

23rd Session of UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations  
Geneva, 18-22 July 2005-07-22

Agenda Item 7(c)

Oral Statement by Goutam Kumar Chakma, Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS), Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

My name is Goutam Kumar Chakma and I am making this intervention under the item 7©: The human rights situation of indigenous peoples in states and territories threatened with extinction for environmental reasons.

It is notable that recommendations on the issues of indigenous peoples including this one have been adopted in the WGIP, the World Parks and IUCN Congresses and CBD of UNEP. In the evening session of this WGIP on 20 July particularly madam chairperson pointed out categories of IPs based on their situation. So recalling all these I wish to make following recommendations for the Working Group to consider for taking up:

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First, to set up ~~A~~ mechanism by WGIP immediately for monitoring the human rights situation of indigenous people in states and territories threatened with extinction for environmental reasons.

Second, to take up with the concerned governments such projects and programmes urgently, which affects the human rights situation extremely because of environmental degradation and thereby threaten the total existence of the indigenous peoples so that they survive until proper and formal arrangements for protection of their rights are framed and developed.

Third, to help the indigenous peoples to highlight their human rights situation related to environmental reasons regularly.

Mr. Chairman let me conclude by informing the Working Group that environmental degradation in CHT is now reached to a point whereby existence of our ancestral land is threatened. For Example, our region now with a population of more than 800,000 indigenous people, is facing environmental and demographic threats with the resettlement of over 500,000 Bengali political migrants in 1980s, who have been receiving free ration, housing and other facilities till now. **In May of 2005 the government has taken up further programme for resettlement of thousands of Bengali families to CHT particularly in the Kassalong Reserved Forest, which will extremely affect the environment and biodiversity and thereby the human rights situation of Jumma people threatening with the extinction of their entity.** So may I appeal to you Mr. Chairman to use your good offices on this issue?

I thank you Mr. Chairman.