

11th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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AGENDA ITEM: 7 on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP)

Statement by the Asia Indigenous Peoples Caucus
Delivered by Rukka Sombolinggi

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Caucus appreciates the Resolution of the President of the UN General Assembly, designating Ambassador Luis De Alba of Mexico and John Henriksen to conduct consultations in preparation to the WCIP in 2014.

Likewise, we congratulate Ambassador De Alba and John Henriksen for their appointment, and we extend our full support and cooperation in the fulfillment of their mandate.

In line with the focus on the WCIP on the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the indigenous peoples in Asia wish to contribute to the entire process of the WCIP. We look forward to an action-oriented outcome that can decisively make a difference in achieving our aspirations in the exercise of our collective rights. We wish to raise our serious concern that many governments in Asia are yet to legally recognize indigenous peoples as distinct peoples with specific collective rights. While we are referred to in different names and have different historical circumstances, we also share common features of indigenous peoples as distinct peoples with our own identities, cultures and ways of life.

As part of the preparatory process for the WCIP, we thereby call on States to immediately engage in meaningful dialogues or strengthen mechanisms for dialogues with indigenous peoples in their respective countries as well as at the regional level towards their legal recognition as indigenous peoples. We believe this will be a major step towards resolving many of the underlying conflicts and challenges that we face as indigenous peoples. Likewise, it will also contribute directly to the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in Asia in all relevant processes relating to the WCIP.

We also call on the UN agencies, Funds and Programmes to extend their utmost support to the WCIP including the mobilization of funds and resources to facilitate the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in all processes relating to the WCIP. We also strongly recommend the UN agencies, Funds and Programmes to undertake a coordinated conduct of thematic studies using empirical data on the situation of indigenous peoples and the underlying causes of their discrimination and marginalization. These studies shall include the urgent concerns of indigenous peoples including but not limited to economic poverty, extractive industries and sustainable development, food security, indigenous women among others.

We also call on the UN Permanent Forum to assist in mobilizing funds and resources for the WCIP and to work closely with Ambassador De Alba and John Henriksen, as well as to the States, the IP Global Coordinating Group, indigenous organizations and institutions, and to UN agencies, funds and programmes in moving forward with the WCIP for its successful conclusion.

Finally, the Asia IP caucus fully supports the statement and recommendations of the Indigenous Peoples Global Coordinating Group (GCG) of the WCIP. We believe these recommendations are vital in achieving the objectives of the WCIP. We remain committed to cooperate with the GCG in all the processes relating to the WCIP.

Thank You