

**Statement by the Global Disability Caucus – Wednesday, 21 May 2014**

**Setareki Macanawai, Chairperson**

**Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network, Global Disability Caucus**

Madam Chair, distinguished members of the Permanent Forum, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen;

A group of Indigenous peoples with disabilities from around the world gathered here in New York during the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Permanent Forum in May 2013 and established the Indigenous Peoples with disabilities Global Network represented here today through the Global Disability Caucus, of which I currently chair. I wish to thank the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and Disability Rights Fund (DRF) for their support towards our establishment and participation. May I also acknowledge all member states, UN agencies, EMRIP, Voluntary Fund and organisations that have championed our issues and concerns at this Permanent Forum.

There are an estimated **one billion persons with disabilities** living across the globe, out of which 54 million are estimated to be indigenous peoples, yet their issues, which are mostly similar to issues faced by all indigenous peoples traditionally remained invisible from both disability and indigenous policies. This lack of prioritisation has resulted in the failure to address the significant barriers faced by indigenous persons with disabilities.

Madam Chair, persons with disabilities and in particular indigenous peoples with disabilities face multiple discrimination and also other **barriers to participate in society**, including access to development programmes and funds, education, employment, health care, communication and transportation services. Persons with disabilities are overrepresented among those living in **absolute poverty**. The Millennium Development Goals did not include persons with disabilities, and as such, they continue to exist as one of the world's most vulnerable populations.

Madam Chair, we strongly believe that a future development framework focused only on economic poverty will not address the widespread inequality faced by persons with disabilities, in particular indigenous peoples with disabilities in all areas of life.

**Madam Chair**, the Open Working Groups on Sustainable Development is currently working to define the Sustainable Development Goals. As our recommendations, we therefore:

1. Call on the Co-Chairs of the OWG to address inequalities by the SDGs in order to uphold human rights for all, eliminate discrimination, diminish inequalities and to ensure that no one is left behind. The sustainable development goals should eradicate the inequalities that marginalized and vulnerable groups face. This can only be done through an overt focus on the realisation of human rights with a clear focus on equality, equity and non-discrimination based on these fundamental values.
2. Call on the inclusion of specific targets relating to vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as indigenous peoples with disabilities in order to reduce deep-rooted inequalities leading to better and inclusive development outcomes overall.
3. Stress the importance of the promotion of disaggregation of data based on disability, to be agreed by the OWG.

I thank you Madam Chair for giving us the floor to make this intervention on behalf of all indigenous peoples with disabilities around the world!

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