

STATEMENT OF THE ASIAN CAUCUS TO THE 8TH SESSION OF THE UNPFII

17-29 May 2009

AGENDA Item 4 a : Human Rights : Implementation of the UNDRIP

MADAM CHAIRPERSON,

In Asia, most of us are referred to with different names except as indigenous peoples. Our governments continue to ignore their obligations to international human rights laws reiterated in the UNDRIP. Economic development comes in the forms of mines, dams, monocrop, biofuel and oil palm plantations, economic land concessions, industrial zones, forest and land reservation laws including protected areas and ecotourism that displaces us from our lands and territories thereby disenfranchising us of our roles and contribution to sustainable development, traditional spaces and livelihoods and in the long run denies us our right to life with dignity.

Our engagements with the civil society discussions on the proposed Human Rights Body and the Commission on Women and Children under the Association of South East Asian Nations has been a venue for promoting the UNDRIP and advocacy for its implementation. South-East Asia being one of the subregions where a big population of indigenous peoples are found, we call on member states of the Association of South East Asian Nations to support the promotion, integration and implementation of the UNDRIP by institutionalized adaption as a standard within the proposed regional Human Rights Body and the Commission on Women and Children.

We particularly call on the ASEAN member states and financial institutions to ensure, through a mechanism, indigenous women's and peoples' participation not only in the establishment of the regional human rights body and the women's and children's commission but also in the processes and discussions on the ASEAN Community Councils i.e Political Security, Economic and Socio-Cultural. Moreover, we recommend that indigenous women and peoples be officially represented in the different ASEAN processes and structures to ensure that the UNDRIP and indigenous perspectives are taken into account .

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude for the support given by the UNIFEM-CEDAW-South East Asia Programme for enabling indigenous women in the subregion to participate in several discussions on the proposed ASEAN human Rights Body and the Commission on Women and Children. We look forward to the UNIFEM's continuing support as we develop and expand our linkages for the promotion of indigenous women's rights.

THANK YOU MADAM CHAIR!

Contact : ellen@tebtebba.org

