

## Ambedkar Centre for Justice and Peace

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President: Yogesh Varhade



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### **UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

May 13-24, 2002

Mr. Chair:

On behalf of ¼ billion Indigenous Dalits and Tribals of South Asia, may I congratulate you for your election as a chair and also I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all our Indigenous brothers and sisters, UN WGIP secretariat specially Madam Diaz and Mr. Julian Burger and many others whose struggle succeeded in the formation of this Permanent Forum. We consider this as a great honor to participate in this historic first session of UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Mr. Chair, even though land rights, cultural rights, socio-economic rights, civil and political rights of the Indigenous Peoples have been violated for centuries by the oppressive and dominant culture, its indepth study has not been conducted by the UN and Indigenous Forum of the United Nations.

Mr. Chair, in our intervention statement in 1994 at WGIP and Sub-Commission, we had requested that there is a need for Human Rights Cell for Indigenous Peoples, wherein Indigenous Peoples could send the violations of their rights on a regular basis and the human rights cell of WGIP would record and submit the copies to UN relevant Treaty Bodies, Special Repporteurs and office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for necessary attention and action.

The benfits will be three fold:

1. There will be documentation available from around the world for the actual cases of human rights violations of Indigenous Peoples.
2. This will reach to the right committees of the Treaty Bodies and Special Repporteurs to take the necessary action.
3. UN Permanent Forum will have reseach material on a permanent basis to substantiate its claim of major human rights violations.

Obviously, it will need some extra help in the man power and finances, but I am sure with the interest of brothers and sisters in mind, we will find a solution, because long-term benefits of this human right cell, will have a very important impact on United Nations systems and the civil society. Thank you Mr Chair, for giving me this opportunity.