



Statement by the Japanese Delegation

August 1988

Thank you, Madam Chairman,

Let me first express our admiration for the efficient and equitable manner in which you have been chairing this important Working Group.

My delegation wishes to make an intervention on the statement made by the Ainu Association of Hokkaido in this session.

To be brief, ladies and gentlemen, however, we would like to call your attention to the statement made by us at the last year's meeting of this Working Group, confining ourselves to referring to the gist of the said statement.

It is said that several ethnic groups were mixed and formed into the Japanese people over the long period of history. The Ainu is considered to be one of these ethnic groups.

Although the integration of the Ainu people into the Japanese community has progressed and it is getting difficult to clearly distinguish them from other groups, they retain their own language and religion, and the culture of their own has been preserved.

In Japan, everyone's rights to enjoy one's own culture, to practice one's own religion and to use one's own language are not denied, and the Ainu people who preserve their own culture are equally not denied the enjoyment of these rights as nationals of Japan whose equality is guaranteed under the Japanese Constitution.

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In the implementation of the various administrative measures, the people of the Ainu, as Japanese nationals, are equally treated just as the rest of the Japanese people are.

Furthermore, with a view to taking special positive measures designed to improve the social and economic status of the Ainu people, comprehensive measures have been taken. These measures include the improvement of living environment, strengthening social welfare, promotion of education and culture, and the transmission and preservation of the social and cultural heritage. The Government of Japan and local public entities have actively made special budget allocation for these measures, which have amounted to 34.9 billion Yen by the end of Fiscal Year 1987 and are determined to continue to make such efforts. These measures include those which apply directly to individuals as well as the improvement measures of the residential areas of the Ainu people. In any case, these measures contribute to raising the social and economic status of the Ainu people.

Thank you Madam Chairman.

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