

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

6th Session, New York, May 14-25, 2007.

Agenda Item 10: Provisional Agenda

Tadashi Kato

Collective Statement by:

**Ainu Association of Hokkaido, Ainu Resource Centre, and Shimin Gaikou
Centre**

In July 2008, the G8 Summit meeting will take place in Hokkaido, Japan, Ainu Moshiri, or peaceful land of Ainu, to discuss various issues confronting the world today, including environmental preservation and climate change. We recognize a great significance in the fact that leaders of major industrialized nations gather and discuss these much-debated issues in the traditional land of Ainu.

In the spiritual world of Ainu, we recognize that humans are a part of nature, and based on this understanding, we have coexisted with and paid great respect to mountains, rivers, oceans, and animals. For instance, we pray for the gods of mountains before entering them, and express deep gratitude when the mountains bestow food upon us. However, the past 130 years have made it increasingly difficult to practice these customs, as the lands and natural resources that enable these practices have been destroyed by mega-developments.

It is obvious to us that the development initiatives that ignore the rights of indigenous peoples have led to these environmental destructions. Traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and our approach to nature will provide solutions to these problems. Therefore, it is essential that the rights of indigenous peoples to promote and implement alternative development paradigms that respect common law of indigenous peoples be secured.

Under the assumption that these issues will be addressed, we welcome leaders of major industrialized nations to the Summit meeting and hope that they will respond to our welcome with great respect for our Ainu Moshiri.

Finally, we would like to make the following two recommendations:

1. That the Permanent Forum request that national governments pay respect to indigenous peoples when major international conferences such as Summit meetings are held on traditional lands of indigenous peoples; and
2. That the Permanent Forum include in next year's agenda studies on the relationships between climate change and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.