



STATEMENT DELIVERED BY

[H.E. MR.](#) JOSEPH U. AYALOGU,

AMBASSADOR/ PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE PERMANENT  
MISSION OF NIGERIA

AT THE 24TH SESSION OF THE WORKING  
GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS  
HELD IN GENEVA FROM 31 JULY TO 4  
AUGUST 2006

GENEVA 3rd August 2006

\*PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY THE NIGERIA DELEGATION AT THE 24TH SESSION OF  
THE WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS HELD IN  
GENEVA FROM 31ST JULY TO 4TH AUGUST 2006

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me first express our congratulations to you for the well-deserved election as the Chairperson for the 24th Session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Your election is recognition of the unrelenting commitment you have demonstrated to the course of the Working Group which essentially, has, in its over 24 years of history championed the recognition, promotion and protection of the rights of the indigenous people. The delegation of Nigeria pays tribute to the Working Group's encouraging achievements and will continue to work in a constructive manner to further strengthen the efforts of the United Nations system for the benefits of the indigenous people.

Mr. Chairperson,

The decision of the Sub-Commission in its resolution 2005123 that the principal theme of the 24th session of your Working Group should be the "utilization of indigenous peoples' lands by non-indigenous authorities, groups or individuals for military purposes", is not only timely but also an important effort to focus on developments on the subject and to address the challenges. The Note by the Secretariat for the discussion of this theme contained in document E/CN.41Sub.2/AC.41200611/Add.1 is, in our view, commendable, as it provides a sound review of developments concerning the principal theme. We have no doubt that it adequately serves as an appropriate framework for constructive engagement on the subject.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is with this background that my attention has been drawn to the comment of one representative of the Green Peoples Environmental Network and a so-called member of one International Alliance on Indigenous and Tribal People of the Tropical Forest. The comments made under items 4b - represent flagrant abuse of procedures, as the theme has neither remote connection with Nigeria nor its history. It is a historical fact that all Nigerian people are indigenous to their respective communities and there is neither indigenous peoples' land nor non-indigenous authorities, groups or individuals and for that matter, no such land is being utilized for military purposes in Nigeria. To say the least, the claims are spurious, baseless and totally unsubstantiated. Indeed, the author is undeserving of our comment but it is considered necessary to set the records straight.