

Statement by the Japanese Delegation

Thank you, Madame 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 statements made by the Ainu Association of Hokkaido and the Shimin Gaikou Centre 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 5th and 6th session 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.

It is groundless to criticize that the nature of Japanese democracy is a sort of "tyranny of majority" for minorities and the Government of Japan does not consider itself as a "monoracial nation".

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.

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

Futhermore, 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 allocations for these measures, which have amounted to 38.2 billion Yen by the end of Fiscal Year 1988 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.

As regards the matter of the land in Nibutani, the people concerned are equally compensated, *as much as possible*, according to the national laws concerned, without any discrimination.

The dam in Nibutani is a multi-purpose dam which is now under construction on the upper stream of the Saru river. We had many floods in the past and particularly in August 1962 and in August 1975 the floods did great damage to the area. Therefore, the Government decided to construct a dam for the purpose of flood control and water utilization. The decision was made subject to the procedure provided by the laws concerned.

~~The people concerned including Ainu people are compensated, as much as possible, according to laws, for lands and agriculture and so on without any discrimination.~~

In constructing the dam, several measures have been designed to preserve and develop the Ainu culture in Nibutani including the improvement measures of the residential areas and social welfare. *The government of Japan is making every efforts to realize the measures.*

Thank you, Madame Chairman.