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UNIFEM ARCHIVE

**CLAN STAR, INC.**

(We work with indigenous women from over 300 American Indian and Alaska Native villages in the United States and the National Congress of American Indians)

**Presenter: Peggy L. Bird  
(Santo Domingo Pueblo Nation, U.S.A.)  
Legal Director of Clan Star, Inc.**

**We respectfully acknowledge and thank the Haudenosaunee Nation, the keepers of this land, for allowing us to be in their territory.**

**Recommendations to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues:**

- 1) We ask the Permanent Forum to recommend that UNIFEM meet with indigenous women to discuss collaborative initiatives and strategies to support the rights of indigenous women to be free from murder, rape, stalking and battering.
- 2) We ask the Permanent Forum to recommend that CEDAW establish a working group comprised of indigenous women to provide advice and recommendations to CEDAW to address discriminatory practices that permit the rape, murder, stalking and battering of indigenous women.
- 3) We ask the Permanent Forum to recommend that the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and its causes and consequences, provide a report as soon as possible citing the findings on the Permanent Forum's recommendations to take immediate action on the impacts of violence against indigenous women, in particular war-related violence. This is in follow-up to recommendation #77 of the Permanent Forum's report from the second session held in May, 2003.
- 4) We support our Hawaiian sister Mililani Trask in her request for an indigenous women working group to be organized to work with the Commission on the Status of Women to prepare for Beijing +10.

**Justifications for recommendations:**

- 1) Indigenous women have approached UNIFEM and have not been successful in gaining an audience with this agency. UNIFEM has a responsibility to work with all women which includes indigenous women.
- 2) CEDAW is able to create a working group of indigenous women who would be selected by other indigenous women to work on

recommendations to CEDAW. The indigenous women working group should be comprised of those who have experience or training in the areas of violence against indigenous women, particularly regarding the murder, rape, stalking and battering of indigenous women.

- 3) This is in follow-up to the recommendation made by the Permanent Forum in May 2003 and it has become more urgent that Mr. Willie Little Child, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Indigenous Women issues, take immediate action on the recommendation and provide a report as soon as possible. The urgency is necessitated by the ongoing wars around the world, including the war in Iraq and conflicts in other countries. We ask the Permanent Forum to join us in expressing concern about these continuing acts of war that create opportunities for states to allow acts of violence against indigenous women to take place unchecked, unheeded and uncontrolled. In support of this recommendation we cite the statistics showing that 1 of 3 American Indian and Alaska Native women will be raped in their lifetimes (2000 National Institute of Justice report); that approximately 8 in 10 rapes or assaults against American Indian women are committed by non Indian assailants (American Indians and Crime Report of 1999) and American Indian and Alaska Native women continue to be raped without lawful consequences. In addition, there are thousands of unreported numbers of indigenous women who are raped and battered in and around military installations around the world; and there are increasing numbers of non-Indians in the United States who are basically permitted to rape, murder and assault Native women without any type of criminal sanction due to loopholes in American law.
- 4) As stated yesterday, the Commission on the Status of Women has marginalized indigenous women and setting up a working group comprised of indigenous women would be a step toward resolving this.

Indigenous women in countries who are at war or who live in countries who are waging war continue to be marginalized and ignored while the Nation States pour much needed economic resources into these war efforts.

We ask the Permanent Forum to urge the United Nations systems as well as the appropriate bodies to take appropriate action to restore and ensure

the safety of indigenous women around the world. The future generations of indigenous peoples depends on the protection and sovereignty of indigenous women to live their lives free from violence.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) Recommend that UNIFEM meet with indigenous women to discuss collaborative initiatives and strategies to support the rights of indigenous women to be free from murder, rape, stalking and battering.
- 2) Recommend that CEDAW establish an indigenous women working group to address discriminatory practices that permit the rape, murder, stalking and battering of indigenous women.
- 3) Recommend that Mr. Willie Little Child, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women issues provide a report as soon as possible as follow-up to Recommendation #77 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the Permanent Forum.
- 4) Recommend that an indigenous women working group be organized to work with the Commission on the Status of Women to prepare for Beijing +10.

**Thank you for your time and attention.**

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