

The Statement made by the Government of Japan concerning the Working Group on the declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples

June 27, 2006

Mr. Chairperson

The Government of Japan makes every effort to respect, protect and promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples. In this regard, we attach great importance to the Working Group on the declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We appreciate very much the chairperson-rapporteur of the WG, Mr. Chavez, for his report and his efforts to make a new proposal.

Although we think his proposal is well thought-out, fair and balanced, we would like to express our concern about procedure.

The proposal made by the chair was made available after the last session of the Working Group held from the end of January to February 2006, and the WG has not discussed his proposal yet. We are concerned that if the new proposal is adopted without prior discussion in the Working Group, that might be a procedural precedent for adopting legal documents in the future.

Having said that, we are very willing to cooperate with other delegations including indigenous caucus to seek a way to achieve our common goal which is to have a strong and well-supported declaration.