



COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities

Working Group on Indigenous Populations

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Item 8 of the agenda

FUTURE ROLE OF THE WORKING GROUP

Statement by Mr Mick Dodson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice
Commissioner, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Australia

Madam Daes

The two fundamental tasks of this Working Group under its mandate - Standard Setting activities and the Review of Developments are crucial to the Indigenous Peoples of the world.

In my opinion, the Working Group must continue in its present mandate and format. As you have said yourself this is an open, transparent and democratic forum for the free expression of views from all its participants. We should not allow the consideration of a permanent forum to threaten the life of this Working Group. The functions in my view are totally distinct and separate.

I was pleased to hear the distinguished representative of the Observer Government of Brazil the other day suggesting items for next years session of this Working Group. I trust this is a commitment by his Government for the continuation of this Working Group. I would respectfully urge all Observer Governments to announce like commitments.

Finally, financial considerations should never be a reason for restricting the many Indigenous voices within the United Nations system.



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