



**Address to the ninth session of the  
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
By the President of ECOSOC:  
Ambassador Hamidon Ali of Malaysia**

**19 April 2010**

Madame Chairperson

Distinguished Members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,  
Excellencies and other distinguished representatives of Member States,  
Distinguished Indigenous Elders and representatives,  
Distinguished representatives of UN Agencies and other intergovernmental organizations,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure and it is indeed an honor to address the ninth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. I wish to convey the support of ECOSOC in the efforts made by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in providing expert advice and recommendations to the Council.

I would especially like to highlight the importance of the efforts made of the Permanent Forum in raising awareness and providing expert advice to United Nations' programmes, funds and agencies to further improve the livelihoods of indigenous peoples.

The mutual support between ECOSOC and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is also important in relation to the coordination function of the Council regarding the work conducted with UN agencies and specialized bodies. In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the forthcoming Annual Ministerial Review of the Council where the theme will be "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women". Given the importance that the Permanent



Forum has placed on indigenous women and the excellent work it has done in the past regarding indigenous women's issues, I look forward to the Forum contributing to this year's session. I know that the theme of the third session of the Permanent Forum was indigenous women and that the Forum has since then made some excellent recommendations that address some of the challenges that indigenous women face.

Mr. Chairperson and distinguished members of the Permanent Forum,

The first avenue by which non-governmental organizations took a role in formal UN deliberations was through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). 41 NGOs were granted consultative status by the council in 1946; by 1992 more than 700 NGOs had attained consultative status and the number has been steadily increasing ever since to 3,187 organizations today. There is no doubt, that the sessions of the Permanent Forum are especially conducive to strengthened relations between Member States, the UN System and indigenous peoples' organizations from all over the world. The Permanent Forum's sessions are amongst the most attended events by civil society in the UN system and I am encouraged to see such a well attended meeting here today.

As you all know, the Economic and Social Council will decide at the end of the month on the membership of the Permanent Forum for the term 2011 to 2013. As President of the Council, I take this task very seriously and I look forward to the announcement of the result next week.

This year's theme of Indigenous peoples' development with culture and identity is highly relevant and timely. It is an important theme not only for indigenous peoples, but also for Member States and, in particular, for developing countries in the face of globalization. I look forward to following the deliberations and reading the Forum's report.



To conclude I would like to convey my sincere wishes for a successful eighth session of the Permanent Forum and extend my hope for the active participation of all participating Member States, Indigenous peoples' organizations, and UN system partners and other intergovernmental organizations.

Thank you.