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**Agenda item 7 of the provisional agenda:
International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples**

**Statement by Mrs. Tove Søvndahl Petersen
Greenland Home Rule Government
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Madame Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the agenda-item on the International Decade for the World's Indigenous Peoples and especially the report from the Technical Meeting last week.

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Antonio Garcia not only for conducting the Technical Meeting in such a fine spirit of cooperation, but also for a well-balanced report which reflects the views and ideas expressed during the Technical Meeting.

Madame Chairman,

As we all know, the main objective of the decade is the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of the problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as human rights, environment, development, health, culture and education.

This objective is one which the Danish government and the Greenland Home Rule Government strongly identifies with and which will be the primary source of inspiration in all commitments and activities which will be undertaken in the years to come. If we are to succeed in achieving this objective, it is important that we delegate and share with the Indigenous Peoples the necessary tools to attain it.

There are two primary goals for the decade that the international community must achieve, the first being the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous peoples within the United Nations and the second being the adoption of the Draft Universal Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples.

I will not elaborate on the idea of a permanent forum as my delegation will address this in detail under the relevant agenda-item. I will limit myself to expressing the view that by creating a forum for Indigenous Peoples, the indigenous peoples will have a forum where issues related to economic and social development and the sustainable use of the environment can be dealt with effectively.

Madame Chairman,

Indigenous peoples have high expectations of the United Nations and with the cooperation of the specialized agencies and between the various programmes the objectives can be furthered effectively during the decade. My delegation is pleased to note that our idea of ensuring that programmes and budgets for the decade of relevant inter-governmental organizations are given priority and are devoted sufficient resources and that regular reports on the action taken be submitted to the governing body or executive council, was well reflected in the report from Technical Meeting.

Likewise we are pleased that the need for intensified coordination not just on the international level but also on national level was reflected with the recommendation that communication and coordination between relevant ministries, agencies, regional and local authorities were encouraged by establishing focal points or other mechanisms for coordination and dissemination of information.

Madame Chairman,

I would like to make a few comments on the launch of the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade for the Worlds' Indigenous Peoples.

First of all, there must no doubt that Denmark supports the idea of this Fund which is already established- and that we are willing in principle to contribute to the Fund. But in order for the Fund to be working efficiently throughout the decade in a way that indigenous peoples themselves can identify with, it is necessary that clear guidelines be established for the Voluntary Fund.

These guidelines must be transparent and include the fund's administration, commitment procedures, accounting and follow-up procedures. Also it is important that reports of the Fund's activities must be made available without delay to donors, so that they feel comfortable with their fulfilments.

Secondly, it is of utmost importance that the fund limits its activities to areas which can't be funded by already existing funding opportunities. In practice this will mean that the Voluntary Fund should not fund activities which a specialized agency already have a programme for.

This does not exclude instances where the Voluntary Fund might fund promotional or initiating activities which at later stages can be transferred to another agency or programme.

Thirdly, since the Voluntary fund is bound to make decisions which will affect indigenous peoples and communities, it is of utmost importance that indigenous representatives are included in the Board of Trustees for the Voluntary Fund. Indigenous representatives will without any doubt also be useful when the Board of Trustees is given a mandate to carry out fund-raising activities.

With regards to funding for indigenous peoples' activities and projects in general, we urge the Coordinator to quickly distribute the " Guide to funding of Indigenous Peoples' activities" to which Denmark contributed last year. This potentially very important guide would give indigenous peoples an overview of the funding opportunities available to them internationally.

During the Technical Meeting last week the Danish delegation included three representatives from the national committees for

the International Decade in Greenland and in Denmark who had been invited to take part in the meeting, inspired by the slogan of Partnership in Action.

The concept of inviting representatives from the Danish and Greenlandic national committees to take part in the international cooperation during the decade is one which we intend to pursue believing that linkages between national committees and the international process are crucial for the success of the international decade.

We will recommend this idea of inviting representatives from the national committees to participate in national delegations when meetings on activities for the decade for the world' indigenous peoples are on the agenda.

Madame Chairman,

We strongly agree with the view that there is a need for continuous exchange and review of ideas and activities during the international decade. We would warmly welcome annual Technical Meetings immediately prior to the meetings in United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

Thank you, Madame Chairman.