

Intervention of the Shimin Gaikou Centre
United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations
Fifth Session
Geneva, August 5, 1987

Thank you very much, Madame Chair, and good morning to all the participants here at the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

I would like to relay a message from the Shimin Gaikou Centre to the Working Group. The Shimin Gaikou Centre is a non-partisan grass-roots organization founded in March 1982 by a group of volunteer citizens and students who are concerned with world peace and development. The Centre shares various concerns of indigenous peoples in the world and maintains a close relationship with the Ainu Associations in the Tokyo area as well as in Hokkaido. The Centre is currently building a network in Japan and abroad in order to exchange views and information on various aspects of peace and development.

The Shimin Gaikou Centre wishes to express its support for the continuing efforts by indigenous peoples throughout the world and pledge to contribute ¥100,000 annually to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations beginning next year. This will come from the "peace tax" the Centre collects from concerned citizens. The Centre realises that the amount is not much, but will make every effort to increase the amount in the future.

Today for the first time, an official representative of the Japanese government is attending a session of the Working Group. The Japanese government made it clear in its First Human Rights Report to the United Nations in 1980, and again in the National Diet earlier this year, that it recognises peoples' right of self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and has been making continuing efforts to see that peoples' right of self-determination is fully realised in international society. In view of this commitment, we would like to invite the Japanese government to contribute to the Voluntary Fund in proportion to its economic capacity, and without conditions as to use as a statement of its interest in, and support for the cause of indigenous peoples inside, as well as outside Japan.

We wonder if the distinguished representative of Japan could indicate his government's views on this possibility during the present session of the Working Group, and would ask him, through you, Madame Chair, whether he could respond to this suggestion.

Thank you very much.

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