

3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
United Nations Headquarters, New York  
May 10-21 2004




Agenda Item: 5 Future Work of the Forum

Statement On behalf of Asia Caucus

Presented by Mrinal Kanti Tripura

On behalf of the Asian Indigenous Caucus we have the following recommendations:

1. That one of the focus issues on the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the PF will be on: Peace Building, Conflict Resolution/Transformation and Restoration of Balance. As already presented in the previous statements of the Asian Indigenous caucus, armed conflict and militarization are major urgent issues confronting indigenous peoples of Asia and elsewhere. We believe that the Permanent Forum can initiate further discussions and dialogues on these issues towards finding mechanisms and actions of resolving these issues.
2. To actively endorse the declaration of a 2<sup>nd</sup> UN Decade on Indigenous Peoples following the 1<sup>st</sup> Decade. Notwithstanding the pending review of the first decade, we believe much has been achieved that we should continue to build on in order to make more positive impacts to the indigenous peoples of the world. Likewise, the adoption of the draft declaration of indigenous peoples must be pursued and genuine partnership between Indigenous Peoples and States needs to be built or strengthen at the national level. Furthermore, more activities aimed at reaching out to various indigenous communities in all parts of the globe is needed in order to enhance their awareness and capacity in dealing with indigenous issues and participation to important international events related to indigenous peoples.
3. We have been informed that the UN Headquarters in New York is due for renovation next year, and that there is a possibility that the 4<sup>th</sup> session will not be held here. We thereby request the PF to consider the venue for the 4<sup>th</sup> session of UNPFII to be held in Asia particularly under the auspices of UNESCAP based in Bangkok, Thailand. This will facilitate the greater participation of Indigenous Peoples and States in Asia and to generate greater awareness and attention on the urgent problems and issues faced by Indigenous Peoples in Asia;
4. In future meetings of the PF to be held at the UN Headquarters here in New York, may we request a more active support and assistance for the visa facilitation of participants to these important meetings of the PF. As in most Asian countries, processing for U. S. visa takes around three months. It is thereby important that invitations will be issued at least four months before the meeting to allow participants to have the time to work on their visa, and shall be assisted by the PF secretariat if necessary. We believe these steps will ensure the broader participation of indigenous peoples from developing countries which can further enrich the meetings of the PF.

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5. In line with the theme of this year's session of the permanent forum, we endorse our support to have a woman as the chairperson of the next term (2005-2007) of the permanent forum, and preferably from a developing country. We believe these are positive steps in enhancing the work of the Permanent forum in its commitment to advancing the issues and concerns of indigenous women without any prejudice to any member of the permanent forum in their capacity to work on the various issues related to indigenous peoples.

Finally, we want to express our deepest appreciation and gratitude to the present Chairperson, Mr. Ole Henrik Maga for his excellent leadership and commitment to the work of the Permanent Forum.