

Intervention to the Eleventh Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2012

Global Indigenous Youth Caucus Statement - May 16, 2012

Agenda Item 9: Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues of the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues

Thank you, Mr Chairperson,

The Global Indigenous Youth Caucus appreciates the opportunity to address the Forum regarding several crucial issues in this session. We are sincerely grateful for the assistance and support from the Forum Members, Secretariat, Indigenous elders, brothers and sisters. As the closing statement of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus in this year's session, bearing in mind that matters addressed today will greatly affect our future tomorrow, we present the following recommendations:

1. For the Permanent Forum to nominate a quorum of experts to discuss, prepare and release a series of expert reports on the global status of Indigenous children and youth, in light of the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The planning, guidance and development of such report and recommendations should be developed in conjunction with Indigenous youth experts and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, with the guarantee of financial assistance from UN agencies and international organizations. The results and the recommendations of the finished expert report must be available to be interpreted by non-expert Indigenous youth.
2. Following the recommendation above, the first expert report should address the participation of Indigenous youth in this Forum. Issues regarding, among others, numbers of Indigenous youth participated since the first session, the distribution of Indigenous youth from different regions, the degree of their participation, recommendations adopted by the Forum and the status of implementation, and how to improve the participation of Indigenous youth should be studied, evaluated and analysed in such report, as well as an assessment of the work and progress of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus.
3. For the 12th session of the Permanent Forum include a half-day discussion on Indigenous youth migration from traditional territories to cities. Many Indigenous youth leave their traditional lands due to education, employment, displacement, conflict and other factors. The causes of migration and challenges afterwards shall be addressed, and the impacts of such migration on Indigenous youth's rights, identity, link to culture and tradition, and good practices addressing such issues and other matters shall be discussed.
4. For the upcoming Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Youth in February 2013, given that, we, the Indigenous youth are the experts of our own issues; representatives of Indigenous youth shall be invited and funded to participate as experts. We request that at least one Indigenous youth from each region is invited and a consultation process with Indigenous youth, communities, organizations, networks and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus should be conducted before the EGM. The selection of such representatives should be in partnership with the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus via

a transparent process.

5. The Global Indigenous Youth Caucus has selected its new Coordinating Group, structured as two co-chairs, and two regional focal points from each region by consensus. The new coordinating group is planning on a working meeting to be held this September to discuss and generate terms of reference, action plans and other essential issues to ensure the work of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus will be effective and efficient. We call for support from the Forum, Member States, UN agencies and Indigenous organizations in terms of mentorship, financial assistance, materials and other crucial resources for such a meeting to take place.
6. For the regional focal points, as well as the focal point on children and youth, among the Forum Members, to establish a mentoring relationships with the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus Coordinating Group to build up the capacities of Indigenous youth and enhancing their understanding of the UN system to improve full and effective participation.
7. Recalling paragraph 51 in the final report adopted by the Forum in its 10th session, the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UNDP and the United Nations Program on Youth were recommended to cooperate closely with the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus to conduct and support regional and international human rights training programs to build the capacity and advocacy skills of indigenous youth. We reaffirm the importance of such training and call upon those bodies to start planning and organizing with the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus.
8. Recalling paragraph 77 in the final report adopted by the Forum in its 10th session, Ms. Myrna Cunningham and Mr. Alvaro Pop were appointed to prepare jointly with UNICEF a report on the situation of indigenous children in Latin America and the Caribbean and to present it to the Forum at its eleventh session. We request this report to be prepared and presented without further delay.

In conclusion, the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus strongly reaffirm that this Forum is a place where all Indigenous Peoples can gather and voice their concerns and the issues they face in their homelands everyday. These lands, that are currently being occupied are Indigenous lands and territories but were taken away as a result of Doctrine of Discovery. Indigenous Peoples, especially youth, have the right to participate in decision-making processes, including within this Forum. Our Indigenous nations shall be the ones to be looked upon in this Forum, not nationality defined by modern sovereign states. Delegates travelling to the Forum shall be protected from being detained, kidnapped and denied entry due to visa, accreditation, political interference, and other hidden agendas. Indigenous Peoples' rights to participation, assembly and freedom of speech and travel shall not be infringed upon by any forces.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.