

International Organization of Indigenous Resource Development

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Economic and Social Council

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WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
United Nations - Geneva
21-25 July, 2003

AGENDA ITEM 6(a): Re: Cooperation With Other United Nations Bodies

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Dustin Saddleback of the Samson Cree Nation. I am 14 years old and I would like to present a joint statement to this 21st Session of the Working Group the recommendations of the Fourth International Workshop of Indigenous Children and Youth, held in Geneva last week [July 17&18/03]. These were also endorsed by the Indigenous Caucus meeting on July 20, 2003. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will share my time with Dusty and Teddi Saddleback.

" RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Participants in the Fourth International Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth make the following recommendations to the Committee on the Rights of the Child:

- Taking into account the recommendations formulated to the Committee on the Rights of the Child by the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its 2nd Session and in accordance with the provisions of article 45 (c) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, participants in the Fourth International Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth recommend the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommend, inter alia, that the Secretary General be requested, through the General Assembly, to conduct an in-depth International study on the State of Indigenous Children.
- Recognizing the increasing high percentage of Indigenous Youth caught up in juvenile justice systems and their need for special attention and procedures, participants in the Fourth International Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth urge the Committee on the Rights of the Child exercise its article 45 (c) authority to request that a special study be undertaken to examine and analyze the specific problems that Indigenous young people encounter in the administration of justice.
- Bearing in mind that the Indigenous experience is one that is unique, and that 180 million Indigenous children and youth are negatively affected by being treated unequally, participants in the Fourth International Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth request that the Committee on the Rights of the Child recognize that the right to self-determination is an integral part of the identity of Indigenous children, ensuring respect for human rights, the natural environment, tolerance and mutual respect.
- Supporting the request of the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for a Second Indigenous Peoples' Decade, participants in the Fourth International Indigenous Workshop urge that the first year of the Second Decade be devoted to the Rights of the Indigenous Child, with an emphasis on child participation.
- Urges the Committee on the Rights of the Child to critically examine State Party reports to assure that issues relating to the Indigenous Child are adequately reported and to ensure that international and other financial support is being distributed directly to the local community.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants in the Fourth International Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth recommend to the relevant United Nations' bodies:

- That Millennium Development reports by countries devote a special section to the situation of Indigenous Children.
- That the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples be expanded and specific funds should be allocated to allow participation by Indigenous young people in the annual Workshop on Indigenous Children and Youth, and the Working Group on Indigenous Populations - thus making it possible for Indigenous children and youth to have a role in shaping their own future and the futures of their people.
- That the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography dedicate one year of the mandate to focus solely on the trafficking and exploitation of Indigenous Children and Youth.
- That the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples be promptly adopted in its present form, without alteration.
- That the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples continue to co-exist and function as they provide different avenues through which Indigenous Peoples can seek solutions."

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman; because Indigenous Peoples are the fastest growing populations, the ongoing funding cutbacks pose serious problems and hinder development especially for children and youth. First Nations in Canada do not have a Federal Child Welfare Legislation, this too causes problems.

We therefore, respectfully request you and your colleagues to consider and refer these recommendations to the other relevant United Nations' bodies in the spirit of cooperation. Thank you.

Dustin Saddleback
Teddi Saddleback
Dusty Saddleback
Mr. Wilton Littlechild, I.P.C.