



HAUDENOSAUNEE

MOHAWK - ONEIDA - ONONDAGA - CAYUGA - SENECA - TUSCARORA

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Nya:weh Sgrno

Dedicated Secretariat:

Prior to European contact/invasion Haudenosaunee People lived in peace and harmony, at that time it was not necessary to make any distinction between the health and well being of the earth and the health and well being of our People. In the absence of land ownership we would rather embrace a sense of reciprocal responsibility to the earth, our mother. Our ancestors did not compartmentalize the concept of conservation nor was there a need for professional environmentalists we have no terminology that relates to these words in our language – this occurred naturally through our lifeways. Back when the waters flowed freely with no question of purity, our medicine plants and grasses grew without artificial engineering – they made themselves known to us and gave freely of their healing powers. As our gardens flourished with well over 100 varieties of corn, beans and squash, the strong sisters that sustain us grew without any threat to their genetic stability or manipulation beyond what happened as a part of natural processes. Healthy animals and birds who gave their lives as a part of their responsibility in the life cycle now suffer from diseases linked to contamination similar to the health of our people. Our strong relationship with our brother the sun, grandmother moon, the winds and stars guided our daily activities as we lived in balance with all of these gifts and respected the knowledge they shared with us.

We remain thankful that our teachings are with us today, we still acknowledge and give thanks for what the Creator has put here for us, we just have more distractions and inappropriate adaptations that haunt our continued existence as traditional Peoples. Environmental protection

company roles in the functioning of clinic services and the policies that determine the relationship between those companies and facilities that provide healthcare for our people.

In the Mohawk language, the word that is used to refer to hospital – Tsiketaientakwa, may be translated to mean “where dead bodies go”. The belief was that once you went to the hospital, you weren’t expected to come home. It seems healthcare for Native Peoples has not changed much, quality of care is almost non-existent and hospital treatment is a last resort. Through the HWHI we are taking control of Haudenosaunee community health by implementing preventative approaches to educating our people about nutrition, wellness, environment, “alternative” treatment and history that affect the health and well being of our communities, leading away from a crisis-oriented treatment and care system.

Overall, we support that Indigenous Peoples gain more control of health services that serve their communities. Further, that traditional, natural methods be encouraged and supported as valid treatment and healing and that these methods be used in conjunction with conventional medicine as appropriate and that natural foods and plants be protected as well as the protection of hunting and gathering practices.

We ask that the Permanent Forum take the following action: to recommend and advise to ECOSOC that each UN agency, organization, fund and program that may have a mandate that deals with health, or health related issues develop reports on their policies and procedures for consistent and meaningful dialogue with Indigenous Peoples and include and promote the participation of Indigenous Peoples having a strong voice in the design of these programs.

On the basis of these reports, the Permanent Forum should consider whether guideline and policy recommendations may be needed relative to these areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the issue of health.

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