

Check against delivery

Interactive dialogue on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

Intervention by

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17 June 2014

We would like start by thanking the President of General Assembly and his office for organising this interactive dialogue, following the important decision to appoint two State advisors and two indigenous advisors to support him in the preparation of the World Conference,

OHCHR is pleased that the preparation of the World Conference has now reached a stage where the focus is on the content of the eventual Outcome document. This morning, we have already heard a number of important proposals from indigenous representatives, States and UN colleagues, usefully complementing the valuable recommendations that have been made in the Alta outcome document and other contexts.

Today, we would like to highlight four key issues that merit consideration in the context of the outcome document:

First, the overall goal of the drafting exercise is clearly stipulated in the modalities resolution, which calls for an

action-oriented outcome document that shall “contribute to the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, pursue the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and promote the achievement of all internationally agreed development goals”. It follows that human rights of indigenous peoples, -- ranging from non-discrimination to land rights and specific concerns faced by indigenous women and indigenous persons with disabilities -- are to be at the heart of the outcome document. The World Conference is an opportunity for all Member States, in all regions, to reiterate their commitment to the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant human rights standards.

Second, it is important that such support for international standards is coupled with strong calls for action to implement the Declaration at the national level. This can be encouraged in many ways, but one key initiative that could be encouraged through the outcome document is the development of national strategies or action plans devoted to the implementation of the Declaration. Such initiatives could be usefully coupled with national implementation mechanisms with strong participation of indigenous peoples, reflecting also a number of recommendations contained in the Alta outcome document.

The World Conference will also provide an excellent opportunity for Member States to express individually their specific commitments to follow up the outcome document with measures adapted to their national contexts. This could be done through voluntary pledges

made by Members States, as has been done in other high level UN meetings. These pledges could cover issues ranging from the development of national strategies on the implementation of the Declaration to the creation of new participatory mechanisms for indigenous peoples or endorsement of relevant international standards. Specific, targeted, action-oriented and time-bound pledges on the rights of indigenous peoples would demonstrate strong commitment by the pledging States and provide an important platform for further dialogue at the national level.

Third, throughout the preparatory process, representatives of indigenous peoples have raised concerns related to the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives in the UN fora on issues affecting them, bearing in mind that their organizational structures are often different from non-governmental organizations. In order to address this issue, the World Conference could draw from the important proposals made by the Secretary General in his 2012 report on Ways and means of promoting participation at the United Nations of indigenous peoples' representatives on issues affecting them.

Finally, as has been stressed in a number of interventions, the World Conference should serve as a catalyst for enhanced, concrete and action-oriented work within the UN system, and we have today heard interesting suggestions including proposals for an action plan and other initiatives. In respect of proposed implementation mechanisms, let me highlight the work of the three UN mechanisms as key actors in terms of promoting full

implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Engagement of these mandates with a view to ensuring that their cooperation and positive impact on human rights are maximized is crucial, and indeed a number of important recommendations have already been made today for enhancing the role of these mandates in respect of the Declaration. Furthermore, boosting cooperation pursued through the UN Inter-Agency Support Group, which OHCHR is currently chairing, and through the country specific work of the UN Indigenous Peoples Partnership would be another important contribution to our common efforts to advance the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

OHCHR looks forward to continuation to engage with States and Indigenous Peoples during the World Conference. I would like to note that 7-11 July, the 7th session will be also include a discussion on the World Conference.

Thank you.