

DISCUSSIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA BEYOND 2015

Twelfth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

New York, 29 May 2013

Statement by Ambassador Carsten Staur, Denmark

Thank you for inviting me to take part as panellist in this timely discussion on the development agenda beyond 2015 in the Permanent Forum.

I would first like to reiterate Denmark's strong support for the efforts by the Permanent Forum - since its creation – to advance the rights of indigenous peoples.

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It goes without saying that important challenges lay ahead of the Permanent Forum, not least in ensuring coordination and coherence among the different and overlapping processes of crucial importance to indigenous peoples – mainly the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the post-2015 development agenda.

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Today, I will highlight some of the points raised during the Leadership Meeting on Addressing Inequalities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda held in February in Copenhagen this year. Secondly, I will present the initial priorities of the Danish government for the process ahead - including the need to “finish the job” of the MDGs – as well as addressing gaps and new challenges.

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The MDGs have no doubt made a significant and impressive contribution to addressing a number of critical development challenges – not least providing social progress and lifting millions of people out of poverty. They have been a success in terms of establishing a common

agenda and reprioritizing funds. A good deal of the MDGs will be met – at least at the global level.

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However, social exclusion and inequalities have not been sufficiently addressed. Inequalities are growing, both within and between countries. More than one billion people still live in extreme poverty – and many of these are indigenous individuals.

Eradication of poverty and sustainable development should be ultimate objectives of the new framework by integrating three dimensions of sustainability i.e. environmental, social and economic sustainability, thereby contributing to reducing inequalities.

Eradicating poverty is in particular relevant for indigenous peoples who worldwide constitute the “poorest of the poor” and who reportedly continue to suffer from higher rates of poverty, lower rates of education and a greater incidence of disease and discrimination than other segments of society.

The effects of inequalities are very real and constitute a heavy burden in the everyday life of millions of those who experience discrimination and are pushed to the margins of society.

Unfortunately, marginalization and exclusion often affects the poorest and most vulnerable people such as indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups. A new development agenda should address this continuing marginalization.

Denmark finds that a new set of global development goals must be based on a common vision to eradicate extreme poverty and promote sustainable development while addressing the gaps in the existing MDGs.

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As part of the broader process on the post-2015 development agenda, Denmark will also engage actively in the formulation of new **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and pay due attention to indigenous issues.

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Denmark believes that well managed and healthy resources bases are crucial for sustainable development. When it comes to indigenous peoples, we will have to keep a vigilant eye, so that indigenous peoples' rights to their lands, territories and resources are not being compromised in the overall domestic and international eagerness for the rapid enhancement of growth.

We believe that **human rights offer a comprehensive universal platform** on which to address inequalities. This can be done by integrating core principles of non-discrimination, accountability, transparency and participation. Denmark is thus committed to strengthening both substantive and procedural rights of discriminated groups, including supporting indigenous peoples' rights to free, prior and informed consent in matters that affect them.. Respecting human rights and fighting discrimination is essential for each and every individual and community – but it is just as important for building strong and inclusive societies and communities based on equity and participation. Human rights are both a means and an end to sustainable development. To us there is no doubt that a human rights-based approach to development has to be part of the solution.

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We also need to make sure that **access to basic services for all does** not drop off the agenda. Everyone must be ensured access to basic services such as education and health. Securing all children equal access to quality education and learning outcomes will make a significant difference and equip people and peoples to tackle challenges of marginalization and inequalities.

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As part of the **global thematic consultation on inequalities**, Denmark co-hosted an international conference in February with Ghana, UNICEF and UN Women that brought together representatives of civil society, private sector as well as key decision makers from governments around the world and international organizations, including the UN.

The consultation put forward many of the points I have mentioned, including a recommendation to more strongly integrate human rights principles and standards in a new post-2015 framework and the importance of empowering women and girls and ensuring their rights.

We hope the strong recommendations that were put forward as an outcome of the conference will serve as a means for addressing inequalities in the future development agenda.

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Drawing up a future development framework from 2015 onwards is a main priority for the international development dialogue and it will require bold visions, an inclusive process and concerted actions on parts of governments, indigenous peoples, civil society and the private sector.

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We are only in the initial phase of the long road to establishing a global development agenda beyond 2015. But the voice of the Permanent Forum is needed already now – and it must be a strong voice vibrant with ideas on how to reduce inequalities for the benefit of the lives of millions of indigenous peoples.

Thank you for your attention.