

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Thirteenth Session – New York
12-23 May 2014**

Agenda Item 6: Half-day discussion on the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples, 19 May 2014

Statement delivered by: Tennille Lamb on behalf of
National Congress of Australia's First Peoples

Supported by:

Thank you Madam Chair,

The National Congress for Australia's First Peoples is the national representative body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia. Congress is owned and controlled by its membership and is independent from the State.

Congress key purposes include:

- to provide national leadership and recognition of the status and of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as first nations peoples;
- to secure the economic, social, cultural and environmental futures for our peoples;
- to build strong relationships with government, industry and among our communities;
- to identify issues, research solutions and educate governments, service providers and our communities to achieve our purposes.

Recommendations:

In relation to the High Level Plenary Meeting to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples recommends:

1. Indigenous peoples be afforded equal participation with States in drafting the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples
2. The final version of the Outcome Document must be validated by Indigenous peoples
3. The contents of the Alta Document should be included and considered carefully in the process of drafting the Outcome Document of the World Conference.
4. The Global Coordinating Group be respected as the global representation of the Indigenous Peoples of the world in negotiating our participation in the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples
5. The topics of 'Decolonisation' and 'Treaties between Indigenous Peoples and States' be included in the themes of the World Conference.

Madam Chair,

It is imperative that the status of Indigenous Peoples as self-determining Peoples be recognised by States in the drafting and adoption of the Outcome Document at the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

This is made clear in the Alta document. Indigenous peoples are free and equal to all other peoples, we have the right to self-determination, to freely determine our political status and pursue our economic, social and cultural development. However, member States of the UN that continue to oppose our equal participation at the World Conference show contempt for our rights as Peoples and disregard for the Charter of the United Nations.

The assertion of sovereignty by colonial powers over Indigenous peoples, our territories, lands and resources are based on morally reprehensible theories that have no basis in fact or law. These theories are now found to be unjust and discriminatory.

Indigenous peoples are the entities that have made changes in the United Nations through our advocacy for and recognition of human rights of Indigenous Peoples at the international level. This has, among other things, resulted in the adoption of the ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (herein after referred to as the Declaration), the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples must be recognised as the normative framework for the Outcome Document, and unless Indigenous peoples have the opportunity to validate the final Outcome Document before its final adoption then that document cannot become a globally-accepted product.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson