

11th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)
Special Theme: "The Doctrine of Discovery: its enduring impact on indigenous peoples and the right to redress for past conquests (articles 28 and 37 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples)"
UNICEF, May 10th 2012

Mr. Chairperson, Excellencies, distinguished members of the Permanent Forum, indigenous representatives, delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

UNICEF is pleased to address the Permanent Forum at its 11th session.

Mr. Chairperson,

UNICEF would like to use this opportunity to congratulate you on your election during this occasion of the 11th session of Forum and to assure you and distinguished members of our continued commitment and support to the Forum through the Inter Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues.

We furthermore wish to extend our gratitude and felicitations to Ms. Mirna Cunningham for the able manner in which she steered the affairs of the 10th session. UNICEF would like to recall the fruitful and successful Comprehensive Dialogue it held with the Forum during its 10th session and would like to thank all members of the Forum, particularly Ms. Mirna Cunningham for navigating that process to a successful conclusion and furthermore to Mr. Alvaro Pop, the Forums focal point on children and youth for providing useful insights and recommendations on measures that UNICEF can initiate and build on in order to advance the rights of indigenous children in an impactful way.

Indeed following the Comprehensive Dialogue, UNICEF has taken a number of bold steps to bring a substantial number of these recommendations to reality. For instance, a process has already been initiated with a number of allied partners to produce the first global report on the situation of Indigenous Children to be fully published in November 2013. This global report will be supported by a special regional report on Latin America, the administrative process for which is underway and will lead to finalization by early-2013. This will be alongside UNICEFs Strategic Framework on Indigenous and

Minority Children which aims to enhance and ensure coherence in UNICEF's programming for and with indigenous and minority children.

Indeed, UNICEF is also collaborating with a number of agencies to improve its knowledge base on specific issues affecting indigenous children and youth. We are for instance, pleased to inform the Forum of the collaboration between UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, ILO and WHO to undertake a joint study on violence against indigenous girls, adolescents and young women, firstly as a technical contribution to the January 2012 Expert Meeting of the Forum which was on the theme: Violence against Women and Girls and as a substantive input to the next session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be held in March 2013. The agencies are grateful to have two indigenous experts: Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz and Dr. Naomi Kipuri undertake this study.

Also in fulfillment of another recommendation of the Forum, UNICEF has recently completed a study on youth suicides in the Latin America Region and is furthermore collaborating with UNFPA, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO and FAO to complete a pioneering study on the socio-cultural and legal institutions of indigenous peoples in the Congo and how they impact on the rights of children and women.

We are certain that these partnerships will maximize our efforts in the field and enhance our capacities as UN agencies to address the multiple forms of discrimination affecting indigenous children and youth taking into account the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples.

Finally, Mr Chairperson, we would like re-echo our warmest congratulations to the Forum and to all indigenous peoples all over the world on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We surely look forward to our continued use of the Declaration as our blue print for working with indigenous children and adolescents.

Thank you and success as you direct this session to a conclusion.