



GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA
MINISTRY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AFFAIRS

STATEMENT

BY THE

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OF THE COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
ON THE

**FUTURE WORK OF THE PERMANENT FORUM, including issues considered by the Economic
and Social Council and emerging issues**

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK

Wednesday 18th May, 2016

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to make some brief observations in this afternoon's discussion on the future work of the Permanent Forum. I also take the opportunity to commend the good work of the Expert Group and thank them for their report.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is indeed a universal agenda which includes specific provisions for indigenous peoples. The concerns and issues of relevance to indigenous peoples must therefore be integral to the Agenda and to its implementation. Guyana in particular wishes to refer to paragraph 26 of the Report in this regard and we also find appropriate the recommendation contained in paragraph 39(i).

It is noteworthy that indigenous peoples were one of the nine major groups involved in consultations in the lead up to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

As a result, the 2030 Agenda contains numerous elements that can aid in the development concerns of indigenous peoples.

In this regard, the Permanent Forum has an important role to play in promoting and monitoring the implementation of the Agenda as it relates to the rights of indigenous peoples.

In moving forward, the Permanent Forum has the responsibility to monitor and highlight the critical gaps that must be mainstreamed across the 2030 Agenda to fully realise the rights of indigenous peoples.

Mr. Chairman,

Though not exhaustive, I wish to identify, from Guyana's perspective, some of these critical issues that the Permanent Forum may wish to maintain on its agenda with a high degree of priority as we enter the implementation phase of the 2030 Agenda.

In the area of education, there must be a continuous push for guaranteed access to education at all levels. Most indigenous children reside in the hinterland areas which are remote and not easily accessible. Children face numerous challenges in getting to schools. Without further educational opportunities, they are limited in contributing to the development of the indigenous communities and also to national development. More qualified teachers are also needed to compliment this process and indigenous languages should be incorporated in school curriculum.

Hinterland areas are remote and access to indigenous communities is often difficult. The development of infrastructure is therefore a critical element to accessing these far flung communities. Housing and urban development must be prioritized and the challenges of climate change must be

addressed. One benefit of this is the increased job opportunities available to youth to ease the burden of the high cost of living in these areas.

The 2030 Agenda seeks to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. With respect to indigenous peoples, access to reliable energy is critical for ICT access and E-Services for hinterland, poor and remote indigenous communities.

There also needs to be improvement in the provision of healthcare services, personnel and facilities for indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and girls. Provisions must also be made for emergency medical services for all remote communities.

In addition, the importance of indigenous women and girls must not be forgotten in the contribution to national development. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls must be on all Governments' agenda.

Finally, we note the recommendations contained in the Report of the Expert Group. These recommendations reflect the views and priorities of the indigenous peoples in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Permanent Forum should therefore seize the opportunity to highlight and advocate these recommendations as the next steps in the continued realization of the rights of indigenous peoples.

I thank you.