



United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

**Report on the fourth
session**

(16-27 May 2005)

**Recommendations Specifically Pertaining to
Indigenous Women and the Girl Child, adopted
by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

E/2005/43
E/C.19/2005/9

Recommendations adopted under item 5 Ongoing priorities and themes: follow-up to previous special themes: “Indigenous children and youth” (2003) and “Indigenous women” (2004)

(b) Indigenous women

106. The Forum emphasizes the unique contributions made by indigenous women within their families, communities and nations and at the international level in terms of possessing and transmitting intergenerationally a wealth of traditional knowledge on the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable environment management.

107. At the same time, the Forum expresses concern that indigenous women continue to be one of the most marginalized groups in many countries, being victims of serious acts of discrimination and flagrant violations of their fundamental human rights. In addition, globalization presents new challenges and problems for indigenous women in many parts of the world.

108. The Forum recommends to the United Nations system and States to implement the recommendations on indigenous women made in the report on its third session in the development of programmes focused on the goals of the Second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People¹ guaranteeing the involvement of indigenous women.

109. The Forum is pleased to take note of the goals accomplished until now by the Task Force on Indigenous Women, reported to the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality at its annual session in February 2005.

110. The Forum recognizes that:

(a) Gender equality has a central role in development policy with a focus on poverty reduction, human rights and the Millennium Development Goals, in particular economic, social, sexual and reproductive health and rights, including good governance and democratic institutions, and to the creation of a world where people live free from fear and want, in dignity and peace;

(b) The elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education requires an improvement in access, continuity, quality, and management of women’s education at all levels with cultural relevance.

Recommendations to Member States

Participation

111. Improve and increase indigenous women’s economic and social conditions through:

- (a) Expansion of employment opportunities;
- (b) Promotion of the professionalization of their traditional skills, arts and crafts;
- (c) Access to resources, including microcredit, new technologies and agricultural input;
- (d) Support the regional meetings of indigenous women and organize training on international, regional and national mechanisms.

¹ □ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 23 (E/2004/43-E/C.19/2004/23)*, paras. 3, 5, 13 (a) and (d), 14 (d), 31, 42 (c), 43 (a) and (b), 46, 63, 65, 87, 89 (a), (b), (g), (i) and (j).

112. Adopt measures that ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous women in implementation, follow-up work and monitoring of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals.

113. Ensure that indigenous women's expertise is reflected in all national and international development strategies and that indigenous women, in consultation with their communities and organizations, are part of the formulation and decision-making processes of sustainable development initiatives. Efforts towards gender equality should be integrated as part of States' investments in all of the Millennium Development Goals.

Capacity-building

114. Include relevant information on the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women by engaging indigenous organizations in the reporting process to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and other relevant human rights bodies, encouraging indigenous women through their organizations to become involved in the reporting process to the Committee.

115. Establish a fund for indigenous women to support capacity-building and their participation in meetings at the international, regional and national levels.

116. Foster the training of indigenous women in order to gain leadership skills to become community advocates and defenders for indigenous women's rights to achieve gender equity.

117. Combat, within an appropriate legal framework, and link with Millennium Development Goals, violence against women, including forced prostitution and trafficking of women and girls as well as domestic violence.

Access

118. Reinforce the investments in population and reproductive health which is crucial for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals — to reduce poverty, achieve universal primary education, improve maternal and child health, curb the spread of HIV/AIDS, promote gender equality, ensure sustainable development, and establish a strong partnership for development.

Recommendations to the United Nations system

119. The Permanent Forum welcomes the initiative of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) regional office in Mexico with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the creation of a regional inter-agency group on indigenous women, and recommends continuing support for indigenous women's issues and replication of the experience in other regions of the world.

120. The Forum recommends that UNIFEM, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization and UNDP support the first-world fair of indigenous women art makers, to be held in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, in April 2006, promoted by indigenous peoples from the north of Mexico.

121. Request the Commission on Human Rights to support the request that the Special Rapporteur on violence against women conduct a workshop/study on violence against indigenous women in coordination with the Permanent Forum and to report on progress at the sixth session of the Permanent Forum.