

(19 April 2010)

19 April 2010



United Nations

Economic and HR/5012

(UNESCO, 2010)

Department of Public Information • New

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Ninth Session
1st & 2nd Meetings (AM & PM)

2010

SECRETARY-GENERAL CALLS ON MEMBER STATES TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT WHILE RESPECTING

INDIGENOUS VALUES, CUSTOMS, AS PERMANENT UN FORUM OPENS TWO-WEEK SESSION

Session Theme: "Development with Culture and Identity": New Zealand Announces Support for Indigenous Rights Declaration

The annual United Nations forum on indigenous issues opened today with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon calling on Member States to promote development while respecting indigenous cultures and traditions, and with the Government of New Zealand taking the opportunity to announce that it would reverse its decision and support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples.

"Slowly but surely, people are coming to understand that the well-being and sustainability of indigenous peoples are matters that concern us all. Diversity is a strength -- in cultures and in languages, just as it is in ecosystems," Mr. Ban said, as he opened the two-week session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which this year will focus on the theme "Development with Culture and Identity".

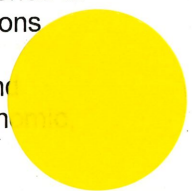
The Secretary-General said that the loss of irreplaceable cultural practices and means of artistic expression "makes us all poorer, wherever our roots may lie". That was why Governments must pursue development underpinned by the values of reciprocity, solidarity and collectivity. "And we need development that allows indigenous peoples to exercise their right to self-determination through participation in decision-making on an equal basis," he added.

Mr. Ban's call was followed later by the announcement by Pita Sharples, New Zealand's Minister of Maori Affairs, that the Government would reverse its decision and support the Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples. New Zealand was one of four countries -- the others being Australia, Canada and the United States -- that voted against the Declaration in 2007. Australia reversed its decision last year. Greeted with enthusiastic applause, he said: "We are pleased to express our support for the Declaration as both an affirmation of fundamental rights and an expression of new and widely supported aspirations."

Maori held a distinct and special status as indigenous people of New Zealand, and their culture was of profound importance to national identity, he continued. The Declaration was an historic achievement, the result of 22 years of hard work, and he acknowledged the long involvement of Maori in its elaboration. It affirmed accepted international human rights and expressed new, non-binding, aspirations. In supporting the Declaration, New Zealand affirmed those rights and reaffirmed the legal and constitutional frameworks that underpinned its legal system, he said.

Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Coordinator of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, said the Permanent Forum had convened at a time of "extraordinary progress" and its work had influenced the agendas of other organizations and financial institutions -- a "ripple effect" which testified to the Forum's ability to change awareness levels. For its part, the United Nations would mark the midway point of the Second Decade with a report by the Secretary-General that evaluated progress towards the civil, econ

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cultural, political and social rights of indigenous peoples.

Despite such advances, "we must recognize that the situations of indigenous peoples in many parts of the world are critical", he stressed. Development efforts had damaged, rather than improved, their well-being and, in many cases, land rights, traditional sources of knowledge and cultural priorities had not been recognized, much less respected. Echoing the Secretary-General, he said that society at large lost out when development approaches ignored customs and ancient practices, and he urged examining how indigenous perspectives could become central to international, regional and national development agendas. In such discussions, the voices of women and youth must be incorporated in meaningful ways.

He also asked the Forum to consider how Declaration articles 3 and 32 — which respectively covered the right to self-determine political status, and how lands, water and other resources were used — could be used to empower indigenous peoples. Such work must be undertaken with an awareness of the Millennium Development Goals. "The Forum gives voices to people who, in many cases, would be otherwise voiceless", he asserted, and he encouraged delegates to share best practices and strategize on new development models that protected and incorporated the wisdom of indigenous cultures.

As is the Forum's tradition, the ninth session was opened with an invocation from Tadodaho Sid Hill, Chief of the Onondaga Nation. Welcoming delegates, he asked them to respectfully put their minds together and give thanks to the leaders of the medicines, the woods, berries, animals, fresh waters and winds. He gave thanks to the elder brother, the Sun, that he carry on his duties to help the plants survive, and to the grandmother, the Moon, to help maintain the water.

In other business, the Forum adopted the provisional agenda of its ninth session (document E/C.19/2010/1) and elected by acclamation Vice-Chairpersons from among its membership:

Hassan Id Balkassam from Morocco; Bartolomé Clavero Salvador from Spain; Michael Dodson from Australia; and Tonya Gonnella Frichner from the United States. Paimaneh Hasteh, from Iran, was elected as Rapporteur.

The Forum also held a discussion on the session's special theme with United Nations specialized agencies, including the International Organization for Migration; the International Labour Organization (ILO); the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR); the World Health Organization (WHO); the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (also on behalf of the International Indian Treaty Council); the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Also participating in that dialogue were Forum Members from Bolivia, Spain, and the United States, who respectively highlighted key themes that had emerged throughout the day, including the vital need for the collection of disaggregated data to ensure that the goals set by Governments to tackle poverty and other social ills did not address the particular situation of indigenous persons. They also spotlighted the concept of "living well", which aimed towards a way of life where human beings and nature lived in harmony.

Ahead of that discussion, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Forum expert from the Philippines, introduced the report on the expert group meeting on the special theme (document E/C.19/2010/14), and the representative of UNESCO introduced the report of the Inter-Agency Support Group. The Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), speaking also on behalf of the United Nations Development Group, also made a statement on that item.

The President of the General Assembly also addressed the Forum. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Hamidon Ali, President of the Economic and Social Council, also delivered opening remarks.

Chairperson Carlos Mamani Condori, Permanent Forum member from Bolivia, also gave an overview of the session.

The representative of Bolivia also spoke.

The Forum will reconvene at 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, 20 April, to continue its discussion on the special theme for the year: "Indigenous peoples: development culture and identity; articles 3 and 32 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."

Background

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues met today to begin its ninth session, which was to focus on the impacts of development policies on indigenous peoples' culture and identity. Almost 2,000 indigenous participants from all regions of the world were expected to take part in the session to engage with members of the Permanent Forum, Member States, United Nations agencies and civil society. The two-week session will be held from 19 to 30 April (For more information, please see press release HR/5011).

Opening Statements

Opening the ninth session, TADODAHO SID HILL, Traditional Chief of the Onondaga Nation, said people here today had come of one mind to greet one another and give thanks to the Mother Earth, whose duty it was to care for what the Creator had planted. In that context, he asked delegates to kindly and respectfully put their minds together and give thanks to the leaders of the medicines, the woods and the trees, berries, animals, winged animals, fresh waters and winds. He gave thanks to the elder brother, the Sun, that he carry on his duties to help the plants survive, and the grandmother, the Moon, to help maintain the water. Finally, he thanked the Creator for having set down love for all people.

BAN KI-MOON, United Nations Secretary-General, said that, from the Arctic to the African savannah, indigenous people often lived in some of the most isolated places on earth. Yet, the United Nations was working to make sure that they themselves were not isolated. "You have a unique place in the global community. You are special members of the [United Nations] family," he said, stressing that the Organization would continue to support and protect indigenous peoples' human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as their right to pursue social and economic development.

The Secretary-General said he attached great importance to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which had been adopted in 2007. In that landmark document, Member States and indigenous peoples had reconciled with their painful histories and had resolved to move forward together towards human rights, justice and development for all. The United Nations had made significant progress on indigenous issues over the past 40 years, including with the establishment of the Forum itself, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"And yet, we can not even begin to be content with our progress," he cautioned, noting that the first-ever United Nations report on the State of the World's Indigenous People, released in January, had revealed alarming statistics. The report stated that indigenous people suffered high levels of poverty, health problems, crime and human rights abuses all over the world. While they made up only 5 per cent of the world's population, they accounted for one third of the poorest people on the planet. Moreover, a Native American was 600 times more likely to contract tuberculosis than the general population. In Australia, an indigenous child could expect to die twenty years earlier than his non-native compatriots.

"Every day, indigenous communities face issues of violence, brutality and dispossession," he continued, adding that indigenous cultures, languages and ways of life were under constant threat from climate change, armed conflict, lack of educational opportunities and discrimination. Elsewhere, their cultures were being distorted, commodified, and used to generate profits which do not benefit indigenous people, and can even lead to harm. "This is not only a tragedy for indigenous people. It is a tragedy for the whole world," he declared.

Yet, slowly but surely, "people are coming to understand that the well-being and sustainability of indigenous peoples were matters that concerned us all," he said. Diversity was strength -- in cultures and in languages, just as it is in ecosystems. He said that the loss of irreplaceable cultural practices and means of artistic expression "makes us all poorer, wherever our roots may lie".

According to current forecasts, 90 per cent of all languages could disappear within 100 years. The loss of those languages eroded an essential component of a group's identity. That was why the special theme of the Forum's work this year, "Development with Culture and Identity," was particularly appropriate, he said, adding that it highlighted the need to craft policy measures that promoted development, while respecting indigenous peoples' values and traditions.

"We need development that is underpinned by the values of reciprocity, solidarity and collectivity," he said, calling also for development that allowed indigenous peoples to exercise their right to self-determination through participation in decision-making on an equal basis.

Vowing the United Nations ongoing support, the Secretary-General called on all Governments, indigenous peoples, the United Nations system and all other partners to ensure that the vision behind the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples becomes a reality for all.

ALI ABDUSSALAM TREKI (Libya), President of the General Assembly, said development, identity and culture all related to indigenous peoples, as "essential issues" on which human rights were based. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ensured their participation in formulating development programmes and policies. Indigenous peoples had suffered from injustice throughout history, notably as result of imperialism and colonialism. Today, many still suffered from poverty and oppression, and were deprived the right to development. Development should happen through cooperation among countries, and take into account the identities and cultures of indigenous peoples. Cooperation based on good faith would benefit indigenous peoples and enrich the environment at large. In closing, he commended the Permanent Forum on its commitment to indigenous peoples' rights.

Taking the floor next, newly elected Chairperson CARLOS MAMANI CONDORI, Forum member from Bolivia, said the special theme this year provided an opportunity to discuss what was meant by "Development with Culture and Identity". Thanking his Government for hosting the Permanent Forum's pre-session meeting, he noted Bolivia's initiative that had led to the General Assembly designating 22 April as Mother Earth Day. Mother Earth was endowed with rights and indigenous peoples were committed to promoting that world view.

On the Permanent Forum's work, he said its international expert group meeting, held in January, adopted by consensus various conclusions and recommendations that were important for the discussions at hand. Its report was among the documents for the session. Also, among the goals of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples was to redefine development, starting from a vision of equity and in a way that was culturally appropriate: "development with identity". Of course, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples guaranteed their full and effective participation in development processes.

Turning to the session, he said the Forum would hold a dialogue with the Governments of Bolivia and Paraguay, along with United Nations country teams, on the follow-up of the Permanent Forum's visit last year to examine the situation of indigenous peoples in the Chaco region, as well as dialogues with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and the Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, there would be a dialogue with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and a half-day discussion on the North American Region. Next week, there would be a half-day discussion on indigenous peoples and forests.

In closing, he said Permanent Forum members had engaged with various processes at national, regional and international levels to facilitate implementation of its recommendations. He paid tribute to indigenous peoples of the world who continued to work for their rights, sometimes sacrificing their own lives in that struggle. "Let's work to make this session meaningful and worthwhile for all indigenous peoples", he said.

SHA ZUKANG, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Coordinator of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, said the Permanent Forum had convened at a time of "extraordinary progress", following the 2007 adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, establishment of a Special Rapporteur focused on human rights abuses and creation of an Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This year, 15 Member States had submitted voluntary reports on indigenous issues, a record number.

Moreover, the Forum had influenced the agendas of other organizations and financial

institutions, he said, a "ripple effect" which testified to the Forum's ability to change awareness levels. For its part, the United Nations would mark the midway point of the Second Decade with a report by the Secretary-General that evaluated progress towards civil, economic, cultural, political and social rights of indigenous peoples.

Despite such advances, "we must recognize that the situations of indigenous peoples in many parts of the world are critical", he stressed. Development efforts had damaged, rather than improved their well-being and, in many cases, land rights, traditional sources of knowledge and cultural priorities had not been recognized, much less respected. Society at large lost out when development approaches ignored customs and ancient practices, and he urged examining how indigenous perspectives could become central to international, regional and national development agendas. In such discussions, the voices of women and youth must be incorporated in meaningful ways.

He also asked the Forum to consider how Declaration articles 3 and 32 — which respectively covered the right to self-determine political status, and how lands, water and other resources were used — could be used to empower indigenous peoples. Such work must be undertaken with an awareness of the Millennium Development Goals. He particularly commended the Forum's holding of in-depth dialogues with the Governments of Bolivia and Paraguay on conditions faced by indigenous peoples in the Chaco region, the first such discussions with States based on voluntary reports from them.

"The Forum gives voices to people who, in many cases, would be otherwise voiceless", he asserted. With that, he encouraged delegates to share best practices and strategize on new development models that protected and incorporated the wisdom of indigenous cultures.

AHMED DJOGHLAF, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said that the theme of the Forum's work this session -- "development with identity and culture" -- complemented two important international commemorative events: the International Year of Biological Diversity and the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. The commemoration of those two events would be led by their very custodian -- the world's indigenous peoples. He also noted that 22 April marked the first worldwide celebration of Mother Earth Day, which would provide an opportunity to celebrate the relations between nature, culture, indigenous people and biodiversity.

By Declaring 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity, the General Assembly had provided a unique opportunity for highlighting the role of indigenous and local communities and their traditional knowledge in achieving the goals of the Biodiversity Convention, he continued. The promotion and protection of biological and cultural diversity was a unique opportunity to unite and cooperate. Ultimately, the conservation, sustainable use, and fair and equitable access to the benefits deriving from biological diversity, as well as the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, would strengthen relations among States. Those things could also assist in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and contribute to peace.

He went on to say that the relationship between cultures and biological diversity was the basis of an oral contract of mutual obligation. Breaking that contract had dire consequences for all humanity. Sadly, there was ample evidence that the pact was being broken, as the rate of plant and animal extinction continued to spiral upward. "This is what is at stake, he said, highlighting the state of the negotiations ahead of the October 2010 meeting of the State Parties to the Convention, to be held in Nagoya, Japan. One of the most important aspects of that event would be to enhance protections for indigenous peoples' knowledge, innovations and practices associated with genetic resources by ensuring that such knowledge was accessed with prior informed consent or approval. Of equal importance was that when such knowledge was used, it would give rise to the equitable sharing of benefits.

President of the Economic and Social Council HAMIDON ALI (Malaysia) highlighted the importance of the Forum in raising awareness and providing expert advice to United Nations programmes, funds and agencies. The mutual support between the Council and the Forum was also important in relation to the Council's coordinating function regarding work conducted with United Nations agencies and specialized bodies, and he looked forward to the Forum's contribution to the 2010 Annual Ministerial Review on the theme of "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women".

Recalling that the first avenue by which non-Governmental organizations had taken a role in

formal United Nations deliberations was through the Council in 1946, he said that today, the Forum's sessions were among the Organization's most attended events by civil society. The Council would decide at month's end on the Forum's membership for the 2011-2013 term and he would announce the results next week. The Forum's theme this year was important not only for indigenous peoples, but particularly for developing countries facing globalization.

PITA SHARPLES, Minister of Maori Affairs of New Zealand, noting that her country was one of four countries that had voted against the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, announced that today, his Government changed its position. "We are pleased to express our support for the Declaration", he said, as both an affirmation of fundamental rights and an expression of new and widely supported aspirations. Maori held a distinct and special status as indigenous people — or *tangata whenua* — of New Zealand, and their culture was of profound importance to national identity. The Treaty of Waitangi, signed by representatives of the Crown and Maori in 1840, was a founding document of New Zealand establishing mutual respect and good faith between the parties.

The Declaration contained principles that were consistent with those inherent in the Treaty, he said. It was an historic achievement, the result of 22 years of hard work, and he acknowledged the long involvement of Maori in its elaboration. It affirmed accepted international human rights and expressed new, non-binding, aspirations. In supporting the Declaration, New Zealand affirmed those rights and reaffirmed the legal and constitutional frameworks that underpinned its legal system. Those frameworks, while they would continue to evolve, defined the bounds of New Zealand's engagement with the Declaration. Where the Declaration set out aspirations for rights and restitution of traditionally held land and resources, New Zealand had developed a distinct approach that respected the relationship with Maori.

Noting that New Zealand understood the historic injustices suffered by Maori in relation to their land and resources, he said his Government was committed to addressing them through established Treaty settlement processes. Many Maori groups had benefited from the transfer of land, forest and fisheries, while others continued negotiations to settle their claims. At the same time, redress offered in Treaty settlements was constrained by the need to be fair to everyone, and by what the country could afford to pay. New Zealand would continue to rely upon its processes and institutions that afforded opportunities for Maori in decision-making. In those processes and institutions, he acknowledged that the ongoing national dialogue was grounded in the Treaty, and recognized that Maori had an interest in all policy and legislative matters. The Government would continue to work in international forums to promote the human rights of indigenous peoples. Its support for the Declaration reflected continued efforts to work together.

Introduction of Reports on Theme: "Development with Culture and Identity"

VICTORIA TAULI-CORPUZ, Forum member from Philippines, introduced the report of the expert group meeting on the special theme (document E/C.19/2010/14), which took place from 12 to 14 January. The Forum had invited indigenous experts from the various regions and observers from United Nations agencies, Governments and non-governmental organization. The aim of the annual meeting was to provide an opportunity for the Forum members to delve more deeply into the theme of the upcoming substantive session.

This year, she continued, the participants had stressed that development models most often reflected the values of the dominant society, often referred to as "the Washington Consensus". That view, which promoted rampant consumption and the destruction of indigenous lands and cultures, was seen as the main cause of the recent global financial meltdown. Many also felt that it was at the heart of the current environmental crisis that was driving climate change and increasing weather anomalies. She said that many people said that the dominant view, which did not respect individual or cultural rights, was becoming a driving force behind the current trend in which indigenous people had begun to create their own development strategies and plans.

Speakers had also highlighted plans and initiatives to ensure sustainable development in their homelands, many of which had focused on boosting local economic capacities; for example employing indigenous knowledge to promote repopulation of salmon stocks in regions where communities depended on those fish for survival. She said the experts had noted that it was vitally important to reverse the view that indigenous people, their lands and cultural practices were obstacles to progress. Rather, indigenous people were "knowledge producers" and should be seen as vital development partners.

Next, SUSANNE SCHNUTTGEN, representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), introduced the report of the Inter-Agency Support Group, saying that 14 members of the group had participated in the compilation of the survey. The report provided an opportunity for United Nations agencies to jointly consider a broader development paradigm that integrated indigenous peoples' views, and to reflect on how development with culture and identities could be taken forward through their work.

She said the report discussed how the notion of development had broadened within the United Nations from a relatively narrow principle to one that took into account cultural and social rights, as well as political and economic rights. Indeed, Member States were learning that development was not culture neutral, but was in fact rooted in the culture of peoples in all their diversity. The report analyzed the different processes in which diversity and culture could be integrated into development initiatives. It also highlighted the special needs of women and children, and discussed the importance of international treaties and covenants on, among others, protecting biodiversity and on intellectual property.

The report also highlighted several key areas in which United Nations agencies were very active, including sustaining the livelihoods of indigenous peoples; mother-tongue and intercultural education; and advocating for the human rights of indigenous peoples. The analysis also showed that culturally sensitive development policies might not be successful if standards of community control and participation were not respected. Development interventions could be detrimental if they were founded on preconceived assumptions, rather than on listening and integrating the concerns of local populations. Overall, she said that development with culture and identity would require serious intercultural dialogue, among indigenous and non-indigenous stakeholders.

REBECA GRYNSPAN, Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), speaking also on behalf of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), recalled that the 2004 Human Development Report, on "Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World", had stressed the need for people worldwide to be able to choose who they were without being denied opportunities for leading a full life. She said that cultural exclusion had many consequences, but it also made invisible the societal contributions of marginalized groups and prevented the transfer of knowledge, ideas and experiences.

Fostering cultural liberty, therefore, required policies that explicitly combated discrimination to ensure that contributions of particular groups were not overlooked. "This is not easy," she said, but there were innovative examples of actions that had bolstered cultural liberty, including through meaningful social dialogue, and explicitly redressing wrongs through targeted policy action, such as affirmative action. She said that better disaggregated data would help provide a better and more comprehensive snapshot of how progress differed across various groups. With that in mind, UNDP was working hard to provide frameworks for such data collection, trying to overcome the "tyranny of averages", because statistical averages often hid more than they showed.

Dialogue with United Nations Bodies, Specialized Agencies and Others

AMY MUEDIN, International Organization for Migration (IOM), said that globalization had facilitated the movement of indigenous peoples from rural to urban areas, which could be difficult for those needing to adapt their cultural practices to new urban locations. In a broader context, international and internal migration of indigenous peoples could dilute their customs and cultures or, on the contrary, make them more visible. The IOM was paying special attention to protecting indigenous migrants' identity and culture in delivering programmes, notably in Colombia, and by updating its 2009 guide: "How to Incorporate a Differential Focus for Ethnic Groups in Programmes and Projects". Poverty among indigenous peoples could be double that of non-indigenous communities in some countries. To change that, indigenous migrants were becoming more active, from a distance, in their places of origin. In their host countries, some had commercialized arts, crafts and medicines to ensure their survival. Programmes, co-sponsored by Governments and foundations, also promoted cultural exchange between communities of origin and host societies.

BIRGITTE FEIRING, International Labour Organization (ILO), expressed her commitment to making the rights contained in articles 3 and 32 of the Declaration a reality, including through the application of Convention 169, which, among other things, enshrined indigenous peoples' right to decide their development priorities. Ensuring their rights were respected required constitutional recognition, policy development and the allocation of resources. The ILO was developing the outline for a monitoring framework that would help avoid fragmented approaches, while making maximum use of existing institutionalized mechanisms. In addition, per an agreement outlining the

Forum's contribution to the application of Convention 169, a Forum member participated in the 2009 ILO Conference. The ILO was scaling up its long-term support to regional and national processes for implementing indigenous peoples' rights. In 2009, a regional programme in Latin America, and subregional programmes in Africa and Asia, were reviewed by indigenous experts who found that they provided valuable support and needed long-term commitment. That was an important message to the multilateral system and bilateral donors.

SHARON BRENNEN-HAYLOCK, Senior Liaison Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said biological and cultural diversity was integral for food and livelihood security. As such, the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems Initiative aimed to reinforce ecological and socio-cultural processes that had sustained agricultural practices of a given area, to empower smallholder communities. Giving an overview of last year's activities, she said FAO participated in the Forum's open dialogue, clarifying issues that influenced its work on indigenous issues. FAO was also elaborating improved methodologies for participatory land delimitation and titling. A draft policy on indigenous and tribal peoples was finalized in February and approved by one management level thus far. Among the newest developments was the reform of the Committee on World Food Security, in which indigenous organizations could now play a significant role.

Taking the floor next, Forum Member from Bolivia ELISA CANQUI MOLLO said living well should be the paradigm for indigenous peoples, one that was based on respect for and harmony with nature. How could one feel well when someone else felt unwell. She recognized Bolivia and Ecuador for taking a vision for living well into national planning systems, which could later set indicators for measuring life quality among various countries. Also, Millennium Development Goal reports and States' reports left out indigenous peoples' circumstances. "We are just not in these reports", she said. Data collection did not reflect indigenous peoples' realities, and it would be important for the plan of action for the September summit to incorporate indigenous peoples concerns. The Forum hoped for a favourable reaction for those responsible for Millennium Development Goals projects in the United Nations system.

BARTOLOMÉ CLAVERO, Forum Member from Spain, said the United Nations Development Programme report reminded him that the Forum often discussed how the theme should be presented. Articles 3 and 32 were added to this year's theme, as culture identity and development could be interpreted in a way that did not respect indigenous peoples' rights. In recent years, Human Development Reports, at least in Latin America, had not taken account of indigenous peoples' rights. It was one thing to be visible; it was something quite different to have people enjoy their rights, especially for development. By contrast, he appreciated the ILO report's reference to the Declaration's articles.

TONYA GONNELLA FRICHNER, Forum member from the United States, said it was important that indigenous peoples contributed to the work of the special representative on human rights and transnational corporations, to advance a special framework for indigenous rights. The three pillars in the report should include indigenous peoples. United Nations entities also should collaborate in research evaluation at local, national and international levels. Moreover, the Forum should adopt a code of conduct for those entities regarding research in indigenous communities. She agreed that the paradigm for development should be applied with the "living well" standard. Regarding the "tyranny of averages" outlined by the UNDP representative, she agreed that disaggregated data would help deal with that tyranny.

LUZ ANGELA MELO, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), said global demands for goods and services, and growing populations, were placing increased pressures on indigenous lands, territories and cultures. As culture, human rights and development were interlinked, advancing human rights would become an "empty exercise" if cultural diversity and identity were not taken into account. While progress towards the Millennium Development Goals had been encouraging, there were often wide gaps between national averages and indigenous peoples' situations. Intercultural human rights approaches to sexual and reproductive health helped ensure that those rights were respected among indigenous peoples. Maternal mortality was a complex phenomenon related to financial barriers, geographical isolation and cultural factors, and UNFPA supported sexual and reproductive health models that produced lessons for scaling up interventions at different levels.

The next speaker, TRISHA RIEDY, representative of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), highlighted that agency's Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacemaking Capacities of Indigenous Peoples' Representatives. That programme was created in 2000 to provide training for such representatives in conflict analysis, negotiation and

conflict transformation. It also provided information on United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms to further the promotion and protection of their rights.

She said that the marginalization from political and economic processes, and conflict over land and resource issues, were two of the main challenges indigenous people faced. The UNITAR programme, therefore, reviewed both rights-based and problem solving negotiation processes to strengthen the capacities of indigenous representatives to analyze conflict, and engage in negotiation and intercultural dialogue with Governments, the private sector and others to address the priorities of their respective communities. She added that, in its work, UNITAR actively sought the participation and contribution of indigenous women and they composed more than 40 per cent of the participants in the training programme.

WERNER OBERMEYER, representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), said the health status and living conditions of indigenous peoples, which were invariably lower than the general population, were of great concern to the agency. While some of the threats to the health and well-being of indigenous people were based on their lifestyles (such as tobacco use), most were due to the destruction of indigenous lands and cultural resources, on which they depended for food and spiritual sustenance. As for curbing tobacco use, the WHO sought to engage whole communities in a process of change. He urged the Forum to raise awareness about the problem of tobacco use by indigenous communities as a way of jump-starting much-needed discussion of the matter inside and outside the Organization.

YAMINA DJACTA, representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), said her agency's mandate included, among other things, working towards improving living conditions and ensuring adequate shelter for all, including indigenous people. The agency had also begun to focus on the situation of indigenous people in the urban context. It provided technical assistance and policy guidelines to public authorities to address the specific needs of indigenous people living in cities. To face the challenges of urbanization and improve the living conditions of indigenous people in cities, UN-Habitat looked forward to bolstering its cooperation with the Permanent Forum and indigenous civil society groups.

Taking the floor for the second time, Ms. SCHNUTTEGEN said UNESCO had developed two important standard-setting instruments, the first, the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage, included calls for the protection of knowledge systems. The second, the Convention to Protect and Promote the Diversity of Cultural Expression, explicitly mentioned indigenous people. It also highlighted their value to sustainable development for all. She noted that the International Year of Rapprochement of Culture also highlighted the importance of indigenous cultural experience.

ANDREA CARMEN, speaking on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Indian Treaty Council, discussed cultural indicators for food security, food sovereignty and sustainable development, which were completed in 2006 and allowed indigenous peoples to measure the effects of programmes, methods and technologies originating outside their communities. In 2007, over 450 indigenous representatives from 66 communities and five countries and territories had participated in workshops on implementing the indicators. The indicators had consistently provided a useful methodology to measure programme impacts. They also were a starting point for discussions that led to the development of community-based initiatives to strengthen traditional knowledge systems. A report containing the responses and an assessment of the "field testing" process had been submitted to the Forum. She asked the Forum to take note of that programme in its report on the session and recommend that the inter-agency support group, among others, apply the indicators in assessing programmes and policies that served indigenous peoples.

JEAN-PHILIPPE AUDINET, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), said development was a people-centred endeavour. That was particularly true for indigenous people facing discrimination or marginalization. The Fund's policy for indigenous peoples had been approved in September and its principles were in line with the Declaration. He called on the Fund's Member Governments to help the organization comply with those principles, as there were growing commercial pressures on land and resources around the world. In addition, the indigenous peoples' assistance facility financed self-development projects and, in 2009, had funded micro-projects in 33 countries. Indeed, development happened when people celebrated their diversity and shaped their future. By complying with the Forum's principles, the Fund, and others, could better support and protect the self-determined development of indigenous peoples.

DANIEL SEYMOUR, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said his organization had

recently taken stock of its work on indigenous issues, with case studies conducted in Congo and Peru. The study revealed that UNICEF's processes, methods and tools for managing programmes for indigenous peoples should be fine-tuned, and that staff should be trained. UNICEF would address those issues through the road map and action proposal developed during its consultation on indigenous peoples' and minorities' issues last year. Expressing commitment to implement the Forum's recommendations, he said UNICEF's regional office in Latin America and the Caribbean was studying the prevalence of suicide among indigenous youth. In May, that office would publish a study on migration and indigenous children in Latin America. UNICEF continued to incorporate a cultural perspective into its health policies. Education was a key area of UNICEF's programming and intercultural bilingual education programmes were directly related to this year's special theme, notably in Guatemala. On other issues, he said UNICEF supported programmes to promote birth registration in indigenous communities. He also urged indigenous children and adolescents' participation in decision-making that affected them.

Taking the floor a second time, Mr. DJOGLAF said the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity was working for an international conference on cultural and biological diversity for development to be held from 8-10 June. It would aim to adopt a joint programme of work between the Convention and UNESCO to advance understanding of biological and cultural diversity.

Rounding out the day, Mr. MAMANI, Chairperson and Forum Member from Bolivia, cited the importance of self-governance and the need to have free, prior and informed consent. There also should be observance of rights contained in ILO Convention 169. In that context, he thanked all who had cooperated with the Forum.

Bolivia's representative said that, on 20 April in Bolivia, his country's President would inaugurate the World Conference of Peoples on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth.

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