

Item 8 – Discussion on impact extractive industries and their impact on indigenous peoples (E/C. 19/2013/16)

Halikoha, Halikoha:

Thank you Mr. Chairman. The National Toshao Council brings greetings from the Indigenous Peoples of Guyana. I am Doreen Jacobis, a member of the National Toshao Council.

As a member of the NTC, it is an honour to make this presentation on behalf of **Chief of Chiefs Mr. Derrick John**, who is democratically elected to represent over 166 village chiefs and the 70,000 indigenous peoples. Our Chief of Chiefs registered request to speak last week and again yesterday but unfortunately he was not given the opportunity. Chief left today for another forum in Canada where he is representing his people.

The NTC would like to inform this forum that in Guyana, the indigenous peoples are actively involved in the mining sector. Any mining done within our village lands by non-Amerindian miners, it is the responsibility of the Village Councils and Leaders to ^{provide approval} following strict procedure as stipulated for mining in the Amerindian Act No 6, of 2006. The NTC recognizes ~~that~~ mining contribute significantly to our livelihood, village economy and national development. In short the indigenous peoples have full ownership to their lands and control over resources therein, so any extractive activity cannot be done without our consent.

Mr. Chairman, The NTC would like to place on record it's disappointed with the joint statement presented by the Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples and the Amerindian Peoples Association, which sought to paint a picture that nothing is progressing for indigenous peoples Guyana. And to firmly state that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are recognized ~~and advancing~~ by the Government of Guyana.

The two NGO's are small organizations and distant and unknown to most of the indigenous peoples, yet they claimed to represent our peoples. They failed to engage the democratically elected village councils and its peoples. Including the National Tshaos Council and were ^{not} granted permission to represent issues on our behalf at the UNPFII 12th Session. We discuss about Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, but the two NGOs failed to practice FPIC?

The annual national indigenous conference for all the village leaders, provides the opportunity to bring to the attention of his Excellency the President, and his entire cabinet various issues affecting our peoples, we have the Amerindian Ministry that provides support in address^{ing}~~ed~~ our issues in a timely manner.

Indigenous peoples of Guyana understand the progress made to safeguard our rights; good practices are available in health, education, culture and infrastructure, productive and economic interventions provided by the Government of Guyana that complements our people's effort to sustain our livelihoods and communities.

We are fully aware that there is room for improvements, we know that it is our responsibility to work for solutions to deal with employment generation for the educated youth~~s~~ to enhance our capabilities to sustainable utilize our natural resources to effectively ~~to~~ support the challenges we face. To keep our strong values and cultural traditions and transmit this. We understand that we must ~~to~~ rise to the opportunities that are expanding before us and to manage the impacts.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, I want to point out that there are various platforms in Guyana, where indigenous issues are addressed by a participatory process where all relevant sectors are involved, particularly when it involves large national development projects. WE are getting accustom and learning to participate in the process of consultation and engagements at high levels.

MR.
Madam Chairman the NTC call on the UNPFII and for those that may have heard the ~~Chairman's~~
statement to evaluate fairly the joint statement made by GOIP and APA, to this 12th
Session, ~~with the Chairman~~ on rights issues with self-determination, land, mining and
governance among other. ~~Madam Chairman~~,

MR.
Madam Chairman, I wish to thank you and to state that as a member of the NTC of the
indigenous people of Guyana, it is a privilege for me to clear the air, and I look forward
to work with all my indigenous brothers and sisters to advance our development.

Presented by:

Doreen Jacobis

For Chief of Chiefs Derrick John

Guyana