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## Item 8: Five-Point Proposal on the Establishment of a UN High Commissioner for Indigenous Peoples

By Dr. Vang Pobzeb, Lao Human Rights Council, Inc.  
At the 16th session on the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, UN Commission on Human Rights, Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Geneva, Switzerland  
July 21 1998

Madam Chairperson and Members of the UN Working Group and fellow indigenous representatives, peoples, and organizations

I am speaking on behalf of Hmong people, the Lao Human Rights Council, Inc., and United Hmong International, Inc. I am pleased to propose to fellow indigenous peoples, representatives, organizations and the members of the UN Working Groups, that one of the best ways to promote, pursue and protect civil rights, human rights, political rights, social rights, economic rights, cultural rights, and the right to self-determination for indigenous peoples in the global system is to establish a UN High Commissioner for Indigenous Peoples. There are about 12 million Hmong people and 300 million indigenous peoples at the global level who have been seeking and calling for a true self-determination, peace, justice and human rights, social, political, economic and cultural rights.

To all fellow indigenous peoples, representatives and organizations, if we all agree that we struggle for, in true reality, peace and justice, we must consider the proposal for the establishment of a High Commissioner for Indigenous Peoples. I am pleased to propose that the High Commissioner for Indigenous Peoples should:

1. Promote and protect human rights, civil rights, social rights, cultural rights, economic rights and political rights for indigenous peoples.
2. Promote and protect the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples. They must freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.
3. Monitor, investigate, and stop human rights violations, genocide, discrimination and ethnic cleansing war against indigenous peoples.
4. Practice and serve as an independent High Commissioner, not controlled or dominated by member states of the United Nations.
5. The High Commissioner must be appointed or selected by representatives and organizations of indigenous peoples.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson and Members of the UN Working Group and fellow indigenous peoples, representatives and organizations.

Dr. Vang Pobzeb  
Representative of Hmong People  
Lao Human Rights Council, Inc.  
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