

**United Nations Human Rights Council,
5th session, June 11 - 18, 2007**

Joint Oral Intervention submitted by the International Indian Treaty Council, the International Organization for Indigenous Resource Development and the Native Women's Association of Canada Assembly of First Nations, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, First Nations Summit, Indigenous World Association and the American Indian Law Alliance, NGO's in Consultative Status to the UN Economic and Social Council

Agenda Item: Institution Building, June 14, 2007

Presented by Ms. Andrea Carmen, International Indian Treaty Council

Indigenous Peoples from all regions of the world continue to recognize the vital role of the United Nations Human Rights Council for the promotion, protection and defense of human rights for all Peoples, including Indigenous Peoples. We continue to wish the Council every success in developing effective working methods and mechanisms to strengthen its role and work within the United Nations system.

During the 6th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May, 2007, the Global Indigenous Caucus adopted by consensus a resolution regarding the work, mandates, structures and mechanisms of the Human Rights Council pertaining to the human rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In particular, the Caucus once again endorsed the **establishment of an Expert Group on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a subsidiary body of the Human Rights Council**. The consensus statement of the Global Caucus, representing all regions, has been submitted in a written intervention under this agenda item.

The core elements of the recommendations which the Caucus requested be presented to this Council include:

Maintaining and strengthening the vital mandate of the UN Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples; the inclusion of a regular agenda item addressing Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights in the ongoing work of the Council; the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights as an item of consideration in the Universal Periodic Review process for state members; the inclusion of Indigenous experts in the new general expert advisory body being established by the HRC; and ensuring full and effective access by Indigenous Peoples to address the human rights violations affecting their Peoples.

The Global Caucus also strongly reaffirmed its consensus statement from May of last year which was presented to this Council during each of its previous sessions, endorsing the establishment of an Expert Group on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN Human Rights Council. The Expert Group on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples

would include at a minimum 2- 3 Indigenous experts nominated by Indigenous Peoples, with equal participation and status as the experts nominated by states.

In addition, the Global Caucus also requests the UN Human Rights Council to authorize at least one more session of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations so that it can review and, as needed, complete its important pending work. This will also facilitate an appropriate and timely transition to the new Expert Group on Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights as well as other appropriate structures in the UN.

Thank you.