



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

S T A T E M E N T

by

**Ms. Yvonne Pearson
On behalf of the Government of Guyana**

on

**Agenda Item 3:
Education**

**12th SESSION OF THE PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS
ISSUES**

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GUYANA REPORT ON EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman,

The Guyana delegation joins with the rest of the delegates in offering warm congratulations to you and your team on your elections. We are confident that you will efficiently guide this 12th Session of the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues.

Mr. Chairman,

With reference to the 2011 ECLAC-UNICEF study on Child Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean more than 45 % of children, that is 81 million people under 18 years of age, suffer from child poverty.

However, the Government of Guyana has ensured that Article 7 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child continues to be upheld and strengthened, resulting in the equal access to education of all Guyanese children. With respect to indigenous children, we are continuously pursuing the enhancement of education ~~access~~ with a particular focus on those living in the hinterland regions of our country.

~~Mr. Chairman,~~

Over the years we have established several initiatives such as the **Education for All-Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI)** and the **School Feeding Programme (SFP)** to improve the quality of education provided to our indigenous children.

The total school population of thirty thousand indigenous children attending nursery to secondary schools receive school uniforms as well as transportation provided to facilitate land and water travelling in order for them to attend school.

Today, there are an increased number of secondary schools in the hinterland regions expanding access to indigenous students at the secondary level. Additionally, a Scholarship Programme enables outstanding indigenous students to attend national and regional secondary schools and covers the costs for

Our Indigenous youths

accommodation, meals, books and other school material. ~~There~~ are also benefitting from tertiary education scholarships both at the national and international levels.

While we are concerned about the physical well-being of our indigenous children, we also want to upkeep our cultural heritage within the framework of national education. In keeping with Art.15 of the UNDRIP, the Ministry of Culture Youth & Sports has undertaken to complete a project for the compilation of dictionaries and short stories narrative of the nine indigenous languages of Guyana. Discussions are currently ongoing on how to incorporate the indigenous language in our secondary school curriculum.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the challenges we face regarding geographical, human resource and other factors, education remains one of our national priorities, especially for the children of the hinterland regions where the majority of our indigenous population resides. In this regard, the Government of Guyana remains committed to affording the indigenous children full access to education.

Thank You.