



INTERVENTION BY THE DEPUTY PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF BRAZIL IN GENEVA,
AMBASSADOR SERGIO FLORÊNCIO

Human Rights Council
First Session

Report of the open-ended intersessional Working
Group on a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of
indigenous peoples

Geneva, Switzerland
June 27, 2006

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil fully subscribes to the GRUAC's intervention and

At the outset I want to thank very much Mr. Luiz-Enrique Chavez, President of the open-ended intersessional Working Group on a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, for the presentation of his report. I want also to commend his work, professional skills and capacity of dialogue.

We believe that the Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples is a major achievement and its adoption, in the first session of the Council, will be a strong positive signal that augurs well for our future substantive work.

Negotiations were long and complex and Brazil commends also States and indigenous peoples who made great efforts to ensure that it would be possible to arrive in this session with a concrete and reasonable proposal, as presented by the President of the Working Group.

Mr Chairman,

Maybe the text proposed is not the ideal. It is necessary the result of an effort by all to accommodate on one hand the rights of indigenous peoples and on the other hand the preoccupations expressed by States.

In essence, the Declaration as proposed revitalizes the core principle of non-discrimination, which inspires the whole system of human rights in the United Nations and asserts the importance of the indigenous peoples in our societies. It also acknowledges diversity as a richness of countries; underlines the past and present contribution of indigenous peoples to the material and spiritual development of all states.

Brazil, as a multiethnic and multicultural country, is convinced that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will be of the utmost importance not only to fight discrimination against indigenous peoples and distortions created by centuries of exclusion, but also to promote harmony in the relationship between indigenous peoples and the other segments of society where they live.

At the same time, it is our understanding that the exercise of the rights of indigenous peoples the Declaration acknowledges is consistent with the respect for the political unity and territorial integrity of the sovereign and independent States which they inhabit. Political unity, territorial integrity and indigenous rights are mutually re-enforcing perspectives and serve the cause of a harmonious relationship within our societies.

We want also to underline that the enjoyment by indigenous people of all human rights will contribute to democracy, good governance, stability, social and economic equity, and greater justice in our countries."

Thank you.