

Statement of the United Nations Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its 13th session

Item 8

Thursday, 15 May 2014

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madam Chairperson,
Honourable Permanent Forum members,
Indigenous representatives,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen.

I wish to take this opportunity under agenda item 8 to provide a brief introduction to the annual report of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues – or IASG.

Madam Chairperson,

On behalf of the IASG, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the chairperson of the 13th session of the Forum and to assure you of our continued commitment and support to the Forum.

The Inter-Agency Support Group plays a key role in ensuring coordination of mutual efforts concerning indigenous peoples' issues and in supporting the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

As you may be aware, the chair of the IASG rotates amongst the participating agencies. In the last 12 months, the IASG has been chaired by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

It has been a productive learning experience to act as Chair this past year, and a delight to work more closely with the Chief of the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum and her team members. UNICEF would like to specifically thank the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity – who was the outgoing chair of the IASG – for its continuous support and efforts.

The annual IASG meeting was held on the 22nd and 23rd of October 2013, at UNICEF in New York, and was attended by over 35 participants from over 15 international agencies. UNICEF expresses its deep gratitude to the distinguished members of the Forum, Paul Kanyinke Sena, Alvaro Esteban Pop and Mirna Cunningham, for their participation in, relevant support and contribution throughout the IASG meeting. We likewise express our deep appreciation for the participation of special guests: the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Ambassador Jorge Mario Montaña y Martínez, the International Representative of the Sámi Parliament of Norway, John Henriksen, and the Co-Chair of the Global Coordinating Group of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and Director of the Red de Mujeres Indígenas sobre Biodiversidad de America Latina y el Caribe, Florina Lopez.

The Inter-Agency Support Group discussed, among other matters, key issues regarding the preparations for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, and the milestones leading towards the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals. The

annual meeting provided a platform for agreement on a coherent framework for the preparation of technical papers to serve as resource papers for the World Conference, as well as the post-2015 development agenda process. These papers will cover a range of economic, social and cultural, but also civil and political rights. The Group expects these to become available later this summer, along with a consolidated advocacy publication this fall.

The meeting also provided the Support Group with the opportunity to review and revise its terms of reference, and to engage in a practical dialogue on how to encourage a collaborative approach to addressing recommendations arising from the Permanent Forum.

Members of the Inter-Agency Support Group requested more collaboration with members of the Forum during the annual sessions of the Permanent Forum to ensure greater coherence and synergies, with particular reference to recommendations and follow-up. To this end, we greatly appreciated the opportunity to discuss this concern with members of the Forum during our annual meeting with the Forum earlier this morning.

Please do refer, for the further issues and highlights brought to the IASG meeting, to the detailed report of the annual IASG meeting. It is available on the Permanent Forum website.

Starting from the end of the 13th session, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) will hold the chair of the IASG for the next 12 months. UNICEF and the entire IASG are ready to stand by OHCHR to successfully host the next annual meeting in the fall of this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank – on behalf of the IASG – the Chief of the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, Chandra Roy-Henriksen, and her team for their continuous support and excellent leadership.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the IASG's full support to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and call for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples.

I wish you every success at this 13th session of the Permanent Forum.

Thank you very much.
