

**United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples  
9<sup>th</sup> session, July 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Agenda Item 7: The Sustainable Development Goals and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples  
Joint Intervention by the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) and Tebtebba (Indigenous Peoples International Centre for Policy Research and Education)  
presented by Andrea Carmen (IITC)**

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Article 32 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples affirms the Right of indigenous Peoples to define their own priorities for development and Article 18 affirms our right to participate in decision-making regarding matters that would affect our rights. Based on these and other inherent rights, the International Indian Treaty Council and Tebtebba accepted to serve as the two Global Organizing Partners for the Indigenous Peoples Major Group on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and Post-2030 Development Agenda.

It was a difficult struggle to achieve the six mentions of Indigenous Peoples in the SDG outcome document "Transforming our World" adopted last September by the UN General Assembly. Likewise, the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, in particular the recognition and protection of our rights to our lands and resources, as well as to full participation in the current process of defining indicators for implementation of the SDG's on the National and International levels. This continues to present a significant challenge for Indigenous Peoples engaged in this process. Sad to say, although the SDG's will impact our most fundamental rights for the next 15 years or more, sustained participation by Indigenous Peoples in this process has been very limited.

In this regard, we share the following statement which was presented on July 11<sup>th</sup>, Monday of this week, in at UN Headquarters in New York at the United Nations High Level Political Forum, Session 3: "*Ensuring that no one is left behind -- lifting people out of poverty and addressing basic needs*" presented by Grace Balawag from Tebtebba representing the Indigenous Peoples Major Group on the SDG's.

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"Thank you for this opportunity to intervene on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group.

For Indigenous Peoples, this session on lifting people out of poverty and addressing basic needs is most relevant. Why? Because Indigenous Peoples are more often than not, included as among the world's most vulnerable, discriminated and disadvantaged populations. However, it must also be clear from the outset that the 2030 Agenda should not only consider Indigenous Peoples as recipients of development, but also as active partners and agents of self-determined development to their lands, territories and resources; and have been contributors to transformational change through our traditional knowledge systems and innovations developed over generations.

For Indigenous Peoples, lifting people out of poverty means to promote non-monetary measures of well-being; instead of just boxing people based on the \$1.25 income. For example, targets under SDG Goal 1 on ending poverty should fully reflect the special situations of land-based and natural-resource-based Indigenous Peoples; and that governments should include an indicator on the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' land

tenure rights, which is very crucial in lifting Indigenous Peoples out of poverty. Another indicator should also be included on the recognition and strengthening of Indigenous Peoples' diverse local economies and traditional livelihoods and occupations that are based on subsistence and harmonious relationship with lands, natural environment and diverse ecosystems, not necessarily measured by monetary income.

In relation to the recognition of land tenure rights and traditional local economies and livelihoods, there is also a need for cross referencing the achievement of agenda 2030 and the SDGs with other government commitments on Human Rights and international conventions that recognizes IPs' rights as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Furthermore, for Indigenous Peoples, the aspiration of the SDGs in lifting people out of poverty and addressing basic need also means the full respect, recognition and fulfillment of our collective rights as distinct Indigenous Peoples. These will ensure equality and non-discrimination; and accord us with our dignity and well-being as active partners in the implementation of the SDGs.

Having said this, the Indigenous Peoples Major Group will again ask, how will the governments ensure that land tenure rights is included as an indicator under SDGs; and how will Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized stakeholders be actively involved in the follow-up and implementation of the development agenda and the SDGs, to ensure that no one will be left behind?"

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In closing, we ask the EMRIP to take note of this statement that was just delivered at the High Level Political Forum in New York. The IITC and Tebtebba, as a global organizing partners for the Indigenous Peoples Major Group, request that the EMRIP advise States and the UN Sustainable Development Process that the rights of Indigenous Peoples must be respected and protected in this process. These include, *inter alia*, the right to full participation, lands and resources, subsistence practices, cultures and self-determination including to freely pursue our social, cultural and economic development. Finally we request that EMRIP recognize and support the work of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group for the SDG's and encourage other Indigenous Peoples to participate actively in this vital and very impactful process.

Thank you.