

Statement about the discriminative  
term of "Indigenous Peoples" used  
in the Chinese version of the Declaration  
on the rights of Indigenous peoples

United Nations, Working Group  
on Indigenous Populations  
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### Statement by the Delegation of Taiwan Aborigines

Madam Chair,

We are Taiwan Aborigines. In Taiwan the official language is Mandarin Chinese, and we Aborigines, also use this language for formal affairs.

There is a serious problem with the terms used in the Chinese version of all the official UN documents concerning indigenous peoples. This is not a small matter of drafting, but a very important matter of discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, **and we ask the United Nations to change these terms.**

The English expression "indigenous peoples" is translated by the UN "tuzu renmin" 土著人民. This is an old and obsolete expression that designate native people but contains such connotations as "savage", "primitive", and "low-level cultural".

**THE U.N. SHOULD NOT ADDRESS US THIS WAY.**

The terms "indigenous peoples" should always be translated as "yuanzu minzu" 原住民族. This means literally "original/inhabiting/peoples". This is a neutral and accurate rendering of the expression "indigenous peoples".

There is also another serious problem. It is important to all indigenous peoples to be called "peoples" or "minzu" 民族 in Chinese. But Madam Chair, in the draft declaration on indigenous peoples, even in the title, the Chinese version refers to "renmin" 人民, that means "population". The Chinese word for "peoples" is "minzu".

The Chinese version of all resolutions and documents concerning indigenous peoples already adopted or published should be changed. For the future, the UN should always use this non-disparaging modern terminology in documents, resolutions, and oral translations.

**The terminology now used by the UN is contrary to the whole spirit of the Declaration and has bad implications for all of us.**

The UN should use the following terms :

"Indigenous peoples" should be "yuanzu minzu" 原住民族, and not "tuzu renmin" 土著人民,

"indigenous population(s)", "Indigenous people" should be "yuanzu min" 原住民, and not "tuzu renmin" 土著人民.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Delegation of Taiwan Aborigines.