

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 12th Session

New York, 20th-30th May 2013

Indigenous Youth: Education: Articles 3, 5, 13, 14, 15, 21, 31 of the United Nations

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Global Indigenous Youth Caucus Statement

The Global Indigenous Youth Caucus thanks you, Mr. Chairman, and recognizes the original peoples of the lands we are on today. We, as Indigenous Youth and children represent fifty per cent of our communities. We also, as the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, represent Indigenous youth within our communities on the grassroots level with the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. We continue to face barriers to our full and effective participation as the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus within the UNPFII, and it was recognized at the meeting the morning of May, 20th 2013 at UNICEF. We have an invitation to be here on this territory and the hurdles we face are a violation of our rights to sovereignty and self-determination as Indigenous peoples in a negative way. The role of security and the definition of the borders of the colonial states is a larger part of the systemic issue of over-policing within our every-day lives and also a part of the Doctrine of Discovery. Many youth here discuss militarization of youth on our lands, so it is substantial that we continue our efforts to gain our sovereign and inherent rights as Indigenous Youth on our lands and traditional territories.

We recommend:

- States should ensure that there is a mechanism or position to be created to ensure full implementation of educational rights, especially for children. The mechanism will conduct regular reviews of its actions and recommendations given by the UN's 3 Mechanisms on Indigenous Issues. The mechanism will take corrective actions based on these reviews, and shall also reach out and educate about indigenous rights to policy makers and indigenous peoples across traditional territories, including those living in urban areas.
- UN systems and the Permanent Forum, in partnership with the UN Voluntary Fund, develop a forum to make a space for experts, educators (as defined by Indigenous Peoples) and Indigenous Youth to share ideas, best practices, experiences and technologies for all levels of education of Indigenous Peoples. This space would be supported by Session 5 Paragraph 137, which is still ongoing. In this way, Indigenous Peoples can learn from each other more effectively and can gain lessons learned from other communities. We support analyses of language revitalization efforts, and how to make teaching models better for Indigenous Youth.

- States should accept Indigenous Peoples' definitions of learning and education, and should provide support for culture- and mother tongue-based education founded on the values and priorities of the relevant Indigenous Peoples. This recommendation is recognized explicitly in Recommendation 56 and in spirit by Recommendation 48 of the International Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Youth (E/C.19/2013/3). Linguistic education and linguistic sovereignty is of fundamental importance to Indigenous Youth. The right to education is independent of State's borders, and should be expressed by Indigenous Peoples' right to freely traverse across borders, as supported by UNDRIP Articles 9 and 36.
- States should implement all principles set out in Article 14 of the UNDRIP. They shall also accept what Indigenous Peoples decide to teach without discrimination of any kind. The right for Indigenous Peoples to define their education should also include the ability to verify educational materials given by States, and for the promotion of using materials written by Indigenous Peoples.

In conclusion Mister Chair, quality, self-determined education at all levels is crucial to our future as Indigenous Youth and Children. So let us work together to create an effective, non-discriminatory and relevant education needed to create a strong foundation for our youth and children coming up, and for those yet to come. Thank you, Mister Chair for this opportunity to be a part of this important dialogue.