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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
Seventh Session  
1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Meetings (AM & PM)

### **BOLIVIA'S PRESIDENT URGES DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC SYSTEM BASED ON 'HOW TO LIVE WELL',**

### **AS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES OPENS TWO-WEEK HEADQUARTERS SESSION**

### **Offers '10 Commandments' to Counter World's 'Unbridled' Development Model; Secretary-General: Indigenous Have First-Hand Knowledge about Climate Change Impact**

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues opened its seventh annual session today, its first session since the United Nations adopted the historic Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples last September, and with indigenous participants aiming to voice concerns that, despite contributing little to the causes of climate change, they are among the first to face its consequences.

The special theme this year is the stewardship role of indigenous peoples in relation to climate change, biocultural diversity and livelihoods.

In the first-ever address to the Forum by a Head of State, President Evo Morales of Bolivia urged the body to develop a model for "how to live well", to counter an economic system where a thirst for wealth had overwhelmed a sense of respect for sustainable living. In a speech greeted by cheers from an audience comprising leaders of indigenous groups, representatives of Member States and officials from United Nations specialized agencies, President Morales proposed a set of "10 commandments" that would offer an alternative to "egoism, regionalism and the pursuit of luxury".

The President said the Forum members should call for an end to the current economic system, where, he said, fossil fuels were being pillaged to fuel luxury motor vehicles. The world should also denounce wars and rid itself of imperialism and unfair competition among nations. On that point, he said the Security Council should be democratized, and questioned the validity of having lifelong Council members with veto power over rotating members.

The theme of power continued in President Morales' fourth "commandment", which touched on the need to maintain full access to water for all, through an international convention that would guarantee the right to that life-giving resource as a matter of human rights.

Returning to the theme of moderation in consumption, he urged in an eighth commandment that people consume only what was necessary and locally produced. His ninth point centred on upholding unity in diversity, while the tenth and final commandment stressed the importance of living well, but not at the expense of others.

In a nod to the session's special theme on the stewardship role of indigenous peoples in managing the environment, President Morales centred much of his address on the notion of

Mother Earth as the wellspring of life, to be cherished and respected rather than treated as a tradable commodity. Indigenous peoples had the moral authority to shape a new model for living based on that philosophy, he stressed, having lived closely with Mother Earth and defended it for ages.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a video message, applauded the choice of climate change as the special theme, saying that indigenous peoples “can and should play a role in the global response” due to their accumulation of first-hand knowledge on the impacts of environmental degradation, including climate change.

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum, who also spoke today, said the Forum had yet to be invited by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to participate in its process to create a new climate change framework. Both the problem of climate change and its solution were concerns for indigenous peoples, she said, who -- according to a World Bank report -- contributed the “smallest ecological footprints” on Earth, but suffered the worst impacts from climate change and mitigation measures, such as the loss of land to biofuel production.

She added that, as stewards of diversity and with their ecological knowledge, indigenous peoples could significantly contribute to the development of sustainable measures and helping move the world towards low-carbon and sustainable communities.

On other matters, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz also noted the discussion to be held later in the week as part of the 2008 International Year of Languages, and that a discussion on the Pacific was being considered, because the region had now given rise to the phenomenon of “environmental refugees” forced to leave small island States that were sinking due to rising sea levels.

Léo Merores of Haiti, President of the Economic and Social Council, also spoke today, while Jomo Kwama Sundaram, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, delivered a welcome address on behalf of Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

Also speaking were Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary of Australia’s Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and Gunilla Olsson, Executive Director of the Action Plan of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Change Management, who spoke on behalf of IFAD President Lennart Båge.

By tradition, the Forum’s seventh session was opened by an invocation from Tracy L. Shenandoah, Chief of the Chief of Councils of the Onondaga Nation, Eel Clan.

During its dialogue with United Nations agencies in the afternoon, the Forum was addressed by the representatives of the following United Nations agencies, associated funds and programmes and intergovernmental organizations: International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; United Nations Development Programme; International Telecommunication Union; United Nations Population Fund; International Labour Organization; United Nations Children’s Fund; United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT); and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Also addressing the Forum were representatives of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; United Nations University; Food and Agriculture Organization; World Bank; and International Organization for Migration.

The Forum will reconvene at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 22 April, to continue its dialogue with indigenous peoples on the special theme “climate change, biocultural diversity and livelihoods”.

#### Background

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues today opened its seventh annual two-week session for a discussion in which representatives of indigenous groups were expected to focus on the themes of climate change, biocultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges. Other matters to be taken up over the two weeks included human rights, implementation of recommendations and the ongoing priorities of indigenous children and youth, the Second International Decade for the World's Indigenous People (2004-2014) and urban indigenous people and migration. Half-day events were to focus on the Pacific and on indigenous languages. (For background see Press Release [HR/4943](#) dated 18 April.)

### Documents

The Forum had before it the session's agenda (document E/C.19/2008/1) and the proposed organization of work (document E/C.19/2008/L.1). Also before the Forum were documents related to issues relevant to concerns of indigenous peoples.

A paper prepared by two Forum members concerned structures, procedures and mechanisms addressing the human rights situation of indigenous peoples (document E/C.19/2008/2).

Also before the Forum was a report of the international expert group meeting on indigenous languages (document E/C.19/2008/3).

Another document contained information received from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) (document E/C.19/2008/4) as part of reporting by the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations on issues related to indigenous peoples. Reports of other bodies in that category and with that document number include those by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)(Add.1), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)(Add.2), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (INFAD)(Add.3), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Add.4), the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Add.5), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (Add.6), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (Add.7) and the Forum's parent body, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (ECOSOC) (Add.8).

Further, information was received from other bodies of the United Nations system (Add.9), including from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Public Information, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Council of Europe and the Asian Development Bank. Also, from the Inter-American Development Bank (Add.10) and from the United Nations Forum on Forests within ECOSOC and the International Organization for Migration (IMO) in one document (Add.11).

Information was also received from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (Add.12) and from the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Intellectual Property Organization, again in a single document with up to the minute information (Add.13). There were also reports by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Add.14), the United Nations System in Ecuador (Add.15), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (Add.16) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Add.17).

Further before the Forum was information supplied in response to the Forum's recommendations by the Government of Ecuador (document E/C.19/2008/5). Other Governments responding similarly and under the same document symbol included those of Spain (Add.1), Mexico (Add.2), Bolivia (Add.3), Peru (Add.4), Colombia (Add.5), Russian Federation (Add.6) and Venezuela (Add.7).

A report was also submitted by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (document E/C.19/2008/6) concerning proceedings of the 2007 meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (Montreal, 17-19 September). And also before the Forum is an expert

paper on forms of education of indigenous children as crimes against humanity (document E/C.19/2008/7). The Permanent Forum's secretariat also reported on ongoing priorities and themes (document E/C.19/2008/8). And finally, the Forum has before it a report on indicators of well-being, poverty and sustainability relevant to indigenous peoples (document E/C.19/2008/9), as prepared by a Forum member.

### Opening of Session

The opening proceedings of the Permanent Forum were presided over by Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development.

According to tradition, the seventh session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues opened with expressions of gratitude from TRACY L. SHENANDOAH, Chief of the Council of Chiefs of the Onondaga Nation, Eel Clan. He gave thanks for everything that the Creator had intended for the Earth, and expressed hope that everything would be peaceful in the world. Thanks were expressed to "our Mother, the Earth", for carrying out her duties "to feed our people". He also acknowledged the maple as the "leader of trees", and gave thanks for the medicines that came from it. He gave thanks to the animals, each with their own duties, as well as the "three sisters" of all foods: corn, beans and squash. He gave thanks to water, the winds and the thunders; the sun and the "skyworld"; the stars; the "Four Beings" that watched over the world; and the Creator's messengers.

"Looking out for the peace, for the faces yet to come," he said, "is what we're working for."

Members of the Permanent Forum then elected by acclamation Victoria Tauli-Corpuz as the Chairperson for the session.

VICTORIA TAULI-CORPUZ, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, recalled that the theme for the Forum's seventh session was the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges in relation to climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods. She said a record number of over 3,300 peoples had pre-registered for the current session and, for the first time ever, a President of a Member State would address the Forum. With his appearance, Evo Morales Ayma, President of Bolivia and an indigenous person who cared about indigenous peoples, would inspire and strengthen indigenous peoples.

Further, she said, the adoption last year of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples was a major victory that would reshape the relationships between indigenous peoples, States and society-at-large. The Forum was explicitly mandated to promote implementation and a major focus of the session would be to discuss how the Forum would discharge the mandate.

Emphasizing the timeliness of the climate change theme, she said the issue had become a global priority in the past months. She had participated in the 2007 Bali process on an unofficial basis, because the Forum had yet to be invited by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. She hoped the current session would change that. Also, more information needed to be gathered on how climate change affected indigenous peoples. They contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions and made the "smallest ecological footprints" on Earth, but suffered the worst impacts from both climate change and mitigation measures under the Kyoto Protocol and the unregulated voluntary market. Both the problem and its solution were concerns for indigenous peoples, most importantly for their contributions in mitigating and adapting to it.

Climate change was the ultimate evidence of how unsustainable the dominant development model was, she concluded. It was also the strongest argument for why unsustainable consumption and production systems should change radically. As stewards of diversity and with their ecological knowledge, indigenous peoples could significantly contribute to the development of sustainable measures and the crafting of the path towards low-carbon and sustainable communities.

Turning to highlights of the session, she noted the discussion to be held as part of the 2008 International Year of Languages. She said the information contained in the documents as outcomes of regional meetings should be incorporated into interventions. A discussion on the Pacific was being

considered, because the region had now given rise to the phenomenon of “climate change refugees” or “environmental refugees”, such as indigenous peoples forced to leave small island States that were sinking due to rising sea levels. The session would also focus on the “crucial” implementation of previous Forum recommendations. Desk reviews and a website had been set up to facilitate monitoring of country reports. And, in another development, the United Nations Development Group had issued *Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues* to help country teams better integrate the priorities of indigenous peoples into programmes.

#### Secretary-General’s Video Message

Addressing the Forum in a video message, BAN KI-MOON, United Nations Secretary-General, said the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was meeting at a historic crossroad, with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples having been newly adopted. “You will work to translate the Declaration into a living document at the national and international levels,” he said. “As you do, you will promote the United Nations development agenda and its vision of development for all. This includes the poorest and most vulnerable, a group to which many indigenous peoples belong.”

He applauded the choice of climate change as the special theme, noting that indigenous peoples lived in many of the world’s most biologically diverse areas. Due to their accumulation of first-hand knowledge about the impacts of environmental degradation, including climate change, indigenous peoples “can and should play a role in the global response”.

He welcomed the session’s focus on the Pacific, and said the Forum was -- as appropriate -- paying close attention to the issue of indigenous languages, meeting, as it was, in the International Year of Languages. By protecting and promoting indigenous languages, it was possible to advance the dignity and human rights of indigenous people and preserve the cultural diversity of all humankind.

He said he looked forward to the Forum’s recommendations on all those important fronts.

#### Statement by President of Bolivia

EVO MORALES AYMA, President of Bolivia, said the Forum was to be viewed as a model for “living together” and was an extension of the decades-long struggle of indigenous peoples for equality and justice. It was also appropriate that the Forum focus on climate change and the role of indigenous peoples in tackling that problem, since indigenous peoples were human beings with the same rights and responsibilities as anyone else.

He noted that the indigenous movement had successfully organized itself to defend access to land and basic services, in the face of attacks and threats of extermination. That fight should continue for as long as needed. In the meantime, the Forum, along with similar bodies, could put forward alternative economic models to ensure the survival of indigenous peoples as they continued their quest.

In the context of finding solutions to environmental issues, including climate change, he said indigenous peoples had the moral authority to participate in those discussions, having lived closely with Mother Earth and defended it for ages. Indigenous peoples in Bolivia had “achieved the Presidency”, enabling it to proceed in the fight for justice and equality. It now fell to gatherings of indigenous peoples, such as the Forum, to work with other world leaders to encourage them to play their part.

He said indigenous peoples wanted to express “how to live well” within their vision of Mother Earth, which was the source of life. Living well was not possible under the current capitalist system, which sought to turn Mother Earth into a capitalist good. The conclusion had been reached in many circles that the authorities of many places were to be blamed for encouraging climactic factors that caused harm to peoples, which had brought floods and global warming. A conversation must be held with other communities on establishing a new model for living. World leaders must encourage more contact with indigenous peoples.

He offered a series of “ten commandments” that he thought should underpin the new model, beginning with the first: a call to end the capitalist system. The capitalist system was inhuman and encouraged unbridled economic development. The exploitation of human beings and pillaging of natural resources must end, as should wars aimed at securing access to those resources. Also, the world should end the plundering of fossil fuels; excessive consumption of goods; the accumulation of waste; as well as the egoism, regionalism and thirst for earning where the pursuit of luxury was taking place at the expense of human beings. Countries of the south were heaped with external debt, when it was the ecological debt that needed paying.

Second, the world should denounce war, which brought advantage to a small few, he said. In that vein, it was time to end occupation under the pretext of “combating drugs”, such as in South America, as well as other pretexts such as searching for weapons of mass destruction. Money earmarked for war should be channeled to make reparations for damage caused to the Earth.

Third, there should be a world without imperialism, he said, where no country was dependent upon or subordinate to another. States must look for complementarity rather than engage in unfair competition with each other. Member States of the United Nations should consider the asymmetry that exists among nations and seek a way to lessen deep economic differences. Moving along those lines, he said the Security Council -- with its lifelong members holding veto rights -- should be democratized.

Fourth, he said access to water should be treated as a human right, and policies allowing the privatization of water should be banned. Indigenous peoples had a long experience of mobilizing themselves to uphold the right to water. He proposed that they put forth the idea of forming an international convention on water to guarantee it as a human right and to protect against its appropriation by a select few.

Fifth, he said the world should promote clean and eco-friendly energies, as well as end the wasteful use of energy. He said it was understood that fossil fuels were nearing depletion, yet those who promoted biofuels in their place were making “a serious mistake”. It was not right to set aside land not for the benefit of human beings, but so that a small few could operate luxurious vehicles. It was also because of biofuels that the price of rice and bread has risen; and the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were now warning that such policies must be prevented. The world should explore more sustainable forms of alternative energy, such as geothermal, solar, wind and hydro-electric power.

Sixth, he said there should be more respect for Mother Earth, and the indigenous movement must bring its influence to bear in fostering that attitude. The world must stop thinking of Mother Earth in the capitalist sense -- which was that of a raw material to be traded. For who could privatize or hire out his mother?

Seventh, he stressed the importance of gaining access to basic services for all. Services such as education and transport should not be the preserve of private trade.

Eighth, he urged the consumption of only what was necessary and what was produced locally. There was a need to end consumerism, waste and luxury. It was an irony that millions of dollars were being spent to combat obesity in one half of the globe, while the other was dying of hunger. He said the impending food crisis would necessarily bring an end to the free market, where countries suffering hunger were being made to export their food. There was a similar case with oil, where the priority lay in selling it abroad, rather than domestically.

Ninth, he said it was important to promote unity and diversity of economies, and that the indigenous movement should put forth a call for unity and diversity in the spirit of multilateralism.

Tenth, the world should live under the tenet of “trying to live well”, he said, but not at the expense of others.

He said the best way forward lay in social movements, such as the indigenous people's movement, which would not fall silent until it had brought about change. He ended by greeting fellow South Americans in the room, acknowledging their role in the fight. In Bolivia, the provisions of the Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples had been made into law, and he expressed hope that other countries would do the same. He welcomed the attention, good or bad, he was receiving as a member of that movement, saying that perhaps it would lead to ideological clarity.

### Statements

LÉO MERORES ( Haiti), President of the Economic and Social Council, emphasized the important role of the Forum in implementing the 2007 Convention, which had been a major development for protecting and promoting indigenous peoples' rights. He said the Council was proud to be the body under which the Forum operated in that important task and encouraged the Forum to strengthen its coordinating role in relevant areas, in cooperation with other United Nations bodies such as the Forum on Forests and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Further, he said that, while the Forum's focus was on the vulnerable indigenous peoples of the world's countries and peoples, the outcome of its work affected other critical matters. For example, by focusing on climate change, the Forum was advancing the work of other bodies concerned with the issues involved. The Forum's work also related to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. And among the Forum's greatest strengths in contributing to other work was its ability to bring about consensus on difficult, sensitive questions and issues.

Welcoming the Forum, JOMO KWAMA SUNDARAM, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, speaking on behalf of Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs (who is scheduled to address the Forum on 1 May), said high interest and participation in the seventh session of the Permanent Forum testified to an increasing awareness of indigenous issues and evidence that it was fulfilling its mandate to make the challenges in the field more visible for policy action.

He also recalled the "historic adoption" of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and said he looked forward to hearing the Forum's recommendations on its follow-up under Article 24 [which provides that indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals].

He noted that the Forum's focus on economic and social development had spurred initiatives in the United Nations system, States and indigenous peoples' communities aimed at eliminating discrimination, exclusion and poverty. The United Nations Development Group's *Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues* was one such example. Inputs to the current session itself included cutting-edge reports, including one containing indicators of indigenous peoples' well-being, poverty and sustainability. Another was based on the Forum's expert meeting, held in the Russian Federation, on perspectives of relationships between indigenous peoples and industrial corporations. He said those inputs would further promote indigenous issues in the United Nations development agenda.

He pointed to the session's special theme, "Climate change, biocultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges", and the focus on indigenous languages and indigenous issues of the Pacific. They would, likewise, further the discussion of indigenous issues within the United Nations.

Thanking the Governments of Spain and the Russian Federation for hosting meetings of the Permanent Forum in the past year, he urged the international community to take action for the well-being of indigenous peoples, with their full and effective participation. He also thanked those Governments that had contributed to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues, which supported the Forum and its work.

BERNIE YATES, Deputy Secretary of Australia's Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, said the new Labour Party that had come into office last year in his country had moved quickly to implement key commitments in some areas relevant to the Forum's deliberations. In February, an apology had been issued to the Stolen Generations, the thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children removed from their families and communities. It was a historical day that acknowledged past injustices and, even more importantly, laid claim to a future that embraced all Australians.

On the issue of climate change, he said his Government was determined to play an active role in the solution. The Kyoto Protocol was ratified on the first day in office of the new Government. At Bali, Australia was active in launching a two-year negotiation on Kyoto post-2012. Domestically, the Government was committed to a target of a 60 per cent reduction in emissions by 2050. A newly developed strategy would assist the Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples to take advantage of carbon trading through abatement enterprises. Hundreds of new ranger positions would be created to work on protecting biodiversity in indigenous lands and waters. And, in line with the apology, specific targets had been set to close gaps between Australia's general population and its indigenous groups in the areas of health, education, employment and life expectancy.

GUNILLA OLSSON, Executive Director of the Action Plan of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Change Management, said she spoke on behalf of IFAD President Lennart Båge, who attached particular importance to the indigenous peoples. Over 300 million indigenous people worldwide accounted for 5 per cent of the global population and yet represented 15 per cent of its poor. Many lived in rural areas considered "marginal" for mainstream development. IFAD's mandate was to enable rural people to overcome poverty and hunger through investments. The Declaration adopted last year was a great achievement in validating the rights, identities, cultures and heritage of indigenous peoples. But, the true and lasting value of the document depended on a collective ability to translate noble words into substantive, sustainable actions, and there were challenges to be overcome.

The first challenge was poverty, she said, and its associated linkages to marginalization, dispossession, discrimination and lack of respect for economic and cultural rights. Another challenge was climate change, since so many indigenous peoples lived in fragile environments. On a policy level, indigenous peoples should be empowered to play a more active role in enhancing the resilience of their ecosystems. A third challenge was related to biofuels and the insecurity in land tenure caused by increasing pressures on global land resources.

To address those challenges, she said indigenous populations must be engaged as full and equal partners in development policies and programmes. The principle of free, prior and informed consent must be respected in design and implementation of strategies and programmes affecting indigenous peoples. And finally, indigenous peoples must continue receiving support through development projects and protection of their rights over ancestral land and territories. "Only then can we avoid what was referred to in a World Bank workshop last month as the last great land-grab," she said.

#### Presentations on Climate Change Theme

Ms. TAULI-CORPUS introduced a report she had co-authored with Forum co-member Aqpaluk Lyngé on the Impact of Climate Change Mitigation Measures on Indigenous Peoples and on their Territories and Lands (document E/C.19/2008/10). She said a great number of conclusions had been reached and had been included in four pages of recommendations. Notably, any climate change policy by any Government should take into consideration the rights of indigenous peoples. Trying to implement measures to assist them without getting their input was likely to damage their best interests, rather than help. Also, the Framework Convention on Climate Change should develop mechanisms to measure achievement of targets. The Forum should facilitate participation of indigenous individuals in regional and global climate change events. And finally, a report should be compiled on indigenous science concerning climate change for possible incorporation into broader measures and policies.

AHMED DJOGLAF, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said humanity had always been destroying the biodiversity, but that it had been systematically carried out in the past 50 years. Destruction of biodiversity went hand in hand with climate change. The destruction of forests and the resultant climate changes were a product of the fact that 80 per cent of biodiversity was located in forestland. Biodiversity was not restricted to the biological elements themselves and the time had come to address climate change in its full context relative to biodiversity. Biodiversity was not just an “energy” issue, but a holistic consideration of the Earth’s environment. Indigenous people were a leading force in bringing about that change. The diversity of the Forum membership proved that indigenous people could work together.

AQQALUK LYNGE, Rapporteur of the United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues, presented the study on the impact of climate change mitigation measures on the territories and lands of indigenous peoples (document E/C.19/2008/10). One of the report’s significant findings was that indigenous people wished to contribute to a solution to the challenge of climate change. Confronting that challenge, however, was not as straightforward as first thought; some mitigation plans did not work or were too slow to be enacted effectively. But, successful adaptation measures existed, though there were not many, he acknowledged.

He noted that indigenous peoples’ lives were affected by malaria, exacerbated by increasing temperatures worldwide; loss of biodiversity; shoreline erosion; permafrost; loss of habitats for animals and plants; and new species wreaking havoc on the delicate balance of nature. They were also affected by flooding and food insecurity. The impact of climate change was particularly damaging to indigenous peoples, including the supposed mitigations to climate change: for instance, land was taken without prior or informed consent, including for the purposes of developing biofuels. Indigenous peoples were left out of the process for addressing climate change, even though they were eager to share knowledge.

He said that, in Greenland, where he was from, the Arctic ice was melting at an unprecedented rate. The appearance of new species, disappearing species, thinning ice and unpredictable weather patterns were among other changes that had been spotted. Meanwhile, oil companies and shipping industries were simply waiting for the north polar sea route to open. Old securities precipitated by the cold war would soon be replaced by new ones, he said. Some countries had drawn lines on maps that had not yet been agreed to, including by those that had not agreed to the United Nations Law of the Sea. He expressed a fear that indigenous peoples would be caught in the middle. The establishment of an Arctic change focal point would be useful.

GONZALO OVIEDO, Senior Adviser on Social Policy, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), said it was difficult to measure the impact of climate change on smaller and more remote indigenous peoples. More work needed to be done on assessing damage using vulnerability factors and recognizing that vulnerability was a multifaceted phenomenon. It was measurable, in part, by comparing the degree of welfare prior to climate change. Addressing needs then took into consideration such factors as the “social capital” of communities, both those of the indigenous peoples and that of the broader population. Thus, to reduce the vulnerabilities of indigenous peoples, threats to their well-being must be reduced and their access to services must be increased, which translated into an increase in their social capital. Threats included such factors as uncertainty about their rights and lack of access to resources informing them of those rights.

CHARLES MCNEILL, Senior Adviser, Environment and Energy Group, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), said UNDP understood that indigenous peoples had much to contribute to the mitigation of climate change problems. At the 1992 Earth Summit, it was indigenous leaders who warned of climate change long before scientists and politicians reached consensus on the issue. The recent human development report, “Fighting climate change: human solidarity in a divided world”, concluded that effective multilateral mechanisms and good governance structures must be developed to tackle the issue, which, in turn, must respect the rights of indigenous peoples. UNDP would help implement the United Nations Development Group’s *Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples’ Issues* and would continue supporting participatory and advisory mechanisms in the context of UNDP’s “global human rights strengthening” programme.

He said that Bureau members of the Permanent Forum had met UNDP officials on 16 April to discuss how the two bodies might work together on issues such as climate change. UNDP would also undertake consultations with indigenous peoples on deforestation, as well as engage in community-based adaptation to climate change in 10 countries. It was also organizing a series of consultations on natural resource management, the results of which were to be discussed at a Global Dialogue at United Nations Headquarters on 22 April. Some time in 2008, UNDP would begin consultations with indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean on indigenous issues.

PHILIP CROSS, representative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), said his organization's mandate was to assist developing countries in implementing applications of information and communications technology for the benefit of the environment and sustainable development, as well as to develop guidelines on the technology and policy aspects of those applications. The organization was involved in developing a knowledge base and in becoming a strategic leader on information and communications technology and climate change. Conclusions based on the work of the previous year indicated that all countries could respond to climate change by a "process of adaptation" to its impacts and by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) to reduce the rate and magnitude of climate change. The capacity to adapt and mitigate depended on socio-economic and environmental circumstances and on the availability of information and communications technology. Many countries had limited capacities to make beneficial use of information and communications technology for environmental action.

He said his organization was making every effort to ensure the positive role of information and communications technology in relation to the environment. It was prepared to work with all stakeholders and was continually seeking to develop partnerships. There was need to assign the environment a more important profile in strategic planning initiatives at the national level and, in particular, in e-government initiatives, so that the use of information and communications technology for the environment was integrated into planning processes from the beginning.

SONIA MARTINELLI-HECKADON, Senior Programme Adviser, Latin American and Caribbean Division, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), said the agency's 2008-2011 strategic plan contained a commitment to help reduce the social and economic gaps between populations, along the lines of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The agency would also continue adopting culturally sensitive approaches in its work. So far, UNFPA had expanded its work on indigenous issues in Latin America by providing increased guidance to its country offices and engaging in partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) for better data collection. It would soon undertake to disseminate the Declaration in the areas where it works, and embark on training programmes for indigenous peoples, including for indigenous women leaders.

She said UNFPA had incorporated indigenous world views in its reproductive health policies and programmes, and was working to mainstream the concerns of indigenous women and youth. In 2007, UNFPA developed and implemented an intercultural reproductive health programme in Bolivia, Mexico, Panama, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam and other countries. In Ecuador and Mexico, UNFPA had developed good practices models on promoting sexual and reproductive health among the youth, including migratory indigenous youth. It promoted the use of data to address the needs of indigenous peoples and was currently supporting efforts to integrate such information in its censuses. UNFPA had submitted a report to the Forum on those topics.

She stressed the importance of policy dialogues between governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as capacity-building and advocacy that reached both types of actors. Through a detailed mapping of population and environmental interactions, UNFPA hoped to be better positioned to help mitigate the negative effects of climate change on indigenous peoples.

DJANKOU NDJONKOU, Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Office for the United Nations, welcomed the adoption of the Declaration and its complementary ILO conventions, but said that recent ILO research on including indigenous peoples in poverty reduction strategies showed hindrances and challenges in realizing rights. The United Nations system, Governments, indigenous peoples and development partners must build momentum to close the implementation gap

by initiating practical and coordinated long-term processes at the national level. The recent development of Guidelines for Country Teams on indigenous issues was an important step forward. A recent ratification of a relevant ILO convention by the Government of Nepal, with a consequent establishment of a task force for implementation, was another positive development. It had shown that the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights could serve as a framework for building an inclusive society.

NADINE PERRAULT, Human Rights Specialist, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said the agency's office in the Caribbean had organized a meeting to discuss the Declaration and to coordinate its implementation. UNICEF particularly welcomed the Declaration's non-discrimination provision vis-à-vis indigenous children, its provision on linguistic rights, and the provision on the protection of children from exploitation. Using the Declaration together with the Convention of the Rights of the Child would bring strength to UNICEF's overall work of protecting the rights of children.

She noted that the linguistic right of indigenous children was linked to the development of children and women. UNICEF had supported the Declaration's translation into 16 languages and was using indigenous languages in its communications materials, in general. It was currently advocating the use of indigenous languages in birth registration documents. The use of indigenous languages was seen as a strategy for improving social services, and was a key strategy for empowering indigenous peoples. In line with various ILO conventions, UNICEF was promoting the involvement of indigenous peoples in making decisions on programmes that affected them. It was likely that the agency's efforts in that matter would soon become a reference for other United Nations agencies.

On the stewardship role of indigenous peoples, she said that, although international concern on climate change had been growing, the close relationship between indigenous children and the use of natural resources had so far not been discussed. Sadly, climate change was likely to affect their way of life, resulting in a loss of identity and traditional knowledge. It was vital to begin studying the role of children as agents of change, but also as a group being adversely affected by such change. At the Bali conference on climate change, UNICEF had helped raise awareness of that issue. There was also a need to respond to the unfolding food crisis by ensuring that the needs of children were being met.

PAULA USKI, on behalf of Salvano Briceno, Director, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), said that indigenous peoples should be encouraged to build resilience to disasters by translating their traditional knowledge and practices into action. Simeulue Island, off the Sumatran coast, was an example of the effective contribution of traditional knowledge to saving lives. Therefore, only seven people lost their lives in the Indian Ocean Tsunami, compared to 100,000 on the mainland, thanks to the transmission of local knowledge from one generation to another. Surin Island in Thailand had a similar experience, where elders called for a hilltop evacuation when they saw water rapidly receding at the time of the tsunami. Such examples point to the huge potential for disaster risk reduction among indigenous peoples.

She said indigenous peoples' harmonious relations with nature and their environment and their sophisticated ecological knowledge of weather patterns, among other things, placed them in a leading position to guide world communities towards climate change adaptation practices. It was crucial to combine and balance indigenous knowledge with modern scientific information for mutual benefit. The ISDR Secretariat, in partnership with Kyoto University and UNESCO, was promoting disaster risk reduction and policymaking practices. A workshop on that topic was being planned in fall 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand, to which Forum members were invited.

HELEN ANDREASSON, Alternate Focal Point on Indigenous Issues, Housing Policy Section of the United Nations-HABITAT, said a number of her organization's activities contributed to the five main objectives of the Second International Decade. They included empowerment, development, rural-urban linkages, promoting civic engagement, social integration, participatory planning and management and gender mainstreaming. A global monitoring mechanism was being implemented with the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights to ensure adequate housing based on a set of housing rights indicators. Indigenous peoples' issues would feature prominently in the November World Urban Forum to be held in China.

JUANITA CASTAÑO, Director of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) Office in New York, said the participation of civil society organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations for an adequate address of environmental concerns was vital, particularly in the intergovernmental decision-making process when her organization developed its operational policies and work programme. Accreditation with the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum would be granted to any organization having a consultative status with UNEP. "Please do contact UNEP" for information on the accreditation process, she urged. "To get indigenous peoples' voices heard, they have to be present and participate." A UNEP policy specifically related to indigenous peoples had been developed and was being circulated in a continuing consultative process during the current Forum session. There would be a public consultation this coming Wednesday at 6 p.m. at the Church Centre.

TRISHA RIEDY, Manager, Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), said the Institute had long been training senior officials and United Nations staff in the field of negotiation, and had begun providing the same training to indigenous peoples since 2000. The decision to provide that service had been made on the request of indigenous peoples themselves and on the recommendations of United Nations special rapporteurs. More than 330 indigenous peoples from around the world had been trained, with the objective of strengthening their capacity to analyze conflict, to identify the needs and concerns of parties to conflict, and to engage in dialogue with partners to formulate solutions.

She recalled a statement by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan that, if the twenty-first century was the age of prevention, indigenous peoples must be involved in making decisions that affected them. Their exclusion would only lead to alienation and poverty, which in themselves were the roots of conflict. Enhancing their capacity for meaningful participation in the political process was one way to prevent violent conflict. A number of UNITAR graduates had played key roles in their Governments in calling for the adoption of the Declaration. UNITAR training was, therefore, contributing to the United Nations' efforts to increase the involvement of indigenous peoples at all levels. Indeed, pressing environmental concerns necessitated their engagement.

DOUGLAS NAKASHIMA, Chief of the Sciences for Society Section in the Local and Indigenous Knowledge System Programme Division of Science Policies and Sustainable Development in the Natural Sciences Sector of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), described the numerous projects his organization was carrying out related to indigenous peoples and climate change. He said a global Internet-based "Frontline Forum" on climate change and vulnerable communities was being launched, with a particular focus on the needs and concerns of indigenous peoples living in small islands, the Arctic, mountain zones, dry-lands, the tropics and other vulnerable environments susceptible to early impacts of climate change. It would offer a platform for indigenous and other vulnerable communities who had protested in Bali that they were excluded from climate change debates. The Forum would operate in three languages and would also address critical climate change issues, such as positive and negative effects of mitigation measures and the impacts of climate change on knowledge relevant to the conservation of biological and cultural diversity.

SAM JOHNSON, Senior Research Fellow, United Nations University (UNU), said the university's Traditional Knowledge Centre aimed to support and promote indigenous leadership at the international level, change minds about the importance of traditional knowledge, and provide a focal point for promoting research and training on such knowledge. A key pilot activity of UNU was the International Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change, in Australia. The Meeting addressed the effects of climate change on indigenous peoples, mitigations and adaptation measures, carbon markets and factors effecting indigenous participation in the climate change processes. At meetings such as those, the Declaration was used as the overarching framework for climate change policies that affected indigenous peoples.

He said UNU had also played an important role in the follow-up to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in the lead-up to the United Nations Framework for Climate Change Convention meeting in 2009, and in ensuring that indigenous assessments were included in that process. Also, because UNU had decided to explore the feasibility of establishing an Institute of the university at the Charles

Darwin University, he sought the support of Forum members to persuade the Australian Government to support that initiative.

REGINA LAUB, representative of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), said her organization had supported indigenous peoples over the past year in the areas of conservation and sustainable management of agricultural biodiversity and ecosystems. A globally important Agricultural Heritage Systems Programme had been established and pilot systems in various countries would implement improved conservation management approaches over the next seven years. Cultural indicators had been developed and land issues tackled in a number of regions. Regional platforms for indigenous peoples had been established in Latin America and Canada, while a high-level meeting on World Food Security had been held. The conclusion of those activities was that more needed to be done to protect biological and cultural diversity for the benefit of alleviating climate change and for the benefit of indigenous livelihoods. Collaboration with indigenous peoples could be a great importance in the effort. Personal commitment should be transformed into a universal one.

NAVIN RAI, representative of the World Bank, said the Bank's World Development Report 2010 would examine the consequences of climate change on developing countries. He expressed hope that its participation at the seventh session of the Permanent Forum would help the Bank to better formulate strategies and policies relating to climate change, and better design adaptation and mitigation programmes.

He elaborated five points relating to the topic that was already known to the World Bank: that indigenous peoples had the smallest carbon footprint, and that they had played a fundamental role throughout history in protecting the environment. Indeed, indigenous peoples managed 11 per cent of the world's forest lands and maintained, within their lands, 80 per cent of the planet's biodiversity. Indigenous communities had a system of rules and practices to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner, and possessed the knowledge to cope with local-level climate change. They also had cultural and political processes for dealing with the environment when processes became unsustainable.

He noted that coping with a warmer climate could impose a heavy burden on the poor, of which the indigenous peoples were the poorest. In addition, proposed programmes to mitigate climate change might inadvertently affect indigenous peoples' livelihoods and undermine their access to resources. Therefore, their active role in finding ways to mitigate climate change was important. The World Bank was working to bring together indigenous experts with climate change scientists to exchange knowledge and to formulate mutually beneficial solutions. He called on Member States to implement the provisions of the Declaration and to provide the necessary financial assistance to achieve the goals contained within it.

LUCA DALL'UGLIO, Observer of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), said three areas of his organization's work were relevant to indigenous issues during the past year. One was related to environmentally-induced migration and its relevance for indigenous people. Another was the Inter-Agency Support Group work in migration and still another was the growing better understanding of indigenous peoples' migration. The theme of climate change and indigenous stewardship had particular meaning in a migration context. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had noted, as early as 1990, that millions would be displaced by phenomena such as shoreline erosion and coastal flooding.

Indigenous peoples in remote areas faced more vulnerability and the necessary "environmental migration" due to climate change had brought world attention to the matter. For example, in response to massive flooding last year in Mexico, IOM had placed priority on the indigenous communities who had lost their homes. Cooperation with local municipalities had enabled recovery of lost property and the rebuilding of homes with a response team that was 80 per cent made up of the indigenous helping their own community members to ensure good communications in their vernacular and an effective needs-based response. He brought participants' attention to the recent IOM report *Indigenous Routes: A Framework for Understanding Indigenous Migration*, which was available in the Conference room and the IOM website. It looked at diverse examples and explored opportunities of indigenous migration and hoped it would act as a catalyst for future research.

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