

**Intervention to the Tenth Session of the  
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2011  
Global Indigenous Youth Caucus Statement - May 23, 2011  
Agenda Item 6: Comprehensive dialogue with United Nations agencies and funds-  
Comprehensive dialogue with the United Nations Children's Fund**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

On behalf of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, I welcome the launch of the UN Indigenous Peoples' Partnership initiated by International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). We are expecting further actions conducted by the Partnership to fully implement the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Partnership shall ensure the engagement and participation of indigenous youth and children in its work and processes.

Since the United Nations Children's Fund is the specialized agency of children, adolescent and youth, the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus strongly urges the Fund, in cooperation with relevant UN agencies, to take the following recommendations into serious consideration and translate the written words into action.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. We request the Fund and other relevant UN agencies, for example, UNDP, OHCHR, UN Programme on Youth, ILO, UNESCO and UNFPA to cooperate closely with the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus and the Greenland-Based International Training Center of Indigenous Peoples to conduct regional and international youth training programs. This is to build the capacity of indigenous youth advocates to effectively respond to current and emerging human rights challenges, including developing skills and knowledge of UN mechanisms and international human rights instruments for more effective lobbying and advocacy for the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

2. According to the Forum's recommendation made in paragraph 31 (a) of its first session, a report was requested on the policies, guidelines and programs of UN agencies to be prepared with regard to the ways in which they address the specific needs of indigenous children. We request the Fund to prepare such a report with an extension on how the UN agencies are implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with regard to indigenous youth and children.
  
3. In addition, we call for a specific international study on the situation of Indigenous Rights of Indigenous Children given the international pattern of disadvantage experienced by Indigenous children and young people and the importance of children in ensuring the perpetuity of Indigenous nations. This report should give special attention to States Parties implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment 11. Paying particular attention to the causal factors underlying breaches of Indigenous child rights, this report could achieve the following aims: 1) collect information on experiences of Indigenous children and young people to inform international and domestic measures respecting Indigenous child rights 2) promote awareness among Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples and organizations working with Indigenous children on existing human rights mechanisms relevant to Indigenous child rights including how Indigenous children can access these mechanisms 3) provide clear recommendations to ensure the full enjoyment of rights to States Parties and Indigenous peoples organizations and community members 4) recommend specific measures to enhance the monitoring of Indigenous child rights among UN human rights monitoring mechanisms and perhaps recommend additional monitoring mechanisms 5) recommend specific measures to ensure UN agencies are fully engaged to ensure the full enjoyment of rights among Indigenous children.
  
4. We again urge the Fund, as recommended by the Forum in paragraph 14 of its second session, and reiterated in paragraph 63 of its 5th session, to appoint indigenous youth as goodwill ambassadors to raise public awareness. These indigenous youth should have the appropriate knowledge and experience as to the specific needs of indigenous youth and children. We also request that all UNICEF ambassadors pay attention to the specific challenges faced by

indigenous children and youth.

5. The Forum has recognized in paragraph 9 of its second session the need for new indicators that specifically target problems particularly faced by indigenous children and youth and, including in the areas of education, health, discrimination, culture, poverty, mortality, incarceration, forced and exploitative labour and other relevant areas. We urge the Fund, as the lead agency on youth, with the participation of indigenous youth and children, to develop such indicators and share them with other entities of the UN system.
6. We understand that issues relevant to indigenous youth and children are addressed in a cross-cutting manner across the five major working topics within the Children's Fund. Accordingly, we strongly recommend the Children's Fund to appoint a person or body as Children's agency's focal liaison for indigenous children and youth who should coordinate the Fund's projects, policies, programs and actions relevant to indigenous youth and children, in order to have a comprehensive monitoring and overview mechanism. An indigenous rights specialist of indigenous origin should be appointed for this position.
7. We strongly recommend the Fund to allocate an intern position to indigenous youth every year, for the term of at least three months, to empower indigenous youths and provide knowledge and experience on the UN system and the work of the Fund. This intern must also be provided at least nominal financial support during the internship period. We also urge other UN agencies to consider the opportunity to such a set up within their own relevant departments to empower indigenous youths with practical knowledge, experience and skill.
8. We strongly urge the Fund to ensure that when conducting reports, studies and planning projects and programs on indigenous youth and children, the participation of indigenous children and youth in every process is guaranteed with their Free, Prior and Informed Consent.
9. The UNICEF document e/c.19/2011/7 talks mainly about the positive work of UNICEF in the developing southern countries. Nothing is mentioned about the North. We understand that most of the Northern countries are called "developed", but indigenous women and children still

remain to live in underdeveloped rural areas facing all the same problems as indigenous peoples of the south. Indigenous youth and women face high level of discrimination, lack of access to education, high level of poverty, suicides, alcoholism, lack of opportunities to learning their ancestral tongs, lack of education for young women on motherhood and sexual life, etc. Having this in mind we ask UNICEF to pay more attention to the indigenous youth and children of the Northern areas as well.

10. We strongly recommend and request the Fund to review the recommendations made by the Forum and Global Indigenous Youth Caucus in the previous sessions that are relevant to indigenous youth and children, especially those specifically referring to the Fund and greatly consider the urgency of indigenous youth and children as well as their power to assist them with the implementation of those recommendations.
11. We strongly recommend and request the Fund to coordinate their activities and operations with the UN Programme on Youth, the Secretariat of the Forum and the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, to ensure the participation of indigenous youth in the upcoming UN High-Level Meeting on Youth.
12. While climate change and environmental degradation is imposing tremendous impacts on indigenous youth and children, our voices are not reflected in UN decision-making processes and policies. We therefore strongly recommend and request the Fund to coordinate with other UN agencies and monitoring bodies working on environmental issues, including but not limited to UNEP, UNFCCC, and CBD to mainstream indigenous children and youth's role in the system.

To conclude this recommendation, I would like to restate that the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus has always been committed to working closely with the Secretariat of the Forum, UN agencies with specific mandate on children and youth, especially UNICEF, UN Programme on Youth, members of the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development.

Thank you, Madam Chair.