

High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly to be known as the World Conference on the Indigenous Peoples

First round of consultations organized by the President of the General Assembly

UN Head Quarters, New York

Tuesday 3 June 2014

Opening Asia region intervention

Delivered by Jebra Ram Muchahary, the Chief Advisor of the Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ICITP), India on behalf of the Asia Indigenous Peoples' Caucus

Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to speak in this august consultation.

This statement is made on behalf of the Asia Indigenous Peoples' Caucus.

We are pleased that the consultations on the outcome document and the remaining organizational matters for the high level plenary session of the General Assembly to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples have now taken place under your guidance and leadership.

The Asia Indigenous Peoples' Caucus welcomes the appointment of Dr. Mirna Cunningham and Mr. Les Malezer as two of your four advisors for this process and we look forward to working with you and your four advisors with the aim of securing a successful outcome for the high level plenary meeting.

The Indigenous Peoples in the Asia region have been engaging in good faith from the very beginning with the understanding that this process allows for the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in Asia and globally. Through our regional preparatory meeting, we came out with "A Call to Action from Indigenous Peoples in Asia to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples". This outcome document reflects the concerns of Indigenous Peoples in the Asia region.

Mr. President, Indigenous Peoples of Asia had actively participated in the Global Preparatory Meeting in Alta, Norway in June 2013 and fully endorsed the Alta Outcome Document on the WCIP.

We humbly submit this Asia outcome document for the consideration of states for the WCIP. We also fully support the Alta Outcome document to be fully considered as a draft negotiating document for the WCIP.

Mr. President, some of our key recommendations to the WCIP are as follows:

Asian governments to conduct constitutional and other legal reforms to incorporate the right of self-determination of Indigenous Peoples consistent with the UN Charter, UNDRIP, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and other international human rights standards. Further, states should establish competent implementation mechanisms, and allocate adequate resources to promote the effective implementation of this right.

We recommend, States to ensure that territories of Indigenous Peoples in Asia be free of state military interventions and that military bases or military training centres installed in indigenous territories be not established without their Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC).

We recommend, for governments in Asia to evolve effective mechanisms to trace the genuine root causes of unrest and address the problems through appropriate political solutions given the increasing trend of unrest and conflicts in Indigenous Peoples' territories.

As the culture and spirituality are the foundations of Indigenous Peoples' self- determined development, we recommend for States to discontinue discriminatory treatment towards Indigenous Peoples, and instead promulgate teaching of indigenous languages in mainstream and Indigenous Peoples' own institutions, and promote other inter -related cultural systems encompassing indigenous health, inter-generational transfer of knowledge, social norms and beliefs.

We recommend, States to ensure the participation of indigenous youth and women in decision-making processes affecting them, including through provision of adequate resources and space for such participation.

We recommend, the Asian States to continue dialogues, consultations and partnerships with Indigenous Peoples on ways and means to foster better relationships with them, and to enable indigenous citizens of those states to fully exercise their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in a truly non-discriminatory manner, free from all forms of discrimination whether based on race, ethnicity, religion, spirituality, class, caste, gender, age, disability or otherwise.

Finally, we wish to again refer to OP 10 of the Modalities resolution, which declares that the action-oriented outcome document should contribute to the realization of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, pursue the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and promote the achievement of all internationally agreed development goals. This will only be possible if indigenous peoples have full and effective participation in the process of drafting the outcome document.

Thank You. Gwjwnthwng Mr. President.