

Thank you madam chair. Hri-khobaya, ju-ju and good morning to all.

Agenda 2030 is of crucial importance for the indigenous peoples of Bangladesh, both in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and in the plains, because indigenous peoples have been “left behind” than the other citizens, for centuries, with regard to education, healthcare and all other aspects of development.

Chittagong hill tracts, has limited self-government, including elected councils and traditional authorities, which was augmented by the CHT Accord of 1997, but nevertheless remains far behind other regions with regard to most major development indicators. The non-implementation of various major aspects of the 1997 Accord, and continued militarization has worsened the situation, and peace and stability is yet to be realized in the region. The exact extent of development neglect cannot be ascertained due to the absence of ethnically disaggregated data.

We recommend to the government of Bangladesh to take all appropriate measures to collect and produce disaggregated data with regard to ethnicity, sex, language and legal status of land holding in 2021 national census.

We also understand that a prerequisite for achieving SDGs is existence and sustenance of peace and stability. Unfortunately, many Indigenous peoples inhabited territories in the world, including CHT, are still conflict ridden. These conflicts need to be addressed, transformed and resolved through equal participation of indigenous peoples and state parties. In this context we recommend to the permanent forum to decide the theme of the next expert group meeting as “Conflict Resolution & Peace Building”, to be held in the Asia region. Thank you.