

On the subject of children and Youth
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Dear representatives and chairperson. First, I would like to state that I am considered a youth among many Aymara because I am not married. Thus, I am part of the Youth Group of the Aymara Parliament. Let's remember that many indigenous people are considered young in their communities because they are not married. Thus it is important to understand how indigenous people self define youthfulness and childhood. Next I would like to start with an example before I make a point. There has been in the United States abuses of laws that were meant to assist children. There are cases where indigenous children were stolen and given to foster homes because the homes they lived on did not have toilets. Imagine how indigenous children could be taken from their mothers because they did not have a toilet. This is one example of many in the world where children were stolen. We don't want our children to be stolen from us either a) illegally or b) legally.

- a) People may try to steal our children illegally for the purpose of slavery, and slavery is a trend that is growing.
- b) Our oppressors such as many governments and churches may try to steal our children through their national and international laws with several excuses. For example, our oppressors may claim that our indigenous children need a western education but we don't want such laws that may thus allow for the stealing of our children by entities. Instead we need laws that enhance and contribute to our education, economy and social issues as a whole and not separate. All of those subjects are interlinked. CISA will speak about those subjects soon.

Also if our children work let us recognize that they are part of a community and every member of a community has a role to fulfill. If you are a farmer you know it is hard to work without your children. At times of war our oppressors could attempt to steal our children with the excuse that our children are in danger. If there are such dangers in war then let us stop the wars before they start.

Therefore, let us be careful not to allow for laws that allow for the stealing of our children brothers and sisters.

CISA-Consejo Indio de Sudamerica
PPQA-Parlamento del Pueblo Qullana Aymara