

Fourth Session Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
United Nations, New York

Conference Room 2

Statement of the
Interagency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) at

Opening Dialogue 16 May 3 PM:

Goal One of the Millennium Development Goals: Eradicating Extreme Poverty to be addressed under the following thematic approach of combating poverty, good practices and barriers to implementation

1. At its annual meeting in October 2004 in New York, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues made up of 20 inter-governmental entities, including Inter American Development Bank (IADB) and the Council of Europe discussed the Millennium Development Goals vis-à-vis indigenous peoples.
2. The IASG noted that upon review of the available evidence indigenous and tribal peoples are lagging behind other parts of the population in the achievement of the goals in most, if not all, the countries in which they live.
3. Detailed information and statistics describing their situation are often lacking and presents a problem for the achievement of the MDGs. Nevertheless, the information available – both statistics that do exist and experience acquired in the course of our work – indicates that these peoples rank at the bottom of the social indicators in virtually every respect.
4. There is also concern that efforts to achieve the MDGs could in some cases have a negative impact on indigenous and tribal peoples, while national indicators may improve.
5. While the MDGs carry a potential for assessing the major problems faced by indigenous peoples, the indicators for their achievement do not necessarily capture the specificities of indigenous and tribal peoples.
6. Efforts are needed at the national, regional and international levels to achieve the MDGs with the full participation of indigenous communities – women and men. Such efforts must also take into account the multiple levels and sources of discrimination and exclusion that indigenous peoples face.
7. The Inter-Agency Support Group has made a number of recommendations, which are included in the document on the report of the Interagency Support Group (E/C.19/2005/2).

8. We would like to highlight the following.

1. There is a need to take the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples fully into account in the efforts of the international system to achieve the MDGs and the aspirations of the Millennium Declaration.
2. The 2005 Millennium review should explicitly take into account the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples.
3. It is important for each intergovernmental organization to continue to develop its sources of disaggregated data and information on indigenous and tribal peoples.
4. Each organization should ensure that indigenous and tribal peoples are consulted, including the participation of indigenous women and youth, in formulating, implementing and assessing its programmes for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the achievement of the MDGs.
5. The common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) process should take full account of the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples. The role of the United Nations Country Teams is, in that respect, crucial.

In addition,

6. States should ensure the inclusion of indigenous issues in their efforts to achieve the MDGs, and should include the situation of indigenous peoples in reporting on the implementation of the MDGs.
 7. States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations should also promote national dialogues, to bring together indigenous peoples' perspectives and priorities for sustainable human development and their expectations regarding the MDGs.
 8. Partnerships at the international and national level should increase efforts to provide adequate funding, technical and institutional support and training to assist those development efforts articulated by indigenous peoples towards achieving the MDGs.
9. The members of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues will support the efforts of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to analyze and comment on the ongoing review by the international system of the implementation of the MDGs.

Thank you.