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Ongoing priorities and themes

Note by the Secretariat on ongoing priorities and themes*

Executive Summary

The present note is an overview of developments under the mandated areas of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues since its fourth session, as reflected in the contributions of the United Nations system and the activities of members of the Forum and its secretariat. Suggestions for consideration of the Permanent Forum are also included.

* The present document was submitted late in order to ensure the inclusion of the most recent information.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Since the end of the fourth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), a variety of activities of relevance to indigenous peoples have been carried out by the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, governments, indigenous peoples' organizations, other non-governmental organizations and civil society actors, members of the Permanent Forum and the secretariat of the Permanent Forum. In October 2005, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs invited written contributions from stakeholders on the follow-up to the fourth session and the preparations for the fifth session of the Forum. Contributions were encouraged along the following lines: (a) response to recommendations addressed exclusively to the particular agency, fund, programme or department or to governments; (b) response to recommendations addressed to one or more agencies, or to the UN system in general; (c) challenges encountered in the implementation of the Forum's recommendations; (d) other significant information regarding recent policies, programmes, budgetary allocations or activities regarding indigenous issues within the agency, fund, programme or department; (d) information and suggestions regarding the special theme of the fifth session; (e) name and contact information of the focal point on indigenous issues in the agency, fund, programme or department; and (f) list of conferences and other meetings under the agency's auspices regarding indigenous issues in 2006 and 2007.

2. As at 17 March 2006 written submissions had been received from 19 UN and other inter-governmental entities and four governments, namely the Department of Economic and Social

Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Fund for Development (IFAD), the Governments of Argentina, Denmark, Mexico and Switzerland and by nongovernmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, namely the Indian Law Resource Centre, Tebtebba Foundation, the Saami Council and VIVAT International. First reports were submitted by Argentina, Switzerland, the Commonwealth Secretariat and a United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Ecuador.

3. Following the fourth session of the UNPFII, the Economic and Social Council, at its session in July 2005, considered the report of the Forum and endorsed the draft decisions submitted for action by the Forum. In September 2005, the World Summit that convened at United Nations Headquarters included significant references to indigenous peoples in the Outcome Document.¹

4. The present note is a general overview of the contributions of the UN system and of the main activities of members of the Permanent Forum and its secretariat in promoting the

¹ A/60/L.1, paragraphs 46, 56 d to e and 127.

implementation of the Forum's mandate. Cross-references are made as necessary. **Throughout the text, recommendations appear in bold.**

V. DEVELOPMENTS UNDER THE MANDATED AREAS AND SPECIAL THEMES
OF THE UNPFII

A. Economic and Social Development, including MDGs

5. Most of the written contributions received are linked to economic and social development. The annual session of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) focused on UN system action at regional and country level and was able to identify gaps, challenges and opportunities for strengthening such action. Discussions revealed in particular a great need for capacity-building on indigenous issues within the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and government agencies, as well as the need for information about the Permanent Forum and its recommendations². Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Aguiar de Almeida participated in the IASG meeting which was convened by UNICEF and hosted by the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama City in September 2006. Among other things, **IASG recommended that UNCTs establish inter-agency thematic groups on indigenous issues at national level and use the Programme of Action of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People as a framework for common strategies and advocacy.**

² IASG Report, see E/C.19/2006/3

6. The United Nations Country Team in Ecuador set a good example of coordination by establishing an Inter-Agency Working Group on Interculturalism, dealing largely with indigenous issues and producing the first ever report by a UNCT to the Permanent Forum³. The Team found this working method useful for including an intercultural perspective in the CCA/UNDAF and making indigenous issues operational. It concluded that the international agenda, including the MDGs, offers a space for dealing with the intercultural perspective as a human rights issue, and that the Permanent Forum's recommendations are a guide for aligning the agendas of indigenous peoples, governments and the international system. **The UNCT Ecuador recommends that the Permanent Forum examine the experiences of coordination of the UN system at the national level in relation to indigenous peoples and that it formulate specific recommendations to strenghten this work.**

7. Following a recommendation of the Permanent Forum at its second session, a meeting was organized between representatives of the Forum, Mr Boychenko, Ms Tauli-Corpuz and Mr Langeveld, with some forty representatives of International Financial Institutions (IFIs). The meeting took place in November 2005 in Washington D.C., at the World Bank and gave the opportunity to Permanent Forum members to explain the mandate of the Forum, its main recommendations regarding IFIs and invite these institutions to engage with the Forum and to build capacity of their staff on indigenous issues.

³ E/C.19/2006/.. [UNFPA]

8. In November 2005 Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, Mr. Langevelt and Mr. Lynge attended a workshop organized by IFAD on lessons learnt from IFAD's work with Indigenous communities.

Desk Review of Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF)

9. The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum commissioned a desk review of CCAs/UNDAFs in ten countries in order to ascertain whether and how indigenous peoples are included. It is recalled that the most recent revision of the CCA/UNDAF Guidelines in 2004 included indigenous issues, following proposals of the IASG. The main observations and recommendations stemming from these desk reviews are the following:

Observations

- a) In countries with some positive policies towards indigenous peoples, UNCTs were able to include indigenous peoples, analyze their situations and identify their key development issues with relative ease. On the other hand, in the absence of such national policies, inclusion of indigenous peoples and their issues with similar vigour was not possible.
- b) OHCHR's involvement during the preparation of CCAs and UNDAFs has proven to be effective in terms of inclusion of indigenous peoples and adoption of a human rights based development approach.

- c) The issue of participation of IPs has not been highlighted, even in those CCAs and UNDAFs which have been prepared after the issuance of the 2004 CCA and UNDAF Guidelines. Participation of IPs should begin at the preparatory processes of CCAs and UNDAFs.
- d) Non-availability of ethnically disaggregated data still remains one of the biggest impediments to inclusion of indigenous peoples in CCAs, UNDAFs and country programmes and this problem needs immediate attention.
- e) In the analysis of situations of indigenous peoples, assessment of their capacities to participate in programme formulation and implementation as well as to claim their own rights is missing, probably because of time and information constraints. Nevertheless, the issue is of utmost importance and warrants priority and targeted action.

Recommendations

- a) OHCHR should continue its support to UNCTs in the form of fielding human rights advisors, holding regional workshops for UNCTs, government officials and indigenous organizations. UNPFII and OHCHR should collaborate in that regard.
- b) Given the significant lack of awareness and capacity on indigenous issues, the UNPFII and its secretariat should develop a practical toolkit, the primary users of which would be civil society, government and UNCTs as well as other donors at country level.
- c) The UNPFII should develop a basic set of indigenous peoples specific targets and indicators to which programme designers at country level can look for reference so that

they can develop their own indigenous peoples specific targets and indicators suitable for their respective countries.

- d)** The UNPFII should promote increased referral and advisory services for UNCTs regarding indigenous issues.
- e)** UNCTs should advocate and support programmes aimed at enhancing availability of ethnically disaggregated accurate and reliable data.
- f)** While assessing the situations of indigenous peoples, UNCTs should take into consideration their special social, political and historical contexts along with statistical data.
- g)** UNCTs should support and/or undertake programmes aimed at capacity building of the indigenous peoples so as to enable them to participate and contribute in programme formulation and take ownership of programme implementation.
- h)** UNCTs should designate focal points on indigenous issues.
- i)** UNCTs should form technical working groups on indigenous issues which would comprise indigenous peoples, other parts of civil society, government, bilateral and multilateral donors, and UN agencies.
- j)** UNCTs should solicit more advice and support from UNPFII and OHCHR.

Monitoring the MDGs: desk review of MDG country reports

10. In an effort to provide to the Forum a basic overview of whether and how indigenous issues are taken into account in the MDGs processes, the SPFII has continued to conduct desk

reviews. Twenty MDG reports (MDGRs) were reviewed in 2005. Some of the conclusions and recommendations from this review are highlighted below:

- a) Over 80% of the MDGRs surveyed do not sufficiently include indigenous peoples.
- b) Most of the reports do not include indigenous peoples' organizations either in the collection of information for the report, or in the planning for future interventions to target marginalized groups for assistance.
- c) Although some countries in one degree or another mention indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities either in relation to specific goals or targets, they do not mention any targeted specific interventions addressed to them, nor any efforts towards their full and effective participation. In the context of the MDGs, free, prior and informed consent should apply not only to land development initiatives, but all development initiatives focused on improving the lives of indigenous peoples.
- d) Most of the reports do not refer to indigenous peoples directly, but use different terminology, such as regional or rural disparities, to express disproportionate development, whereby often these regions and/or rural settings correspond to indigenous lands and territories.
- e) While some of the reports mention the ethnic diversity of the countries and bring up indigenous peoples as marginalized and in need of targeted interventions, none of the reports disaggregates data regarding the MDGs and indigenous peoples. Therefore the realities of indigenous peoples and the MDGs are most likely obscured. More focus on data disaggregation is indispensable for the future of the MDGs' success within countries with indigenous and marginalized populations.

- f) When indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs) are mentioned as being consulted in the production of the report, it would be useful, in future reports, for the authors to provide examples of good practices in that regard to underline the importance of this process.
- g) The effective participation of indigenous peoples in environmental programmes can contribute to conservation and development. Namibia's example of setting up conservation areas whereby the indigenous peoples of that area are the conservationists and also the leaders of ecotourism, provides a good example of how the state can simultaneously protect the environment and foster the development of the indigenous peoples.
- h) Both developed and developing countries should do more to include indigenous peoples as part of Goal 8.** As it is, none of the MDGRs reviewed referred to indigenous peoples in the context of meeting Goal 8.
- i) Governments with indigenous peoples should incorporate the issues and challenges specifically faced by indigenous peoples directly into the framework of the MDGR by: (a) including indigenous peoples into the context of the overall report; (b) including indigenous peoples in the context of meeting each specific goal; (c) including indigenous peoples in the planning of the overall report and each individual goal; (d) including indigenous peoples' effective participation in the planning process of future interventions, as well as in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects that will directly or indirectly affect them.**

11. **The challenges encountered in the inclusion of indigenous issues in CCA/UNDAF, as well as in MDG country reports require special attention by the Permanent Forum.** The need for capacity-building within the UN system, including country teams, as well as government and indigenous organizations to participate effectively in these processes has been repeatedly underlined, including by the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. **The Forum may wish to promote special measures so that programmatic instruments, especially MDG reports and PRSPs, as well as CCAs/UNDAFs, will include indigenous peoples. Important recommendations in that regard are included in the reports of the IASG and the International Expert Workshop on MDGs Indigenous Participation and Good Governance** which took place in January 2006, following a decision of the Forum and the Economic and Social Council⁴

B. Environment

12. Environment, one of the substantive mandated areas of the UNPFII, includes a number of important related issues, such as conservation, traditional knowledge (TK), access and benefit-sharing (ABS), forests, climate change and environmental sustainability which also relates to Goal 7 of the MDGs. The processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), climate change and the UN Forum on Forests are among the most relevant in this field. Linking poverty and conservation is an area of growing concern and activity.

⁴ E/C.19/2006/... Papers presented at the Workshop are on www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii .

Participation of UNPFII Members at relevant meetings

13. Mr. Langeveldt and Mr. Tamang participated in the symposium “Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity” in Tokyo, Japan, 30 May-2 June 2005, co-organized by UNESCO FAO, United Nations University, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) and the Secretariat of the UNPFII (SPFII), in cooperation with the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The symposium was attended by nearly 80 participants and consisted of nine sessions. The SPFII and SCBD organized a session on “Protective Measures for Sacred Sites in the Context of *Akwé: Kon* Guidelines”⁵

14. A Technical Workshop on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, 21 – 23 September 2005, Panama City, Panama, was organized in response to a recommendation of the Permanent Forum at its fourth session and hosted by the UNICEF Regional for Latin American and the Caribbean. The workshop was attended by twelve indigenous experts and eight UN entities. During the workshop, participants exchanged information and extensively discussed ways on how different UN entities working on traditional knowledge can better integrate a more collaborative, complementary and holistic approach to traditional knowledge in order to enhance understanding of indigenous concerns and ways to address them⁶.

⁵ UNEP/CBD/WG8j/4/INF/4

⁶ E/C.19/2006/2. Papers presented at the Workshop are on www.un.org/esa/socden/unpfii.

15. Mr. Tamang participated at the CBD Working Group on Article 8(j) & the one on Access & Benefit Sharing, 26-31 January 2006, in Granada, Spain. The main issues from these meetings included the need for collaboration and sharing of negotiations between the two working groups of Articles 8(j) and Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) as well as a need to avoid duplication of efforts of relevant international organizations (WIPO, WTO) on potential elements in the development of sui generis systems for protecting Traditional Knowledge. Indigenous participation in the main CDB processes related to Article 8j and Access and Benefit-sharing is a major priority.

16. In February 2006, Mr. Sulyandziga participated at the session of the UN Forum on Forests in New York, following a recommendation of the UNPFII.

17. Mr. Aguiar de Almeida and Mr. Tamang attended the Convention on Biological Diversity, Eighth Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP8), 20 – 31 March 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil.

Other relevant activities

18. UNESCO has reported on a number of issues relating to the environment including⁷. UNESCO's Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) initiative as well as two publications, "Reef and Rainforest: An Environmental Encyclopedia of Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands" and "Water and Indigenous Peoples".

⁷ E/C.19/2006/..

19. Since the fourth session of the UNPFII, the Secretariat of the Forum was involved in three environment related meetings:

- Poverty and Conservation Learning Group meeting, held at the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Group Centre, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 12 – 13 December 2005. The meeting highlighted, among other things, that the majority of donor agencies did not see a significant link between biodiversity conservation and their mission of poverty eradication and that indigenous organizations believe that conservation can cause or exacerbate poverty in some cases, e.g. where indigenous peoples have been evicted from their territories and lands to make way for conservation parks.
- Tsleil-Waututh International Gathering: Indigenous Perspectives on Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge, Vancouver, Canada, 25 February to 2 March 2006. The meeting provided an opportunity for elders and community members to become involved in issues discussed at the global level in relation to TK and genetic resources.

20. Indigenous peoples' participation is still a high priority in the environment area particularly within the UN system. Better coordination is required of issues such as traditional knowledge, access and benefit-sharing, sui generis systems and linkages between conservation and poverty eradication.

21. Possible recommendations that the UNPFII could consider are:

- **Support for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in the CDB, UNPFF, Climate Change and other environment-related bodies, in all levels of discussion, decision-making and implementation, and recommending that the necessary funding be provided to guarantee such participation as well as build the capacity of indigenous peoples.**
- **Support for the work of the UN Framework on Climate Change in regards to in-session workshops, including Indigenous expert meetings that facilitates the discussion of the effects of climate change on Indigenous Peoples. Particular themes that could be addressed include specific impacts on fragile and vulnerable ecosystems, the interconnection between climate change and poverty, the impact of climate change indigenous knowledge and traditional practices.**
- **Consider the impact of conservation on indigenous harvesting practices.**
- **Examine the issue of sui generis regimes as a means for protecting indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge**
- **Consider the linkages between conservation and poverty eradication.**
- **Consider becoming a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests within the United Nations Forum on Forest.**

C. Education

22. The mandate and work of UNICEF and UNESCO are crucial in the global efforts to achieve the MDG 2, namely universal primary education. Both agencies have been carrying out extensive work on education, including activities of relevance for indigenous peoples. The important role of mother tongue and intercultural education have been widely recognized as guiding principles in the promotion of indigenous children's primary education and many initiatives at national level are in the process of implementation, as for example in Mexico. It is encouraging that UNESCO has been developing a position paper and a database on intercultural education and that UNICEF has been strengthening efforts to promote indigenous girls' education in several Latin American countries⁸.

23. Mr. Dodson participated in the Fifth World Indigenous Education Conference in November 2005 in Hamilton, New Zealand, and was a keynote speaker at the panel on "Education for All and MDG 2: universal achievement of primary education" organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the SPFII. On numerous occasions, the Forum stressed that primary education for indigenous children should be sensitive to indigenous cultures, histories and values; it should be in children's mother tongue at least for early learning, and it should be bilingual and inter-cultural to prepare the future of children.

24. At the Workshop on Partnership Visions for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People co-organized by the Greenland Home Rule Government and the Permanent Forum in Nuuk, Greenland, in February 2006, much discussion focused on partnership-building

⁸ For the reports of Mexico, UNICEF and UNESCO see E/C.19/2006/.., E/C.19/2006/.. and E/C.19/2006/.. respectively.

with indigenous peoples in the field of education. **It was recommended that the Programme of Action of the Decade and the rights-based approach should be the framework in partnership building in this area⁹.**

D. Health

25. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz paid an official visit to WHO on 25 November 2005 in Geneva, Switzerland, and met with the Director of the Office of the Director-General of WHO as well as a number of senior officials of different departments relevant to indigenous issues. Matters of mental health, suicide and substance abuses, HIV/AIDS, traditional medicine, MDGs, diabetes, tobacco and policy were discussed.

26. Some challenges faced by WHO in addressing specific health issues of indigenous peoples were pointed out: collection of data based on ethnicity, activities of regional offices in the field of traditional medicine, specific indigenous programs on HIV/AIDS, diabetes and tobacco, possible advantages and/disadvantages of having an organizational policy on indigenous peoples.

27. On the same occasion, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz paid a courtesy visit to UNAIDS, during which she met with the Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS. As a result of this visit and in response to recommendation 136 of the Forum at its fourth session, UNAIDS has sought to

⁹ For the Nuuk workshop report, see Annex of E/C.19/2006/...[Denmark]. For papers presented at the workshop, see

bring more visibility to the issue of indigenous peoples and HIV/AIDS by presenting its first report to UNPFII in 2006. The report is in the form of an issues paper which broadly maps out a number of challenges in addressing HIV/AIDS in indigenous communities.

E. Culture

28. Mr. Langeveldt and Mr. Tamang attended international symposium “Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity: the role of sacred natural sites and cultural landscapes”, co-organized by UNESCO, United Nations University, IUCN, FAO, SCBD and SPFII. References to indigenous peoples’ sacred sites and their protection were made in the final declaration of the symposium¹⁰.

29. In February 2006, UNESCO organized an international workshop on cultural resource mapping in Havana, Cuba, in the context of a regional meeting on “New Perspectives on Cultural Diversity: The Role of Communities”. Ms. Lux de Coti represented the Forum. As the representative of Guatemala in UNESCO’s Executive Board, Ms. Lux de Coti also participated in relevant meetings for the adoption of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

30. UNESCO, as lead organization in the field of culture, has continued its work on standard-setting and on operational programmes relating to cultural diversity and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. The information from UNESCO to the fifth session of the Permanent

www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii.

Forum provided an extensive account of the variety of activities undertaken by UNESCO in relation to indigenous peoples. With a view to developing sustainable partnership with indigenous peoples in all areas of UNESCO's work, the Forum **may consider recommending to UNESCO to establish an institutional partnership with indigenous peoples so that they can fully participate in the monitoring mechanisms of UNESCO's conventions which are relevant to indigenous peoples, such as the Convention on the Promotion and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the two conventions on cultural heritage, tangible and intangible.**

F. Human rights

31. Members of the Forum have been actively involved in a series of activities on human rights. Mr. Langeveldt addressed the 38th session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The engagement of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and its Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities with the Forum will certainly be beneficial for Africa.

32. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Littlechild participated in the Expert Seminar on "Constitutional Reforms, Legislation and Implementation of Laws regarding the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" organized by University of Arizona College of Law in Tucson to support the annual thematic research work of the Special Rapporteur.

¹⁰ UNEP/CBD/WG8j/4/INF/4

33. Mr. Aguiar de Almeida, attended a symposium in Belem, Brazil, on voluntarily isolated peoples of Amazonia and the Gran Chaco region of South America. An International Alliance for the Protection of Isolated Indigenous Peoples was convened by organizations attending the symposium and the Belem Declaration on Isolated Indigenous Peoples was issued on 11 November 2005.

34. From the contribution of OHCHR to the fifth session of the Forum¹¹, it is encouraging to note that the human rights treaty bodies continued to pay increased attention to indigenous peoples in their concluding observations after the examination of State party reports.

Furthermore, the Committee on the Rights of the Child continued to work towards the drafting of a general comment on indigenous children, following the Committee's thematic discussion on this topic in 2003. Joint urgent appeals were sent by several special rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights on specific human rights situations of indigenous peoples worldwide. **The Forum may wish to consider starting a dialogue with human rights treaty bodies and special procedures of the new Human Rights Council, in cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, with a view to seeking support to build the capacity of indigenous peoples and their organizations to better utilize these mechanisms for the protection and promotion of their rights.**

35. In view of the establishment of the Human Rights Council in March 2006, the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz addressed a letter, on behalf of

¹¹ E/C.19/2006/..

the Forum, to the President of the General Assembly and the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights saying: *“At this moment of institutional change, on behalf of the Permanent Forum I wish to convey, through Your Excellencies, to the members of the General Assembly and of the Commission on Human Rights the strong support of the Permanent Forum for an enhanced substantive focus on the human rights of indigenous peoples in the new Human Rights Council. “*

G. Awareness raising and information

Awareness-raising events

36. At the 58th Annual Department of Public Information (DPI)/NGO Conference¹², Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, participated at a high-level panel on building partnerships and highlighted the establishment of the Permanent Forum as one of the best global expressions of partnership between indigenous peoples, governments, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs and the academic community.

37. At the Commemoration of the International Day of the World’s Indigenous People¹³ at United Nations Headquarters in August 2005 a panel discussion was organized entitled “The Cause of Indigenous Peoples is Ours” and the new film produced by SPFII, “Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations”, was screened. A cultural event was also organized, messages

¹² Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnership and Renewal, Final Report, <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/annualrep05.pdf>

for the Day issued by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Coordinator of the Second International Decade, the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum and indigenous performers participated at the event.

38. During the World Summit on Information Society, held from 13 to 18 November 2005 in Tunis, SPFII participated at an event on a feasibility study for the creation of a Virtual Permanent Forum that would make the Forum's work more accessible to communities using information and communications technology.

Bartolome de las Casa Award

39. On 19 December 2005 it was announced that the 15th Bartolome de las Casas Award¹⁴ of the Spanish Government was awarded to Ms. Lux de Coti. At the same time, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues received an honorific mention of recognition as a multilateral body that guarantees the presence and voices of indigenous peoples in the UN system.

Logo competition for indigenous children and youth.

40. In order to promote further knowledge of the Forum and the UN among indigenous children and youth, at its Second Session the Forum decided to organize an indigenous youth art

¹³ A/RES/49/214

¹⁴ <http://www.casamerica.es/programacion/premio.jsp>

competition for the design of a logo for the Forum. The SPFII received a total of 148 entries from around the world.

Material produced by SPFII

41. The SPFII in cooperation with UNDPI prepared the poster of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The painting for the poster is a contribution of Mr. Carlos Jacanamijoy, an Inga artist from Colombia.

42. The SPFII, in cooperation with UNDPI, produced the Indigenous Youth Brochure "Speak Up", in English, Spanish, French and Russian. The brochure describes how indigenous youth can get involved in the Permanent Forum and is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html>

43. The SPFII annually produces four internal newsletters addressed to the UNPFII members as well as four public newsletters in English. After the IASG meeting held in Panama, UNICEF's country office of Venezuela offered its cooperation for the informal translations into Spanish. The newsletter now includes some news from field offices. The public newsletter is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/newsletter.html>

44. The SPFII produced a 30-minutes film on "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations", in French, English and Spanish, for distribution to UN country offices and governments with the

purpose of promoting integration of indigenous issues in their work and providing general information on the UNPFII.

45. The SPFII in cooperation with UN Radio/Spanish Radio Section produced five radio spots for public service announcement on MDGs, using indigenous people's voices and music. It is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/es/multimedia.html>

46. The new website of the SPFII launched in March 2006 is an important information and communication tool.

H. Promotion of integration and coordination

Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG)

47. As mentioned in I.A. above, UNICEF chaired and hosted the annual meeting of the IASG in 2005. The Fondo Indígena participated at the IASG for the first time and the Commonwealth Secretariat joined in February 2006, thus bringing the total number of IASG members to twenty-nine. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Aguiar de Almeida participated at the meeting as well.

48. Some important recommendations included: **1) building capacity within UN Country Teams on indigenous issue; 2) appointing focal points on indigenous issues in order to form an inter-agency group at the regional level; 3) establishing an inter-agency readers'**

group for the review of draft CCA/UNDAF documents; 4) requesting the UN Development Group to distribute the report of the IASG to regional directors of UN agencies in other regions with a view to initiating similar processes; and 5) creating inter-agency thematic groups on indigenous issues within UN country teams to follow up on the recommendations of the Permanent Forum once a year.

49. SPFII was also involved in coordinating an international workshop on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, mentioned under I.B. above¹⁵.

United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

50. In order to promote integration of indigenous issues in the UNDG, including at the operational country level, SPFII participates in select UNDG meetings, namely the UNDG Support Group, the UNDG Programme Group, the Working Group on Capacity Development, the Task Force on Civil Society, the Task Force on Gender and the Task Force on Non-Resident Agencies. SPFII sees the conceptual and coordination efforts through UNDG as significant for the integration of indigenous issues within the UN system, given the fact that most development agencies, funds and programmes as well as departments participate in the UNDG.

DESA's Intra-Departmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues

¹⁵ E/C.19/2006/2

51. The main achievement of DESA's Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues since the fourth session was the design and adoption of the "Framework of DESA technical cooperation programs in countries with Indigenous Peoples". This Framework is to be used as a technical capacity-building tool in the formulation and implementation of activities of DESA's technical cooperation programs. The Framework is structured into four main sections: identifying indigenous peoples in diverse contexts; participation and free, prior and informed consent; collection and disaggregation of data; and indigenous women.

Strengthening of Local Governments with Indigenous Authorities

52. As a result of the work of DESA's Intradepartmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues, SPFII and the Division of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) are co-managing an interdivisional project, on issues related to institutional capacity of local governments led by indigenous authorities. At the invitation of the Government of Ecuador, SPFII and DPADM organized, in Quito, Ecuador, a consultative meeting with indigenous leaders attended by twenty indigenous leaders from local governments, indigenous authorities from the provincial level and representatives of indigenous organizations working at community, regional and national level. The main goal of the project is the empowerment of communities in municipalities with indigenous authorities through institutional capacity building.

I. Indigenous children and youth

Ibero-American Meeting on the Rights of Indigenous Children and Adolescents

53. Indigenous leaders and 80 indigenous children and adolescents from 17 Latin American countries, Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari, several UN agencies and representatives from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) participated in the Ibero-American Meeting on the Rights of Indigenous Children and Adolescents, from 7 to 8 July 2005, in Madrid, Spain. Her Majesty Queen Sofia of Spain also participated in the meeting. The meeting was co-organized by the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, with the assistance of AECI and the UNICEF National Committee in Spain. Issues raised during the meeting included the necessity of a UNICEF policy on indigenous children and youth, the creation of national indigenous youth and children forums, the importance for indigenous youth and children of knowing and using international treaties and human rights procedures, development with identity as an indispensable approach to achieve MDGs, capacity building and the inclusion of gender perspective. Areas highlighted for priority attention included migration, armed conflict, lack of participation, health and education basically and culturally inappropriate, environmental degradation, unemployment, unregistered births.

Youth Assembly

54. SPFII addressed the Youth Assembly, on 4 August 2005 at United Nations Headquarters. Around 200 young people attended the session, where the audience also received words from

an indigenous Quechua Elder from Peru, who expressed his vision on how young people can seek a better world for all.

Website section on youth

55. The SPFII created a special website section on indigenous youth and children www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/children.html.

Youth brochure

56. The Secretariat of UNPFII released a brochure on Indigenous Children, Youth and the Forum, which is available in English, Spanish, French and Russian.

UN Youth Unit

57. SPFII is closely working with the Youth Unit/ DSPD/DESA to support and promote indigenous youth participation at the Forum's session.

J. Indigenous women

Task Force on Indigenous Women: compilation of case studies

58. The Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE) was established in 2004 and is composed of 15 UN entities and chaired by SPFII. In 2005-2006, the Task Force collected good practices and lessons-learned from the work of the UN system with indigenous women. The collection of case studies “The UN's work with indigenous women” contains 18 cases submitted by CBD, FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNDP, UNFPA and UNIFEM about their work with indigenous women in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Task Force intends to publish this collection once it is finalized and disseminate it widely so that it may serve as a practical tool for future work of the UN system and other organizations engaging with indigenous peoples. The compilation appears at

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/IANGWE_indigenouswomen_mar3.pdf

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

59. During the 50th Session of the CSW, the official panel for the commemoration of the International Women’s Day, on 8 March 2006, included Ms. Noeli Pocaterra, President of the Permanent Commission of Indigenous Peoples National Assembly, Venezuela. SPFII co-sponsored, jointly with MADRE and the International Indigenous Women Forum (FIMI), a side event on “Violence against Indigenous Women”. SPFII also participated in a panel on "Opportunities and Challenges for Women in the Americas" organized by UNIFEM/LAC and the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations.

Gender and Statistics

60. Ms. Kokajev attended the VI International Meeting on Gender Statistics “from Beijing to the Millennium Development Goals”, from 27 to 29 September 2005, in Aguascalientes, Mexico. UNIFEM, the National Institute of Statistic, Geography and Informatics and the Women’s National Institute organized this event. Ms. Kokajev addressed relevant recommendations adopted by the Forum at its third and fourth session linking indigenous women and data collection and disaggregation.

Second Meeting of UN Agencies and Indigenous Women representatives of Central America and Mexico

61. From 21 to 23 June 2005, Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari participated in the Second Meeting of UN Agencies and Indigenous Women representatives of Central America and Mexico organized by the Inter-Agency Working Group on Gender of Mexico, UNIFEM Mexico, FIMI and the Mexican National Commission for Indigenous Peoples. Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari gave a presentation on the Permanent Forum’s mandate and its recommendations on indigenous women.

Projects

62. In December 2005, the General Assembly approved a project under the Development Account, the main objective of which is to strengthen the capacity of institutions at the national

and community levels in selected Latin American countries to better engage indigenous women in decision-making processes by utilizing new information and communication technologies. The project will be executed by SPFII in cooperation with various other UN agencies.

II. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES BY SPFII TO FOLLOW UP ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNPFII AND TO PROMOTE THE FORUM'S MANDATE

World Summit on Information Society

63. Following the recommendation of the UNPFII, the SPFII, as member of the WSIS International Indigenous Steering Committee (IISC), supported at WISIS II in Tunis the parallel event “Indigenous Peoples and the Information Society: “Towards an International Indigenous Portal”¹⁶. Co-Chairs for this parallel event were Mr. Littlechild, Member of the UNPFII, and Ms. Eliane Potiguara, Board Member, Comité Intertribal (ITC). During the event, ITU announced their commitment to appoint a focal point for indigenous peoples. Mr. Id Balkassam participated on a panel organized by Dragonfly Blue Productions and Dialogue Between Nations, where he highlighted the mandate and activities of the UNPFII.

Brisbane Conference on Engaging Communities

¹⁶ http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/WSIS/report_eng.pdf

64. Within the framework of the above-mentioned conference, SPFII organized a capacity building workshop on 15 August 2005 in Brisbane, Australia, in cooperation with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia on engaging indigenous peoples in governance processes. The workshop was chaired by Mr. Dodson. Mr. Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, served as the Rapporteur. A major output of the workshop, attended by over 160 indigenous and other participants, were guidelines for engagement with indigenous peoples, intended as a resource for national and local officials engaged in governance processes. SPFII has posted these guidelines on its website at: www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html.

Ottawa meeting on Indicators.

65. As a follow up to recommendations of the UNPFII, SPFII is organizing a series of meetings for developing indigenous-specific indicators to capture indigenous peoples' perspectives of poverty and well-being. The first such meeting will be held in Ottawa, Canada from 22-23 March 2006 within the framework of the Aboriginal Policy Research Conference, in cooperation with Indian and Northern Affairs Ministry of Canada. The conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the fifth session of UNPFII.

66. This meeting, along with a series of other such meetings in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and the contributions of IASG in its report to the fifth session of the Forum, will provide recommendations for a core set of global and regional indicators, which may then be utilized

by governments, intergovernmental organizations and the UN system when designing and monitoring programs that directly affect indigenous peoples.

ICARRD

67. SPFII organized a special event at the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in March, 2006, bringing together a panel of UNPFII Members, namely Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Aguiar de Almeida, indigenous experts and representatives of UN Agencies. The panel emphasized the fact that agrarian reform and rural development must be sensitive to indigenous peoples rights and that although they have many common interests with the rural poor, indigenous peoples also have very distinct interests which, at times, are and have been threatened by policies and programmes intended to eradicate rural poverty. Central to this are indigenous peoples' communal rights to land, territories and resources which are threatened by an increasing emphasis on individual rights to land and the commoditization of land.

Database of recommendations: monitoring the status of implementation

68. SPFII is undertaking a review and analysis of the status of implementation of the recommendations of the fourth session of the Forum and will be updating its database of recommendations, which will be posted on the website. The challenges associated with monitoring the status of implementation of recommendations of UNPFII can be broadly grouped under the following categories:

- (a) It is difficult to know the status of implementation of general and broad recommendations which are not specifically addressed to any one entity.
- (b) It is difficult to monitor the status in respect to recommendations which are about process and not necessarily about a specific tangible output, since governments, intergovernmental organizations or the UN system may also leave their response open ended or not address these recommendations. A large proportion of reports received simply report on activities and not actual progress, which makes it difficult to assess progress.
- (c) It is difficult to monitor the impact at the local and national levels of recommendations that are addressed and implemented at the global level, since this is entirely dependent on which States or UN country teams decide to report to the Forum on national activities.
- (d) It is difficult to monitor the status of implementation of recommendations which have multiple parts, since not every reporting government, intergovernmental organization or UN system agency will report on each part of a recommendations;
- (e) From a monitoring and management perspective, it is difficult to prepare a precise status report on the types of recommendations mentioned under (a) to (d) above.

69. Since monitoring the implementation of recommendations is perceived as a vital function, it would be beneficial if the UNPFII were to make fewer recommendations, that are more clear about expected outcomes, with possible targets, and to avoid recommendations with multiple parts. Another beneficial strategy for furthering

implementation and making monitoring easier would be to have an enhanced dissemination strategy for the recommendations at country level, in cooperation with the IASG.

Meeting on migration and indigenous peoples convened by the International Organization on Migration

70. Following a recommendation of the UNPFII in 2004, a Workshop on Indigenous Peoples and Migration is organized by IOM and SPFII in April in Geneva, Switzerland. The outcome of this welcome development will be announced at the fifth session of the Forum and feed into the High-Level Dialogue on Migration at the General Assembly later this year.

Concept paper on a “Report on the State of the World’s Indigenous People”

71. Following UNPFII recommendations, SPFII prepared a concept note on a possible global report on indigenous peoples. This concept note was presented to the UNPFII at its meeting in Nuuk, Greenland, in January 2006, for its consideration.

Preparation of Handbook for members of the UNPFII and Resource Guide for participants to the Forum’s sessions

72. In order to facilitate orientation and provide a resource tool for Members of the Permanent Forum, SPFII prepared a Handbook which outlined how the UNPFII works, as well as practical information relating to the Forum's sessions. A Resource Guide was also prepared for prospective indigenous and civil society participants who attend the annual sessions of the Permanent Forum. This Resource Guide will be available in French, English, Russian and Spanish and will be posted on the website and disseminated widely.

Capacity-building

73. SPFII has been promoting capacity-building to the extent that its resources allow. The production of material outlined above, the production of the film "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations", the collection of case studies, the preparation of a toolkit on indigenous issues and regular cooperation with non-governmental organizations for training activities are some of its efforts in this area. Although resources have not yet permitted the launch of its indigenous fellowship programme, SPFII was pleased to host, in January 2006, a programme for a group of Russian indigenous fellows, in cooperation with RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North). In May 2006, SPFII will cooperate with Deusto University in Spain to organize a two-week training for a group of indigenous fellows including participation in the fifth session of the Forum.

III. SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

74. Following the proclamation of the Second Decade by the General Assembly in resolution 59/174, the Assembly adopted, in December 2005, the Programme of Action for the Decade in resolution 60/142. It is recalled that the goal of the Decade is the further strengthening of international cooperation for solutions of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and social and economic development. This is expected to be carried out by means of action-oriented programmes, specific projects, increased technical assistance and relevant standard-setting activities.

As described in the Programme of Action, the main objectives of the Decade are:

- a) Promoting non-discrimination and inclusion of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation and evaluation of international, regional and national processes regarding laws, policies, resources, programmes and projects;
- b) Promoting full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decisions which directly or indirectly affect their lifestyles, traditional lands and territories, their cultural integrity as indigenous peoples with collective rights or any other aspect of their lives, considering the principle of free, prior and informed consent;
- c) Redefining development policies that depart from a vision of equity and that are culturally appropriate, including respect for the cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples;

- d) Adopting targeted policies, programs, projects and budgets for the development of indigenous peoples, including concrete benchmarks, and particular emphasis on indigenous women, children and youth;
- e) Developing strong monitoring mechanisms and enhancing accountability at the international, regional and particularly the national level, regarding the implementation of legal, policy and operational frameworks for the protection of indigenous peoples and the improvement of their lives.

75. The theme for the Second Decade, adopted by the General Assembly, is “Partnership for Action and Dignity”.

76. The Coordinator of the Second Decade and Under-Secretary- General for Economic and Social Affairs, has invited governments, the UN system and other inter-governmental organizations and bodies, indigenous and other non-governmental organizations to provide information regarding specific plans of action they may intend to adopt in connection with the Decade. The Coordinator has also placed the Decade on the agenda of the UNDG for discussion and action. In addition, all DESA Divisions have been invited to contribute to a specific DESA plan of action for the Second Decade and also to identify benchmarks of achievement by 2015.

77. As mentioned above, a UN poster for the Decade will be ready by the fifth session of the Forum. Following a recommendation of the Forum in 2005, a special launch of the Programme of Action will take place at the General Assembly Hall at the opening of the fifth session of the Forum.

IV. TRUST FUND ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

78. By its resolution 57/191 of 18 December 2002 on the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to establish a voluntary fund in support of the Forum. By resolution 59/174 of December 2005 the General Assembly, in proclaiming the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, also decided that a fund should be established to support projects and programmes during the Second Decade. In this regard, the former Trust Fund in support of the UNPFII has been renamed to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues and its terms of reference have been expanded to enable acceptance of contributions for this purpose.

79. In 2005, the Trust Fund received contributions from Finland, Mexico and Norway, as well as earmarked support from IFAD thus bringing the total amount of contributions received last year to \$277,024. In addition, to date, the Trust Fund has also received

contributions earmarked for projects related to the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People totaling \$160,822 from Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia and Germany. The Secretariat is exploring the possibility of transferring any remaining funds from the Voluntary Fund of the first Decade of the World's Indigenous People to supplement funds for the Second Decade.

80. As part of the activities during the Second Decade, SPFII finalized funding guidelines for submitting project proposals. SPFII received more than 200 project proposals and set up a review mechanism in 2006 to assist the Bureau of the Permanent Forum, who will serve as the Advisory Group for reviewing project proposals. The Bureau will meet for two days, on 11 and 12 May 2006, to review proposals.

81. During 2005 the Trust Fund financed the following activities: a) partial expenses for the International Workshop on Free, Prior and Informed Consent; b) travel of Members of the UNPFII to meetings of relevance to the Forum's mandate; out of a total of 25 such meetings, the Fund funded 15; c) earmarked support by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for preparing case studies of IFAD-financed projects in indigenous communities and a framework for advocacy on development and indigenous peoples; d) support for a data disaggregation project in Nepal from an earmarked contribution of the United Nations Development Programme; e) the production of an awareness-raising film on indigenous peoples and the UN in three languages –French, English, Spanish--and for reproduction of copies of the film for distribution to UN country teams and governments; and

f) an ongoing project with IWGIA for the preparation of a Russian version of a publication on the UNPFII .

82. Additional earmarked support from UNDP, received in 2005 will be utilized for the project “Millennium Development Goals and Indigenous Peoples” the main objectives of which are: to campaign on MDGs among indigenous communities at national level, use MDGs as advocacy and training tool for indigenous communities and enhance participation of indigenous peoples in MDG processes. IFAD is expected to provide another grant in 2006 for the organization of three regional meetings aiming at identifying indicators of poverty and well-being by indigenous people.

83. In January and March 2006 the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Coordinator of the Second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People addressed letters to Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and private institutions calling for contributions to the Trust Fund.