

International Organization of Indigenous Resource Development

An NGO in consultative status to the United Nations
Economic and Social Council

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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination
and Protection of Minorities
Working Group on Indigenous Peoples
Sixteenth Session, Geneva - 27-31 July, 1998

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AGENDA ITEM 4: REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS

Thank you very much and at the outset, please allow our delegation to congratulate you on your re-appointment to chair this 16th. Session of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples. There are two (2) comments I wish to make on Canada's statement under Agenda Item 4:

With regard to the \$350M fund over four or five years - while it sounds good - we have yet to be given, without creative accounting, written evidence of the amounts of new monies. It is our view that these are funds re-allocated from existing budgets until shown otherwise.

With regard to the apology - as mentioned by the Assistant Deputy Minister - this was not from the Prime Minister but from his Minister of Indian Affairs. For the Prime Minister to apologize, it would admit to his own wrongdoings when as the Minister of Justice and then, as Minister of Indian Affairs he introduced the 1969 White Paper: The effects of which we still have to deal with under different names and initiatives.

On a more positive matter, I.O.I.R.D. is proud to inform this Session and, through you Madame Chairperson, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, of a recent development in the Territories of Treaty 6, 7, and 8 and Alberta, Canada.

As you will recall, there is a General Assembly Resolution 52/127 of 12 December, 1997 entitled "United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004." An Indigenous Human Rights Commission has been established in our Territories and it has undertaken a specific activity of formal and informal education for our members at the local level. It is, in my view, an important contribution to the commemoration of the 50th. Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as has been requested by the U.N. General Assembly.

Under the dedicated efforts of Muriel Stanley-Venne and the Aboriginal Human Rights Committee, a publication has been recently completed entitled "The Rights Path - Alberta." It is a book, in layman terms, about Indigenous Rights in ten (10) important areas: (1) Children's Rights (2) Family Rights (3) Employment Rights (4) Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (5) Women's Rights (6) Educational Rights (7) Housing Rights (8) Health Rights (9) Justice Rights and (10) Elders' Rights.

Member Organisations
Four Nations of Hobbema Council of Energy Resource Tribes Canadian Indian Energy Corporation

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I.O.I.R.D., with your permission, Madame Chairperson, would like to table copies with you for the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Mary Robinson. We have found the book to be very helpful in informing our members about their human rights and how they can ensure they are respected. With this basic information at the local level, the empowerment of our Peoples, with knowledge about their rights, will be realized within the Decade. If it can be helpful for others, then we are happy to share it. Thank you.



J. WILTON LITTLECHILD, Q.C.
July 28, 1998