

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
4th Session, 16-27 May 2005, New York, United States of America.

*Statement by Kumar Yonjon Tamang,
South Asia Region, International Alliance of Indigenous Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests.*

Intervention 1:

**Agenda Item No.1 (3a), Millennium Development Goal:
Eradicating Extreme Poverty and Hunger,**

Madam Chair,

My Warm greetings to you.

First of all, I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity on behalf of the South Asia Region of the International Alliance of Indigenous Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests.

Madam Chair,

South Asia Region of the International Alliance consists of seven countries Nepal, India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri-Lanka, and Pakistan where more than hundreds million indigenous peoples are living under different kinds of governing rules and systems.

Madam Chair,

I would like to express the concerns of the South Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples that the denial of democracy in various countries, access to participation in administration, development, decision making process of the State building and the recognition of indigenous peoples as a distinct people are the main barriers of the MDG. We all know that the indigenous peoples are the main victim of the 'so-called' development, globalisation and militarisations in the name of development and democracy. Similarly, we all know that the most backward and suppressed people in the world are indigenous peoples. They don't have even minimum Human Rights as the peoples. Whenever, this situation is remains, there will be no any progress in the Millennium Development Goals.

Indigenous peoples have their own cosmo-vision and tradition to look at the development. In our opinion, 'development' means divers and overall development of the people, specially, in the case of indigenous peoples, development means recognition of their minimum human rights and access to land and resources, access to participation in decision making and implementation process of the State and equal opportunity to public and private sector. Similarly, it is very significant that the recognition of right to self-development, self - governance and the right to self-determination of the indigenous peoples are must for their development.

In this regard, in some of the developing countries in Asia are preparing 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper' but without the consultation and participation of Indigenous Peoples. Some of them are not recognising the indigenous peoples rights.

Madam Chair,

I would like to draw your attention acknowledging the recommendations of 'Asian Preparatory meeting to the 4th session of the UNPFII', held on 25-26 Feb. 2005 in Shillong, India to the following agendas that affects the indigenous peoples development:

- a. All the States that are preparing 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper' (PRSP), should have full participation of the indigenous peoples in the drafting and the implementation process of 'PRSP'.
- b. PRSP should follow the indigenous peoples' development approach and rights based approach recognising the collective rights of indigenous peoples.
- c. 'PRSP' should clearly follow the 'free and prior informed consent' of the indigenous peoples and be allowed to participate in the planning, assessment and processes of development, environmental and social impact assessments of projects affecting them.
- d. The permanent Forum should develop mechanisms to review and monitor the implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of 1st to 3rd session of the UNPFII.
- e. The UN Commission on Human Rights, ECOSOC and the General Assembly, adopt as a matter of urgency, the UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples as developed by the UNWGIP and approved by the Sub Commission on the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, with a view to securing the basic rights to self determination and sustainable development of indigenous peoples.
- f. International Treaties and Agreements confirm indigenous peoples rights to development.
- g. Urge all Governments to enact legislation recognising the rights of Indigenous peoples and lands and territories.
- h. Urge all Governments must ensure that there is active and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in the decision-making processes affecting them. Govt. must ensure that indigenous peoples are fully informed, consulted and provide consent with regard to policies, plans, programmes and projects on indigenous peoples lands, and territories.

~~Mr. Chairperson,~~

In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goal, particularly on the poverty alleviation and eradication, I strongly urge to mainstreaming of indigenous peoples' issues and the recognition of indigenous peoples rights within the UN system and the States policies. It is must that the recognition and full participation in decision making and implementing process of the national development of indigenous peoples.

In closing, I strongly urge all the right to self-determination, self-development and self-governance of the indigenous peoples should be respected in their respective countries as a conflict resolution measure and the development of indigenous peoples.

Thank You Chair,

Kumar Yonjon TAMANG,
Nepal