We have gathered here in Manila from 6 to 8 December 2000 to share;

- Who we are and why we persist in asserting our identities and rights as indigenous peoples;
- Stories of the situations of conflict in our lands and the struggles we are waging;
- Stories of how we are building peace among ourselves and with others and the lessons we learned;
- Our definitions of conflict, peace, justice, and sustainable development.
- Our visions of a future where justice and lasting peace will reign in our territories and our tasks of building this future.

We are 90 indigenous persons coming from all corners of the world: from Greenland, Siberia, and Eastern Europe, from South America, Central America, and North America, from Southern, Central, Western and Eastern Africa, from the Middle East, from South and Southeast Asia, Australia, Aotearoa, and the Pacific.

We looked at our past and saw that the roots of the conflicts in our lands are found

- firstly, in our common histories of external and internal colonization and
- secondly, in the continuing process of dispossession from our territories and resources; our identities, languages, cultures, and knowledge;
- thirdly, the historic and ongoing denial of the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination.

We have been told that the ways of the colonizer are better and superior; that we cannot govern ourselves and that we cannot be self-determining. We have been and are being forcibly integrated and constructed in systems which continue to be shaped by the same, if less overt, racism that underpinned colonization. The powers-that-be say that globalization is an inevitable reality which we should accept, even if it leads to the further appropriation and destruction of our territories and resources, privatization of our waters, the commodification of our human genetic materials, and legitimization of the patenting of life.

Our ancestors and we have resisted and continue to resist these moves which undermine our dignity and rights as indigenous peoples.

When we seek redress for the grave injustices that still confront us, we utilize agencies of international and domestic law but continue to reclaim and revalidate our indigenous ways of resolving dispute both
internally and externally.

In doing so we accept that while the concept of justice may be universal the processes by which it is achieved and the values which underpin its understanding are culturally defined. However, experience has taught us that colonization has also sought to universalize the western processes of achieving justice and resolving conflict so that we are constantly forced to turn away from our own institutions and operate within those of western legal paradigms.

This conference accepts the challenge to honor our ancestors by adapting those institutions which they have left us to restore justice to our lives today.

At the same time this conference seeks support from non-indigenous partners to work with us to ensure that state and international institutions are more willing to acknowledge the validity of indigenous processes and systems and to work to ensure their recognition and their growth. We have in this conference 25 representatives of NGOs, United Nations bodies, and the donor community whom we are enjoining to be part of our journey.

The conference also acknowledges that in revalidating the traditions and institutions of our ancestors it is also necessary that we, ourselves, honestly deal with those ancient practices which may have led to the oppression of indigenous women and children. However, the conference also stresses that the transformation of indigenous traditions and systems must be defined and controlled by indigenous peoples, simply because our right to deal with the legacy of our own cultures is part of the right to self-determination.

Indeed, the underlying focus of this conference was a reaffirmation of the sentiments expressed in Article 3 of the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, namely

**Indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.**

In pursuit of this right, peace building in each country means we must weave together the threads of equality, justice, participatory democracy and recognition and respect for the rights of all peoples and cultures; peace building implies establishing intercultural and other relationships which facilitate peaceful coexistence within a framework of plurality and mutual respect.

It means that when others speak of respect for political, economic, social and cultural rights of indigenous and original peoples, they need to respect our forms of organizations and institutions, our spirituality and cosmovision; they need to respect our mechanisms and methods of conflict resolution.

It also means that sustainable development must be nurtured by historical, cultural and biological diversity because this is the basis of creating justice and equality among peoples. It must include as a fundamental premise the equality of rights and opportunities for both women and men. It must promote the unrestricted participation of all in democratic processes.

The conference affirms that the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples necessarily requires that indigenous peoples reclaim the space and secure the respect needed to resolve conflict, build peace and develop the treasures of Mother Earth in a sustainable way that both reflects ancient traditions and the right of indigenous peoples to develop in the ways that they feel are appropriate.
This includes the right to create new systems and institutions of peace-making that are sourced in indigenous values and that co-exist with existing bodies such as the International Court of Justice and similar regional bodies.

Such institutions could include independent indigenous peoples tribunals, commissions of inquiry that are recognized as legitimate organs in any process of conflict resolution. The conference has agreed that:

1. An "Independent International Commission of Indigenous Peoples for Mediation and Conflict Resolution" be organized not later than the year 2002. The mission of this body will be to promote and defend the rights of indigenous peoples and to expose and denounce aggression and abuses of the rights of indigenous peoples in different parts of the world.
2. That an Indigenous Peoples Global Network for Research will be created which will help support and strengthen the capacities of indigenous peoples to undertake research and documentation and disseminate information as widely as possible.
3. Indigenous global, regional, and local networks need to be further strengthened and created for collaboration in education, campaign and policy advocacy.
4. Indigenous peoples networks should build partnerships with media, academe, civil society organizations, NGOs and others to promote public understanding of the issues facing indigenous peoples and to further peace-building and solidarity.

The conference recognizes the need for such independent indigenous institutions as a further recognition and re-affirmation of our right to self-determination. Indeed this conference declares its support for other statements by indigenous peoples that we continue to exist as self determining peoples in spite of the centuries of denial of our rights and our human worth. The conference further commits to support the following calls and recommendations and proposals arising from the regional and thematic workshop groups and resolutions adopted in the plenary sessions.

1. **Uphold the dignity of indigenous peoples and promote and defend their rights.**

   The subordination of indigenous peoples under colonialism and economic globalization fuels the current ecological and social crises. The restoration of balanced relationships within nature and society requires valuing diversity and respect for indigenous peoples.

   - Indigenous peoples organizations must continue and intensify education and training on the rights of indigenous peoples and their need to rediscover dignity in their own cultures, language, ways of living, worldviews and value systems. These efforts should be directed to indigenous peoples themselves, as well a non-indigenous entities including states and NGOs.
   - States should respect and recognize indigenous peoples practices, values and principles with regard to their land, resources, and culture, and recognize indigenous land and property systems.
   - States should repeal and/or amend discriminatory laws and constitutional provisions.
   - States should reform the educational system, such that it reflects the views and values of indigenous peoples, promotes respect, tolerance and acceptance of cultural differences. Education should become a conduit for cultural survival. Education should help strengthen the community by instilling pride and generating a shared commitment to improve their situation.
   - States should grant indigenous peoples control over social plans, education and health
programs that are implemented in their communities.

• Indigenous peoples should use the upcoming World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance as a stepping stone for further dialogue with other survivors of racism and discrimination, with States, and society at large.

• Indigenous peoples call on the World Conference Against Racism to ensure the participation of indigenous peoples and to support the regional and international parallel meetings organized by them to consolidate their recommendations for the World Conference.

2. **Respect and actualize the rights of indigenous peoples to self-determination.**

Self-determination is the inherent birthright of all peoples, from which other freedoms flow. This fundamental human right of all peoples, including indigenous peoples, is recognized in the basic International Human Rights Covenants. The continued denial and violation of indigenous peoples right to self-determination is the root cause of many conflicts faced by indigenous peoples.

• Call for the adoption of the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN Commission on Human Rights and the UN General Assembly before the end of the International Decade of World’s Indigenous Peoples in the year 2004.

• States and the international community should recognize and respect the various forms of self-determination which would include, among others, autonomy, secession or federalism, recognition of indigenous socio-political and juridical systems, etc. as viable solutions for pluricultural and pluriethnic societies.

• States should dismantle existing repressive bodies and institutions and those who have committed genocide and ethnocide against indigenous peoples should be brought to court.

• States should ensure that indigenous peoples are fully consulted and involved in decision making regarding appropriate mechanisms, structures, and measures when refugees are hosted in their territories.

• More widespread consultations and in-depth research on how the problem of refugees and settlers in indigenous peoples territories can be resolved should be undertaken. Indigenous peoples, refugees, NGOs, the donor community and UN bodies should be involved in these consultations.

• States should stop transmigration programs that encourage non-indigenous people to move into indigenous peoples territories. The World Bank and the donor community should make social impact assessments of their support for such programs and should be central in developing solutions and providing redress for the victims of such programs.

• States, the donor community, the UN bodies, should provide economic support to indigenous peoples nations, communities and organizations, without conditionalities.

• States, NGOs and international bodies are called to recognize traditional structures of governance and to provide technical, political, and financial support to strengthen these.

• The United Nations should establish the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues before the end of the year 2001. It should provide support to indigenous peoples choosing their representatives to the Permanent Forum. It should ensure that the secretariat for this body will be composed mainly of indigenous peoples.

• The United Nations and the donor community should uphold the right of indigenous peoples to development and their right to define the processes and forms of development appropriate for their circumstances. The international community and society-at-large
should recognize and support indigenous peoples perspectives and practices on
development especially those which are not consistent with the mainstream development
paradigm of the globalized market economy.

3. Defend and Protect indigenous peoples right to their territories and resources.

Development aggression - the violation of basic human rights in the development process,
continues to be a central problem for indigenous peoples. It is often the immediate
manifestation of the underlying conflicts experienced by indigenous peoples and communities
with states and in relationships with dominant economic, political, and social structures and
institutions. The territories and resources of indigenous peoples are being exploited at an
increasing rate - leading to the destruction of the environment, marginalization of indigenous
peoples, and denial of their basic means for subsistence and sustenance as distinct peoples and
cultures. In this light we present the following recommendations;

• States, corporations, the banks, and the donor community should seek the full, free, and
  prior informed consent of indigenous peoples on all projects affecting their territories,
  resources, and culture.
• States should repeal or reform unjust mining policies and laws and build the capacity of
  indigenous peoples to regulate and monitor the production, processing, and sale of
  resources (e.g. diamonds in Sierra Leone) in respect of indigenous peoples rights and to
  prevent conflict.
• Indigenous peoples should make a data base of corporations which are involved in the
  exploitation of resources in indigenous peoples’ territories and their environmental and
  social impacts and share this as widely as possible.
• Call for a moratorium on new applications for large-scale extraction activities and land
  acquisition in indigenous peoples’ territories.
• Demand that existing permits of MNCs to exploit resources of indigenous peoples be
  cancelled or withdrawn, and an indemnification paid for damages that have occurred.
• Indigenous peoples should sustain their initiatives to monitor the impact of globalization.
  International bodies which are the key players in globalization should be monitored.
  Some of these are;

  a. the World Trade Organization, especially its Agreement on Trade-Related
    Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), the Agreement on Agriculture
    (AOA), and Trade-Related Investment Measures.
  b. the international financial institutions, like the World Bank, Regional Banks,and
    the International Monetary Fund.
  c. other intergovernmental bodies like the European Union, European Commission,
    Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the
    Organization of American States, and other similar bodies.
  d. Regional trade agreements like Mercosur, APEC, etc.3.7. Indigenous peoples
    should strategize concrete ways to appropriately respond to the forces and
    processes of globalization.

• Indigenous peoples should promote and strengthen the "No to Patenting of Life"
  campaign of indigenous peoples organizations and NGOs and use the "Indigenous
  Peoples’ Seattle Declaration" as a tool for raising awareness on globalization.3.9.
  Indigenous peoples to recommend the inclusion of a clause against patenting of life
  forms in the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
• Indigenous peoples and States should ensure that Article 8j of the Convention on Biological Diversity which deals with the protection of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples in the conservation of biological diversity is implemented. Full and prior informed consent of indigenous peoples should be obtained before any bioprospecting takes place in their territories.
• Monitoring bodies in the local, regional and national level which will consist of indigenous peoples organizations, NGOs, and academia should be set up to monitor biopiracy, patenting of biological resources, and the collection of indigenous peoples genetic materials through the Human Genome Diversity Project and other similar endeavours.
• States, indigenous peoples, broader society, and the international community must respect and nurture indigenous knowledge. They should understand what it is, how it evolves in response to changing living conditions and how it can be combined with appropriate modern knowledge particularly in biodiversity conservation, health promotion, agriculture, and cultural development.

4. Work for a just and lasting peace in indigenous peoples territories.

In recent decades, open conflicts between "non-state" groups, such as the indigenous peoples versus states has increased both in frequency and ferocity. According to one source, at least 80 times since WWII such conflicts has escalated into war, and over 200 such groups have organized themselves at one time or another to defend their collective interests versus governments, transnational/multinational corporations and other groups.

Only a quarter to a third of modern civil wars (including anti-colonial wars) have found their way to negotiation. About two-thirds of internal conflicts have ended in the surrender or elimination of one of the parties involved. Since the roots of these conflicts have not been addressed the possibilities of re-emergence remain. In the meantime, negotiated peace accords are not being implemented to the favor of indigenous peoples and some ongoing peace negotiations have been stalled. Recommendations for the realization for just and lasting peace in indigenous peoples’ territories are as follows:

States should respect and faithfully implement the peace accords with indigenous peoples and other armed groups, should resume stalled peace talks and overcome the setbacks in some ongoing peace negotiations. We call on states to do the following;

a. Implement fully the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord of 1997 between the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) and the Government of Bangladesh.
c. Implement and reinvigorate the San Andres Accord between the EZLN (Zapatistas) and the Government of Mexico.
d. Resume the stalled peace negotiations between the National Democratic Front-Communist Party of the Philippines-New Peoples’ Army (NDF-CPP-NPA) and the Government of the Philippines.
e. Resume the peace negotiations between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Philippines.
f. Overcome the setbacks in the ongoing peace talks between the National Socialist
Council of Nagaland and the Government of India

- Indigenous peoples should participate fully in peace processes and these processes should ensure the participation of chiefs, elders, women, community and religious leaders, youth. The broad participation of all peoples and sectors of society should be ensured in the peace-building process. The inclusion of the right people in the decision-making processes from the lowest to the highest political level can constitute a significant contribution to peace building.

- Indigenous peoples systems, methods and practices on peacebuilding and conflict resolution should be further developed and used by indigenous peoples, themselves. These should be supported by States, the donor community and international bodies. These indigenous capacities to prevent, resolve and transform conflicts should be developed from the local level upwards.

- In order to strengthen peace-building capacities of indigenous peoples, conflicts should be carefully analysed to examine their root causes and the political economy of their prolongation.

- Skills training on how to negotiate at the local, national, regional, and international levels should be sensitive to indigenous practices and should be made available for indigenous peoples.

- States should create conditions for peace negotiations to take place- i.e.,
  a. agreeable to all parties,
  b. based on genuine desire for peace, good faith, openness, flexibility, and mutual respect.
  c. consensus building, common platforms, and creating mechanisms for dialogue
  d. not based on divide and rule tactics and not solely based on the agenda of states for the surrender of arms

- International bodies such as the UN should be enjoined to participate in peace-building processes in indigenous peoples territories through, facilitation, moderation, conciliation, mediation and arbitration. This participation should be based on the free and informed decision by the indigenous peoples through their legitimate representatives and authorities.

- Establish mechanisms that will ensure transparency and accountability of peace negotiators or representatives to their constituents. This should be ensured before and during peace negotiations and during the post-conflict reconstruction period. Indigenous persons and other negotiators who occupy government structures as a result of the peace accords should maintain a high sense of accountability to their constituents. Broad consultations and dialogue on how the peace accords are being implemented should be established.

5. **Recognize and respect the rights of indigenous women and enhance their roles in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Engender the conflict-resolution and peace-building processes.**

    Indigenous women have played key roles in peacebuilding in their communities. Yet they have not been given due recognition in the conflict resolution processes. Indigenous women are not adequately represented in peace negotiations in all levels. At best, they are seen as auxiliaries in conflict, and are portrayed as passive victims and silent spectators of conflict. When conflicts lead to violent confrontations, women, lacking support mechanisms women face the brunt of repression and therefore become a vulnerable sector.
• Create an awareness among indigenous peoples and the public at large on the importance of recognizing the role played by indigenous women in conflict resolution and peace-building. Document the peace-building efforts done by indigenous women in different parts of the world and share this as widely as possible.

• Promote effective participation by women at all levels and stages of peacemaking processes, particularly at the planning, negotiation and decision-making stages. Negotiating parties should include a fair number of women in the negotiating panels.

• Peace accords should emphasize the obligations set up by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and ensure reporting to the CEDAW Committee. The Beijing Platform for Action and the results of the Beijing Plus 5 Review should inform the participation of indigenous women in peace processes.

• Encourage and support women to seek decision-making positions and build mechanisms which will enable women to have access to such positions whether in the traditional or modern governance systems. Post conflict structures which are set up should ensure that there are women included not only on the lower levels but in the highest decision-making bodies.

• Provide training, technical and financial assistance to women to build further their capacity to effectively participate in conflict resolution and peace-building efforts in their own regions.

• Encourage indigenous women to use the media to highlight their suffering during wars and violent conflicts and their perspectives and recommendations on how to bring about peace and development in their territories.

• Encourage indigenous women to forge networks and linkages with other women’s organizations and networks at all levels in their respective region and internationally.

• Mobilize women in the struggles alongside men and even with children in pursuit of their demands as women and as indigenous peoples.

• Work towards solving the double burden of women so they can have more time to participate in the public domain.

• International agencies, NGOs, indigenous peoples, the donor community should include gender in their analysis of conflict and peace-building processes and in the assessments done on the economic, social, political and cultural situation pre and post-conflict.

6. **Enhance the capacities of indigenous peoples to undertake research to allow for the broader articulation of indigenous perspectives and worldviews, and to strengthen indigenous peoples’ systems and institutions for peace-building and sustainable development.**

Indigenous peoples have been the objects of scrutiny - the researched, not the researchers. They have been represented more as the hapless victims or fierce warriors and less of pro-active agents of peace processes. Some academic studies used constructs and frameworks which are not relevant to the lives of indigenous peoples. Many of these were rarely translated into policy recommendations and used in advocacy campaigns. It is an imperative therefore that indigenous peoples define their own research agenda and undertake studies which they can use to strengthen their initiatives to bring about peace, resolve and transform conflicts, and bring about sustainable development.

• Conduct more in-depth case and comparative studies on peace accords, with emphasis
on the following sub-topics:

a. Forms and range of indigenous peoples’ struggles, what strategies have succeeded, what has failed;
b. Different kinds of frameworks and efforts forged between indigenous peoples and states, and what kinds of compromises were entered into;
c. Various parties involved in conflict resolution;
d. Reasons, factors and conditions leading to the success or failure of peace accords;
e. The role of multilateral organizations, donor community, international financial institutions, as causative, fuelling and/or resolving conflicts;
f. Assessment on the impact of armed conflicts on indigenous peoples with particular emphasis on women and children.

- Take stock of indigenous peoples land and resources: their current status, how they are appropriated and protected. These problems were identified as major source of conflict in indigenous peoples’ territories. The following are some of the related topics/issues:
  a. The status of land rights in countries- i.e. map out the boundaries of indigenous territories (such as living space, communal agricultural and fallow lands for shifting cultivation, and burial, spirit and collection forest)
  b. The social and ecological impact of resource-exploitation by large-scale development projects on indigenous peoples
  c. Data base of corporations which are involved in the exploitation of resources in indigenous peoples’ territories and their environmental and social impacts.
  d. Inventory of indigenous peoples’ struggles, campaign and advocacy resources, organizations and networks.
  e. Indigenous knowledge: what it is, how it evolves in response to changing living conditions and how it can be combined with appropriate modern knowledge particularly in biodiversity conservation.
  f. Successful methodologies employed by indigenous peoples in protecting their indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage.

- Conduct specific studies on the role of indigenous women on conflict resolution, peace-building and sustainable development.
  a. Actual and potential roles of indigenous women in conflict resolution and peace-building.
  b. Gender analysis of peace accords and other peace processes.
  c. Differences in the perspectives and methods of indigenous men and women.
  d. Gender roles in conflict and conflict resolution

7. **Strengthen networks and alliances between indigenous peoples, help strengthen their capacities to promote indigenous peoples rights, and help create networks where there are none.**

There are many networks built by indigenous peoples among themselves from the local, regional, and international levels. These are borne out of the desire to strengthen the voice of indigenous peoples so that they will have a greater impact in making the world recognize and defend indigenous peoples rights. The conference, however, recognized that in relation to the issue of peace-building, conflict resolution, and sustainable development, there are additional networks which could be established to complement the existing ones. Linkages with NGOs, international agencies, and the donor community should also be enhanced to create the broadest
support for indigenous peoples.

- Create an Indigenous Peoples’ Global Network for Research. The main objective of this body will be to help build the capacities of indigenous peoples for research and policy advocacy. This network will promote indigenous peoples methodologies and frameworks on research.
- Create an Independent International Commission of Indigenous Peoples for Mediation and Conflict Resolution. The mission of this body will be the promotion and defense of indigenous peoples’ rights. With the help of the Research Network mentioned above, it will document the aggression, conflicts and abuses committed against indigenous peoples and explore ways in which redress of these injustices will take place.
- Develop meaningful and equal partnerships with other NGOs, intergovernmental bodies, donor community and independent experts on the basis of mutual respect.
- Develop a mechanism for information dissemination, coordination, and for quick reaction to urgent alerts from indigenous peoples. Create a website which will be used for this purpose.
- Endeavour to bring indigenous peoples’ issues and concerns to the mainstream media at the local, regional, and international levels.

The dream and vision of indigenous peoples for a just and lasting peace and for sustainable development to reign in their territories can be realized. What is needed is for others to share this dream and work in partnership with indigenous peoples to make it a reality. Let this Manila Declaration be a guiding light for this journey.

Philippines on December 8, 2000