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STATEMENT AT THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE U.N. WORKING  
GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS, GENEVA, AUGUST 1988

Shimin Gaikou Center  
The Ainu Association of Hokkaido

WGIP 88/EAS. JPN/2

Thank you very much for providing us with the opportunity to speak, Madame Chair. I would like to speak on behalf of the Shimin Gaikou Center, which, as a grass-roots nonpartisan NGO, supports human rights activities of the Ainu people and <sup>other indigenous peoples</sup> in the ~~South~~ Pacific. ~~But I am also incorporating the views of the Ainu Association of Hokkaido.~~ This I would like to note, in addition, that this statement is approved and supported by the Ainu Association of Hokkaido.

move to the end.

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The Shimin Gaikou Center (SGC) contributed 100,000 yen to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations in March this year and pledges to do so next year, as well. In our presentation ~~last~~ here at this Working Group last year, we invited the Japanese government to join us; it is rather regrettable that we have/heard no favorable response to this. \* Please allow us, through you, <sup>so far</sup> Madame Chair, to request the distinguished member of the government <sup>once again</sup> delegation of Japan to carry this message back to his home government.

x We would like to invite the J. G. to join.

We wish to make a few brief general comments on the Draft Declaration prepared by you, Madame Chair. We appreciate very much the time and energy you spent in drafting the 28 principles.

(1) The first point has to do with the concept of control. ~~and~~ This concept which, we believe, goes hand in hand with the concept of self-determination, must be clearly incorporated with special emphasis in the Declaration.

In the field of education, for instance, there is a ~~see~~ social scientific finding that initial education of children must be relevant to, / or have meaning in, their/cultural environment. To provide such meaningful education for children, <sup>immediate</sup> it is essential and crucial for ~~at~~ the indigenous community concerned to have control over ~~the~~ its own educational system and material.

~~The same can be said concerning the preser~~

Indigenous control is crucial also in the preservation and promotion of culture, language and religion of the indigenous people. It has been repeatedly pointed out in this forum for the past several years that ~~a~~

~~the~~ control over these aspects of indigenous life is essential to the continued existence of the indigenous people concerned. ~~as-a-people~~ In this sense, the concept of control by indigenous peoples cannot be separated from ~~it~~ the broader concept of self-determination.

Yesterday, the distinguished delegate of the government of Japan almost repeated word-for-word ~~its last year's~~ the statement that the government delegate made last year, in spite of the fact that the Ainu Association rejected it and demanded their self-determination. Not only does such an attitude take ~~us~~ us nowhere, but also to simply assert that the Ainu people are not denied their enjoyment of <sup>the</sup> rights to enjoy ~~one's~~ own culture, to practise their own religion and to use their own language, <sup>their</sup> without acknowledging their control over these aspects of life misses the point. <sup>recognizing</sup> For no individual ~~person~~ can really meaningfully enjoy these aspects of life unless they are collectively ~~retained~~ retained.

Another point on the concept of control: We have witnessed in the past several decades in the international arena the failure of financial aid policy ~~without providing~~ <sup>in the absence of</sup> delegated authority and control over the use of the fund by the ~~concerned~~ community ~~concerned~~. If any financial assistance is to function properly ~~and~~ <sup>target</sup> to achieve its stated goals effectively, control over the use of the money must lie in the hands of the indigenous people and community concerned. The era of merely ~~providing~~ <sup>pouring</sup> money into the so-called "poor," "disadvantaged," "impoverished" ~~community is-over~~ should be over. But still today we face the problem of financial aid, both internal and external, not actually going to and benefiting the target community.

In this connection, a clear example is shown in pages 3-4 of the material submitted to the Working Group by the Ainu Association of Hokkaido the day before yesterday. The Japanese government seems to be satisfied with, and in fact ~~be~~ <sup>to</sup> be proud of, pouring a total of 34.9 billion yen (US\$ 1.00 = about 130 yen) into the Ainu community for the past 14 years. Although it is a rather cheap rent for the Ainu's mother earth for the past 120 years, the amount of money is not the issue, but the issue is who determined how and where the money should be utilized. ~~The~~ The Japanese government's welfare measures toward the Ainu people is a clear illustration of the failure of a welfare measure without community control. We request the ~~members~~ of the Working Group to give special consideration to this distinguished information and incorporate explicitly the concept of control into the Declaration.

(2) Secondly, as an NGO concerned with the ~~South~~ Pacific, ~~if~~ the SGC would like the Working Group to consider the incorporation of the right to reject nuclear testing, and to oblige the ~~state concerned~~ <sup>offending</sup> to ~~restore~~ the environment and the health of the people(s) that have been affected by such testing. We refrain from naming the countries, but the lives of many indigenous peoples in the ~~South~~ Pacific have been and ~~are~~ still are being threatened by nuclear testings. The declaration should at least make its position ~~clear~~ on nuclear issues clear.

(3) Thirdly, to be included in the Declaration is the right to reject the disposal and/or storing of nuclear wastes, as well as ~~other~~ industrial wastes in the territory and lands of indigenous peoples. <sup>obsolete nerve gas disposal</sup>

(4) ~~and~~ Fourthly, the declaration should include the right of indigenous peoples to give the highest priority to their aspirations and interests in the field of tourism development. Too many indigenous peoples and communities have been abused for external commercial profits.

~~Madame~~ Madame Chair, as more and more indigenous people peoples get involved from non-English or Spanish speaking areas of the world get involved in this United Nations process, and we are one of ~~these~~ <sup>these</sup> groups, a very serious issue <sup>arises</sup> in dealing with this type of important document. Such document must be translated into the language they use on a daily basis. Although we had an opportunity to obtain the document ~~before~~ <sup>just before we</sup> left our community, <sup>but</sup> translation because of the ~~delay in~~ <sup>need to</sup> translation ~~we~~ <sup>it</sup> could not ~~have enough~~ <sup>study</sup> it ~~adequately~~ <sup>adequately</sup> in our community. The points just submitted are based on our initial observation of ~~the~~ your draft declaration. We would like to add a footnote that we have not exhausted our comments on it.

Let us ask you, Madame Chair, to provide whatever document that comes out from this important process well in advance so that we may have enough time to have it translated and study it.

Thank you very much for the time.

Finally, Madame Chair, let me point out that the SGC is very concerned about the integrity of this Working Group's process. We want to see the continual expansion of indigenous participation in this forum. To this end, the SGC --\* (from p.1).