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Tonya Gonnella Frichner

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**Intervention to the
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 8th Session
New York, May 18-29, 2009
Human Rights Agenda Item 4
Presented by
Tonya Gonnella Frichner, Expert Member from North America Region**

Madame Chair, I have closely listened to the strong comments of all the speakers. It is clear that the Human Rights agenda item brings the passion out in all parties, especially those parties that have been excluded from Human Rights for so long.

Madame Chair, in 1945 at the founding of this august body, the United Nations, there emerged the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, of which Indigenous Peoples were excluded.

Madame Chair, Indigenous Peoples have been excluded from the Human Rights agenda for 64 years. We have been fighting our way to this point. That is why we are here.

As the great-granddaughter of Chief Deskahah shared with us at our opening Monday, her great grandfather went to Geneva seeking for fairness from the International Community.

Once again, our people appealed to the world community at the United Nations in Geneva in 1977 to discuss Human Rights; and we come to the United Nations headquarters to do the same.

Madame Chair, nothing has changed for Indigenous Peoples. We are still fighting for our Human Rights. We have heard this from every Indigenous Caucus, Indigenous region and the Special Rapporteur and the Representative of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Madame Chair, that is why Indigenous Peoples are here.

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