

An Open Letter to President Lee from the Indigenous Peoples of the World at the 11th UN Session of the WGIP

President Lee:

We are the delegates who attend the 11th UN session on Indigenous affairs. We would like to talk to you about International year of Indigenous Peoples.

1993 has been designated International year of the world's Indigenous Peoples by the United Nations, and is also the time for the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples (WGIP) under Economic and Social Council of UN to complete the "Draft Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples". For that, during 19 - 30, July, 1993, the WGIP holds its eleventh session to invite indigenous peoples representatives, governmental representatives and representatives of non-governmental organizations of the world to sit together, and to participate in the completion of the Declaration. The representatives of Taiwan Aborigines are also attending the session.

The Declaration clarifies and recognizes indigenous peoples, as subjects protected by the International law and new partners of the International community, and as equal peoples to enjoy all the human rights and fundamental freedom. As peoples (), they also have the right to autonomy and self-determination in order to ensure their life and self-development. The word "Indigenous" is used in the Declaration as well as the name "indigenous peoples" to stress the fact that indigenous peoples have lived on their land before the colonists came and occupied the land.

It is known that Taiwan is not a member of UN. The Government pays very little concern to International affairs and developments. They especially, ignore the dynamical situation of the indigenous peoples of the world. This is reflected in the fact that the Government insists on using the discriminative term "Shambaou" () (mountain fellowcitizen) which had also been used by the former Japan colonists to name the indigenous peoples. On the contrary, the concept "indigenous peoples" () has been used to name the indigenous peoples, by UN and almost all the publics in Taiwan.

Taiwan government exercises the force of State to deny the identity of the indigenous peoples of Taiwan.

Until now, Taiwan government has not made any positive response to the International year of Indigenous Peoples. Even worse, the government close its eyes to the continuing violations of the human rights of indigenous peoples, especially the political right and the right of the land and natural resources management. This kind of behaviors will reduce the possibility of the UN to open its doors to Taiwan.

The ignorance by Taiwan government on the rights of Indigenous Peoples has been reported in the session by delegation of Taiwan Aborigines, and has aroused anger among us: the indigenous peoples

WGIP 93/EKS.TWN/4

representatives and the members of WGIP in the session. We express our serious concern to the Taiwan government, and sincerely appeal to Mr. President for your efforts to promote the rights of Taiwan Aborigines, and to respect the efforts and contributions of the world's indigenous peoples to bulid a truly equal and harmonic Internation community.

Thanks for your attention, Mr. President.