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High Level Plenary of the United Nations General Assembly
(World Conference on Indigenous Peoples)
United Nations Headquarters, New York
September 22, 2014

Round Table Discussion 1:
United Nations system action to implement the rights of indigenous peoples

Statement of National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF), Nepal

Mr./Madame Co-Chair, distinguished representatives, sisters and brothers,

I am Yasso Kanti Bhattachan from Nepal. I am honored to present statement in this august gathering as a representative of the National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF). We indeed welcome the Outcome Document of the High Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP).

Systematic exclusion of indigenous peoples by the State in Nepal has been continuing for centuries. Situation of indigenous peoples of Nepal continues to worsen due to loss of ownership and control over our ancestral land, territories and resources. Effective implementation of UNDRIP and ILO Convention No. 169 can indeed kindle indigenous peoples' hope for enjoying human rights in a meaningful way. Efforts made by the United Nations, as one of the key development partners of Nepal, in securing rights and improving quality of life of indigenous peoples have been conspicuously inadequate due to lack of internalization of UNDRIP in its letter and spirit and its effective implementation.

In light of the above, we respectfully urge the United Nations system to take the following urgent steps to translate the Outcome Document into practice:

- 1) Develop or revise existing indigenous peoples policy of individual UN agency and develop policy implementation guidelines and performance indicators to make these fully compatible with UNDRIP;
- 2) Establish a separate permanent unit within the UN system, both at the Regional and Country Offices, to ensure UN system's policy of engagement with indigenous peoples;
- 3) Establish a mechanism to take Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of indigenous peoples in all its initiatives;
- 4) Revise existing guidelines for National Execution (NEX) and Direct Execution (DEX) to make it fully compatible with UNDRIP;
- 5) Develop effective tools for implementation of UNDRIP;

- 6) Increase indigenous staff at all levels and ensure mandatory representation of indigenous peoples in the team preparing new or revising existing project documents;
- 7) Make gender mainstreaming programs and activities compatible with UNDRIP and increase participation of indigenous women at all levels;
- 8) Develop and incorporate indicators relevant for indigenous peoples in human development;
- 9) Add "Eliminate discrimination against indigenous peoples" as the 9th goal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- 10) Carry out indigenous auditing of all the UN agencies; and
- 11) Give responsibility to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to monitor effective implementation of UNDRIP at the state level.

In conclusion, effective implementation of UNDRIP by the UN system by translating the Outcome Document in practice would pave the way for enjoying human rights by indigenous peoples, including indigenous women, and bringing peace and prosperity in Nepal and other parts of the world.

Thank you.