Agenda Item 5. Methods of Work of the Forum with the United Nations System

Joint Statement of:
Indigenous Peoples Caucus on Sustainable Development,
Asia Caucus,
Tebtebba Foundation,
RAIPON,

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Permanent Forum and the Follow-up of the World Summit on Sustainable Development
   The Permanent Forum, formulate a strategy and work plan coherent with the implementation of the
   outcomes UN World Summit on Sustainable Development
   1. taking into account the recent decisions made at UNCSD 11 with respect to the implementation of the
   WSSD outcomes
   2. taking into account the Kimberley Declaration and the Indigenous Peoples’ Plan of Implementation
   on Sustainable Development

2. The Permanent Forum and the Follow-up of other UN World Conferences and Summits
   The Permanent Forum, formulate a strategy and work plan coherent with the implementation of the
   outcomes UN World Conferences and Summits, including but not limited to
   1. the Millennium Summit and the Millennium Development Goals
   2. the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance
   and its Programme of Action
   3. the World Summit on Financing for Development
   and informed by the General Assembly’s Open-ended ad-hoc Working Group on Integrated Conference
   Follow-up, which will produce concrete recommendations, including on how best to address the review of
   the implementation of outcomes of major UN conferences and summits.

3. The Permanent Forum, WTO and the Doha Development Round
   The Permanent Forum must be cognizant of the current gridlock in the Doha talks as these relate to
   multilateral agreement on trade and investment, agricultural subsidies, intellectual property rights (IPRs)
   and access to life-saving drugs and the disastrous impacts this could have on indigenous peoples.

4. The Permanent Forum and the Privatization Agenda for Essential Social Services
   The Permanent Forum must comment on the systematic policy attempts by the international financial
   institutions and the WTO to accelerate the privatization of essential services such as water, energy and
   health. These policies could take away and weaken indigenous peoples’ control, management and access
   over these life-giving resources and values and could result in the further impoverishment of the indigenous
   peoples around the world. The impacts on indigenous peoples of globalization and the policies and
   programmes of international financial institutions should be a subject of further research and development
   of policy proposals by the Permanent Forum.

5. The Permanent Forum and Corporate Accountability
   Mechanisms to ensure corporate accountability can be explored and developed further by the Forum
   informed by ongoing work under the auspices of the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on
   Sustainable Development and other UN agencies and bodies.

6. The Permanent Forum endorse the call for a World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and
   Sustainable Development.
Mr. Chairman,

The past decade may well be characterised as a decade of UN Conferences on the many urgent problems faced by the world at the turn of the 21st century. Convened under the auspices of the UN General Assembly, these conferences attempt to develop a global understanding of the world’s pressing problems and to promote a global consensus on the necessary actions to be undertaken by member States, UN Agencies, international and regional organisations, and all peoples of the world.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg last year, was one such meeting which had important participation by indigenous peoples, who are recognized as a major group in the implementation of Agenda 21 and other environmental agreements arising from the UN Conference on Environment and Development, and in the implementation processes thereafter. Indeed, the Johannesburg Declaration “reaffirmed the vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development”.

Translating this recognition into a reality will depend on the actions taken at international, regional, sub-regional, national and local levels and will be guided by the decisions taken by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, which is the ECOSOC functional commission charged with follow-up implementation. The same process will be apply to the implementation of the outcomes of other UN summits and conferences.

In order for the Permanent Forum to effectively carry out its mandate as an advisory body to ECOSOC, it must fully understand the outcomes of all these summits and conferences as well as the follow-up mechanisms and processes for their implementation, as these relate to indigenous peoples, in order to provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds, and agencies of the United Nations. Permanent Forum meetings should include reports from world summits and conferences from the relevant UN bodies and indigenous peoples.

The common challenge posed by these world conferences and follow-up implementation, is how to ensure the meaningful and effective participation of indigenous peoples in such global processes. The Permanent Forum, with its broad mandate but targetted focus on indigenous issues, is well-placed to provide expert advice on how to strengthen indigenous peoples participation in such conferences and their follow-up processes at international, regional and national levels, thus mainstreaming indigenous peoples into the day-to-day work of the UN bodies and member states. The Permanent Forum could further contribute to the ongoing work of the Secretary-General and ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations by providing advice on accreditation of indigenous peoples organisations.

We recommend that the members of the Forum and Secretariat analyze thoroughly the Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.199/20) and the Kimberley Declaration and Indigenous Peoples’ Implementation Plan in order to identify relevant policies and programme areas that should be monitored by the Forum, taking into account the Report of the UNCSD 11 and its Multi-Year Programme of Work. The Inter-Agency Workshop on the Follow-up to WSSD is a useful starting point for this work. Under Agenda Items 4(a) and 4(b), additional detailed recommendations on the follow-up to WSSD will also be made.

A more strategic approach for the Permanent Forum is to endorse the call for a World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development, integrating the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainable development, consistent with the Permanent Forum’s Mandate. The World Conference would be a major step forward in strengthening ECOSOC’s role as the central mechanism for system-wide coordination and thus to promote coordinated follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related fields as these relate to Indigenous Peoples. It would raise the political profile of the Permanent Forum and mark the deepening partnerships involving the United Nations, governments, and indigenous peoples, as well delivering concrete outcomes for the improvement in the lives of indigenous peoples. The Conference could serve as a fitting culmination to the UN Decade for the World’s Indigenous Peoples, or the start or a Second Decade for the World’s Indigenous Peoples, focusing on action.
Thank you Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to speak on this important Agenda item.