

OGIEK Welfare Association is a community-based organization  
The United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations 20<sup>th</sup> session at GENEVA, Switzerland.  
July 22 to 26, 2002.

Mr. Chairman,

My statement follows:

My name is Simon N. Parkesui .

Thank you for this short time to comment and review agendas. My fellow indigenous brothers and sisters. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be here addressing the meeting. I come here representing the OGIEK community of Kenya. The organization stands for the rights of the indigenous hunters and gatherers of East Africa – the OGIEK people. There is little known about the OGIEK. The OGIEK are the most widely distributed peoples in Africa. We live in the Mau Forest and depend on nature for our livelihood – by collecting honey and wild fruits. Our focus, as an organization, has been to educate the OGIEK together with other indigenous people on their basic rights to life, prosperity, education and good health.

I am speaking to seek more information on what the United Nations Centre for Human Rights is doing to improve the status of the world's indigenous people. Kindly supply us with contacts of such groups for the purposes of sharing information. The Kenyan government has threatened to evict more than 10,000 OGIEK families from their ancestral land with no alternative for the OGIEK people. We have challenged the decision and the matter is in the High Court of Kenya. Survival International together with our organizations have issued an alert for protection of the OGIEK forest land rights. We hope that your Centre will give the OGIEK an opportunity to present our grievances to the UN international conferences.

I hope that you will guide us on how to be part of the UN process on issues related to indigenous groups. We will continue supporting the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights Working Group on Indigenous Peoples.

Thank you. Mr. Chairman.  
Simon Parkesui  
(ORIP)