

Statement by Ghazali Ohorella
Alifuru Council
Fifteenth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Agenda item 10: Future work of the Permanent Forum

May 18, 2016, New York City (USA)

Mr. Chair, Distinguished members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Representatives of Indigenous Peoples and Member States, Ladies and gentlemen,

We wish to address three distinct issues regarding future work of the Permanent Forum:

First, we appreciate the reform of the UNPFII working methods. We recognize the intent of the Forum and its Secretariat to provide indigenous peoples more opportunity to address the forum in a clear, concise, constructive, and interactive manner. For the 16th session we appeal to the Permanent Forum to provide in a timely manner, sufficient information on the new working methods.

We recommend the Permanent Forum to start a procedure or questionnaire to receive communications from Indigenous peoples and organizations, Member States, UN-agencies, and non-governmental organizations, to improve the working methods for the 16th session towards further engagement from all participants.

Secondly, Mr. Chair,

During COP21, the Indigenous caucus worked hard and systematically to include Indigenous Peoples' perspectives in the new Climate Change Agreement. We recall that even though most of the countries we were lobbying in Paris voted in favor of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it was very demanding to defend the indigenous priorities. It was therefore obvious that we were disappointed that the Parties did not see fit to accommodate human rights in the Agreement and Decision in which we were joined with a broad constituency that included a number of States.

We reiterate that a rights based approach is an essential framework in addressing climate change, as reflected in amongst others the 2014 World conference for Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) outcome document, stating: "indigenous peoples' knowledge and strategies to sustain their environment should be respected and taken into account when we develop national and international approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation."

Mr. Chair, climate change exacerbates the difficulties already faced by indigenous peoples in the Pacific and around the world, including political and economic marginalization, loss of land and resources, human rights violations, discrimination and unemployment. Therefore, Indigenous peoples require the assistance of the Permanent Forum to ensure that: In the context of climate change mitigation the rights of indigenous peoples be recognized, protected and respected within a broad human rights framework.

Finally, Mr. Chair,

We took note of the remarks made yesterday by the representative of Indonesia in response to the statement of Mr. Yohanis Anari, regarding the situation of West-Papua.

The representative of Indonesia omitted from his statement:

1. That States, including Indonesia, should interpret the UN Charter in light of international obligations, even if the Charter appears to require members to grant broad jurisdictional interpretation to maintain territorial integrity in addressing violations of the UN Declaration.
2. Per GA resolution 2625 1970 the principle of territorial integrity of a State applies only to those states that conduct themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.

We have seen readily available and recent attempts to limit, oppress, or circumvent the right to self-determination of the indigenous people of West-Papua and South-Maluku. We remind the Indonesian government that self-determination is the virtue and purpose of the United Nations and a measure for strengthening peace and resolution, this virtue must be supported to the fullest extent.

Thank you Mr. Chair,