

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Sixth Session
14-25 May 2007, New York

Agenda Item 4:

Implementation of recommendations on the six mandated areas and on Millennium Development Goals, (f) human rights

17 May 2007

Oral intervention submitted by Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific Alliance
Delivered by Mr. Teyra Yudaw (Taroko Nation)

Madam Chair, members of the PFII, distinguished delegates and friends:

My name is Teyra Yudaw. I am a member of the Taroko Nation. This is my first time addressing this Forum on behalf of my people in the Asia Pacific region.

Our traditional Taroko value about "man and nature" is presented in the saying that "The land is our blood. The mountain forest is our home." Hunters are the guardians of our land and wild animals. Before foreign rulers came into our territory in the upper, middle and lower areas of the Liwu River, we have been living here for over four hundred years. My people had long enjoyed self-governance on our land under Taroko customary laws.

But now, our hunters – the guardians of our traditional territory and wild animals – are frequently harassed by the Ministry of Interior National Park police force with violent means, because our traditional territory has been demarcated by the government as Taroko National Park. Such harassment by the police force is not tolerable by my people and it is a direct violation of the human rights of indigenous peoples and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (particularly Article 26, 27, 28, 29, and 32). In so doing, the government is also violating its own law, that is the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law enacted and promulgated in February 2005 (particularly Article 19 and 34 of the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law).

We hereby demand the following:

1. We demand an end to the human rights violation committed by the Taroko National Park Police, followed by publicly released apology and promise to Taroko people that such violent behavior will not happen again. We reserve our rights to file for national compensation and other legal means for justice.
2. If the national park police force repeats its human rights violation against our people again, we demand an immediate dismissal or transferring of the responsible officials from the Park and the territory of the Taroko Nation. Otherwise, we will be forced to enact self-defense mechanism according to Taroko law to protect our rights.
3. We demand full respect of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law by concerned government units, particularly the ones responsible for natural resources management. We further demand the relevant authority to amend, make or repeal relevant regulations in accordance with the principles of the Declaration and the Basic Law within stipulated time.

We thank you for your attention and dedication to the rights of indigenous peoples.