance the establishment of a Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples in the United Nations' system.

The idea was launched at the global Governmental level at the Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1993. Following that appeal a first workshop was held in Copenhagen (Denmark) in 1995; a second workshop in Santiago de Chile in 1997 and here we are in 1999 in the ad hoc group under the Human Rights Commission to elaborate concrete proposals for the establishment of such a Permanent Forum. So it looks like every second year we are making progress on the subject-matter.

Considering the *fact* that we are almost half way through the International *Decade* of the world's Indigenous Peoples and considering further that an *objective* of the Decade is to give consideration in particular to the establishment of a Permanent Forum, my delegation believes that we: Governments and Indigenous Peoples' Representative working in partnership ought to be able to produce a first concrete and visible result of the Decade, namely the establishment of a Permanent Forum. The theme of the Decade is "Indigenous Peoples: partnership in action". Let this ad hoc group be a true example of partnership and action.

We are in no shortage of concrete proposals for the establishment of a Permanent Forum submitted by Indigenous Peoples and Governments, so let us get *down to business* and consider in a sort of first reading the various aspects of the establishment of a Permanent Forum. After such a first round of discussion we may be able to narrow down differences to a level of having two or three alternative texts for a second round of discussion and then see if we can come up with one final text - maybe with a few alternative suggestions - to be submitted to the Commission of Human Rights for further considerations. To some this outline may seem highly ambitious, but please remember we are not drafting a treaty, but merely establishing a mechanism within the UN to secure a regular dialogue between Governments, Indigenous Peoples and UN agencies thereby furthering an effective involvement of Indigenous Peoples in the work of the UN. That task is not insurmountable. And we should overcome it – now!

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

*Individual
part*

18 February 1999

Denmark
doCip

[Signature]

Denmark
[Signature]

The Danish Delegation request that the following paragraph be inserted into the report:

"The Government delegate of Denmark pointed out that the establishment of the Permanent Forum should be subject to a review clause which would allow for adjustments to be made with regard to the mandate, composition and rules of procedures of the Forum in light of experience gained over a certain period of time e.g. every 5 years. Thus the establishment of the Permanent Forum may not be perfect in the sense of satisfying everybody's wishes from the very start, but may gain strength during an evolutionary process". *A number of delegations considered this to be a constructive idea.*