

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues – 12th session

IAD with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Mr. James Anaya

Thank you Mr Chair,

I take the floor on behalf of the EU. Since I understand that this is the last time the Special Rapporteur, Mr James Anaya, will address the Forum in his present capacity, I am pleased to have this opportunity to warmly thank the Special Rapporteur for the important work he has carried out since taking up his mandate in 2008.

The respect for human rights and equality are core principles of the European Union and its global action includes combating discrimination and exclusion. Indigenous peoples around the world continue to face denial of their rights, marginalisation and discrimination.

The EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on human rights and democracy, adopted in 2012, reiterates the EU commitment to the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly in the context of combating discrimination. In the Strategy, we are committed to taking a new look at our policy and further developing it in the context of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and in preparation for the High level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014.

We are glad to note that, at the end of last year, the General Assembly adopted a resolution 67/152 on the Rights of the Child, jointly co-sponsored by GRULAC and the EU, which for the first time focused on the rights of indigenous children and called upon States to take all appropriate measures to ensure that indigenous children are protected against all forms of discrimination and exploitation. The General Assembly, in its resolution, called upon all States to include, within the overall context of policies and programmes for the realization of the rights of the child, relevant provisions for indigenous children within their jurisdiction.

We reaffirm our support for the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The EU continues to work to address the gap between the promises of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and reality of its application on the ground and encourages all States to increase their efforts to promote its implementation.

Mr Chair,

The EU continues to support your work as Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We appreciate the complementary manner in which the three UN mechanisms on indigenous issues, namely the Forum, the Special Rapporteur and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples continue to work to promote a coherent approach to the challenges faced by indigenous peoples.

Mr Anaya, as Special Rapporteur you have had an important role in promoting the implementation of the 2007 Declaration. You have also reflected on and provided recommendations when it comes to strengthening the complementarities of the work of the Three UN mechanisms.

In this regard, Mr Special Rapporteur, we would like to take the opportunity to ask for your further reflections on how the three mechanisms can be further strengthened, and through what means more synergies can be created between them.

It would also be interesting to hear your thoughts on ways in which your own Mandate can cooperate with the Universal Periodic Review of the HRC, and well as with other Special Rapporteurs.

Moreover, it would be interesting to hear your reflections from your years as Special Rapporteur regarding the cooperation with States, including trends when it comes to timely and positive responses, and in the context of your visits.

Finally, I would like to ask you for your recommendations in order to ensure the importance of full and effective participation of indigenous peoples including through activities and events in preparation for the World Conference.

Thank you.