

**UNDP Statement to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
(under item 5: Comprehensive dialogue with UN agencies and funds)
Friday, 24 May 2013, 10am – 1pm, Trusteeship Council**

Chairperson, members of the Forum, Excellencies,

I would like to thank the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, its Members and the Secretariat, for the opportunity to share with you some main points and highlights from UNDP's work on indigenous peoples' issues over the past year.

In so doing, I would like to reiterate that UNDP has neither a normative nor monitoring mandate on human rights. We are a development agency and for UNDP human rights is an integral part of human development. Human development is more than just economic growth. It is about expanding the choices people have to lead lives they value, in accessing resources to make those choices meaningful, and enjoying security to ensure those choices can be exercised in peace within the context of inclusive and responsive institutions. Against the backdrop of a rights based approach, articulating and translating, normative standards, principles and member state commitments into policies, programmes and services highlights the fundamental question we face as to whether they are responsive and accountable to the needs and demands of people. Channels for accountability & empowerment are just some of the crucial links to ensure that individual and institutional capacities are strengthened and patterns of inequality, discrimination, exclusion and other

structural factors inhibiting human development are addressed. In this regard UNDP continues to engage strategically, internally and externally, to advance indigenous issues and to work towards the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples.

Members of the Forum, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

New developments in UNDP include a revised **Strategy for Civil Society and Civic Engagement**. While it is understood that indigenous peoples are distinct from civil society, the Strategy for Civil Society takes into account the need for dialogue, capacity-building for indigenous peoples and their inclusion and participation in decision-making and policy-making. Many of who may know that earlier this year, **UN-REDD** launched the **Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent**. UNDP also continues to contribute actively to the **United Nations Indigenous Peoples Partnership (UNIPP)** with ILO, OHCHR and UNICEF, both substantively as well as administratively

Our support to National Human rights institutions, approximately 100 globally, continues in partnership with our sister agency, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Co-ordinating Committee for National Human Rights Institutions. We also find the UPR recommendations, limited

as they are with respect to Indigenous Peoples' a useful entry point for our development programming.

At the regional level, and highlighting a few examples, the **Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean** (RBLAC) has contributed to the strengthening of indigenous youth organizations and networks, the empowerment of indigenous youth as key agents for development and democratic governance and the participation of indigenous youth in national and international processes, facilitating inter-ethnic and inter-generational dialogue. Between 2009 and 2012, UNDP trained over 600 young indigenous leaders from Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Paraguay and Colombia through regional, national and on-line seminars.

UNDP Bolivia (2010-2013) has been implementing a project to strengthen the capacities of public administration to incorporate the integral development perspective of "Vivir Bien" and the norms of pluralism and interculturality in the design of public policies.

The **Asia-Pacific Regional Centre** (APRC) carried out country assessments in Nepal, Philippines, Laos, Indonesia and Cambodia to evaluate the communication and information needs of indigenous peoples, in line with article 16 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Its findings have been summarized

in the report “**Indigenous Voices in Asia-Pacific**” (2012), which gives recommendations on priority interventions for each participating country and for a regional strategy.

Since late 2012, the UN System in Costa Rica, led by UNDP, has been working both with the indigenous leaders and the Government authorities toward the dialogued resolution of conflict around the hydroelectric project, with a view to guaranteeing indigenous rights.

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Remain assured of our support to the 2014 World Conference as well as the Post-2015 process (more of which you will hear about during next week’s sessions), both of which we consider excellent opportunities to advance indigenous. In this context, UNDP will continue to work closely with the Members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Secretariat and the Inter-Agency Support Group.

(703 =7 minutes)

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