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UNITAR Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives

This programme provides advanced training in conflict analysis and negotiation to key representatives of indigenous peoples. The focus is on a problem-solving negotiation approach to strengthen participants' capacity to more effectively negotiate to have their needs met, while also promoting constructive relationships between members of their communities and those in the dominant community. Indigenous experts, including Members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as well as representatives of regional organizations, and other specialists, serve as resource persons for the training programme.

The international training programme is conducted annually at the time of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held at the United Nations in Geneva. The first programme took place in 2000 and the second in 2001. The third international programme, which included 17 female representatives among participants, was held in July 2003. The next international training programme for 30 indigenous representatives from around the world is planned for July 2004.

As well, a regional training programme is conducted in a different part of the world each year. The first regional programme was held in Mexico in 2001 for indigenous peoples' representatives from North, Central and South America. In April 2003, the UNITAR Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives of the Asia-Pacific was organized in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The programme involved 30 representatives, including 13 women, from the Asia and Pacific regions. The next regional training programme is planned for the latter part of 2004 in Africa.

In May 2002, the UNITAR Seminar for Members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was organized in New York at the request of a number of Permanent Forum Members. The Seminar was planned to assist their efforts to prepare for and implement the first historic meeting of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at United Nations Headquarters, and to facilitate work on their important mandate. The former High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples, and representatives of 16 UN agencies and departments held briefing and dialogue sessions with the Forum Members during the Seminar.

Over the past four years the programme has received support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada, the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, and the Agency for Development and Cooperation of Switzerland.

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