

(#11)

May 12, 2004

United Nations  
Economic and Social Council  
*Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*  
3<sup>rd</sup> Session, New York – May 10-21, 2004

doCip  
ARCHIVES

International Indigenous Women's Caucus Statement on CULTURE

Dear Members of the Permanent Forum:

Please accept our gratitude for the work you have done and will continue to do for Indigenous Peoples. This statement on CULTURE is presented on behalf of the Indigenous Women's Caucus.

We come before you today as life-givers of future generations, caretakers of Grandmother Earth and guardians of our cultural ways.

We are the first to feel the effects of oppression and bear the heaviest burden of survival. We feel the urgency to protect our culture as it is the only meaningful way to survive, with respect to Mother Earth for sustaining us.

We come to you for your advocacy in strengthening our voice against the degradation to Indigenous cultures. In this time of the world's alienation from the Earth and the need to dominate Indigenous Peoples, the Permanent Forum is one of our last resorts to realize our self-defined solutions.

1. As an advocate for Indigenous Peoples, we recommend that the Permanent Forum be adequately funded to accomplish its mission.
2. We recommend that the States adopt the draft Declaration on Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Permanent Forum requests a report from each State in opposition, citing the nature of their objection to the draft declaration. We recommend that these reports be made available to the Fourth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
3. For hundreds of years, Indigenous Peoples have suffered domination and violence. Proper attention and remedies cannot be accomplished in a brief decade. We recommend that closure to the Decade of Indigenous Peoples be delayed until such a time when the draft Declaration on Indigenous Peoples is adopted.
4. We recommend that the Permanent Forum arrange for a report on Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity at the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Permanent Forum.

United

5036

5. Globalization is severely impacting our cultural, environmental, social, economic, physical and spiritual health of Indigenous Peoples. Globalization efforts have only further marginalized Indigenous Peoples, particularly women. We recommend that the Permanent Forum continue its advocacy to prevent cultural degradation and the displacement of Indigenous Peoples from homelands. We further recommend that the Permanent Forum find necessary means to discourage states from appropriating cultural resources for economic gain and control.

6. We recommend that the Permanent Forum advocate for the development of culturally-adequate consultation processes in decisions that impact Indigenous Peoples.

7. We support and remind the Permanent Forum of its recommendation #100, , as noted in its report of the second session in May of 2003, "The Forum recommends that the United Nations and Member States recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples which include the rights to organize oneself freely and to administer one's own cultural, sports, social, and religious institutions."

a) We recommend that the Permanent Forum include and advocate for the recovery and use of Indigenous languages and to discourage states from suppressing such languages through declarations of "official languages".

b) We recommend that the Permanent Forum include and advocate for the consultation of Indigenous Peoples in the development of culturally-relevant curriculum and educational practices.

c) We recommend that the Permanent Forum support and advocate Indigenous Peoples' recovery of culturally-appropriate health care.

d) We recommend that the Permanent Forum support and advocate for Indigenous Peoples' study and recovery of culturally-appropriate governance and further support the establishment of an international centre for multicultural and multiracial studies as contained in Recommendation #100 of the same report cited above.

This statement does not necessarily include all of the Indigenous Women's concerns regarding CULTURE however it is a beginning and should give the Permanent Forum a place to start in its infancy. In closure we thank the distinguished members for the opportunity to present this collective statement on CULTURE and look forward to working with the Permanent Forum regarding these recommendations.