

STATEMENT TO THE 24TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
WORKING GROUP FOR INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS HELD IN
PALAIS DES NATION GENEVA.
31ST JULY - 4TH AUGUST 2006

Statement by Daniel Ole Tenaai - Olpadep-Kenya

olpadep@yahoo.com OR dtenaai@yahoo.com

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguish guest, ladies and gentlemen and fellow indigenous peoples my names are Daniel ole Tenaai from Olpadep Kenya.

Mr Chairperson, in Kenya, indigenous Maasai have been subjects of land dispossessions from the turn of last century through the Anglo-Maasai treaties of 1904 and 1911 and of consequent African regimes through expropriation of their grazing territories for the establishment of National Parks, Game Parks, Game Reserves, Military installations, training grounds, commercial centers', railroads and highways, government forests.

Other means of dispossessions have been the commercialization of land, undermining of pastoralism so as to make Maasai peoples sell off their lands in order to survive, enactment of skewed land policies and outright land grabbing. The remaining Indigenous Maasai lands are also being exploited for eco-tourism ventures, mining, generation of geothermal power, tronar (soda ash) movie locations, horticulture, archeological sites/digs, housing projects for slum families and foreign military excursions. In addition Maasai peoples culture and artifacts have been used to market the country as a conservation conscious tourist destination as well as portraying the country as culturally rich.

Most of these ventures are commercial involving multi million dollars but indigenous Maasai remain among the poorest of the poor with such areas as Magadi division of Kajiado district (home to the multi million Magadi Soda Company harvesting tronar from Lake Magadi) recording poverty levels of 68.39%. Indigenous Maasai people's attempts at addressing this crushing burden of exploitation and discrimination has often been met with hostility by government resulting in injuries, deaths, incarceration and trumped up charges.

In other areas i.e. Laikipia and Samburu, women have been brutalized and raped by foreign military training in these areas, people and livestock maimed or killed by munitions left behind by the same (British) army personnel. Despite the ongoing case against the British army by Maasai women, the government has covertly renewed a US\$ 4 million agreement for the continuation of these exercises before the case is heard and determined.

RECOMENDATIONS

1. International and Local Human Rights agencies to initiate a process of addressing Maasai Indigenous Peoples Human Rights Abuses by State and also Historical Injustices on lands and natural resources.
2. Full involvement and integration of Ingenious Maasai in the Millennium Development Goals process as they are already disadvantaged due to obtaining skewed government processes.
3. International bodies and agencies to lobby/push the Kenya government to equitably distribute with special emphasis on resources sourced from indigenous Maasai territories.
4. Enactment of a policy protecting Indigenous peoples Intellectual Property Rights and patenting the same.
5. Push and lobby the Kenya government to ratify all international instruments on indigenous peoples with special emphasis on UN Draft Declaration and ILO 169.
6. Recognition and acceptance by Kenya government of indigenous peoples right to self determination

Thank you for listening me.