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Presented by Ms. Rosalie Little Thunder
7th Generation Fund (Collective)

The United Nations
Economic and Social Council
Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Esteemed Members of the Permanent Forum,

Seventh Generation Fund, American Indian Law Alliance, Maya Vision, Tonatierra, and Owe Aku Tiospaye express gratitude to the Permanent Forum for providing this time and space for the attention of the United Nations to the Indigenous Peoples of the world, madam chair, and congratulate you on your election. We further express our deepest gratitude to all the Indigenous leaders that have traveled great distances to represent their communities and who work tirelessly to lessen the suffering of the oppressed and to protect our plant and animal relatives.

I come before you under the Millennium Development Goal 2, to achieve universal primary education. I call your attention again to the overdue and increasing need to protect those species of beings that are held sacred by Indigenous peoples all over this world. These Sacred Species have proven to be the unfailingly wise teachers of careful and respectful survival upon Grandmother Earth. Sacred Species are the true indicators of the health of the Earth. This is the Indigenous education that our children have a right to and who, in their maturity, will bear the leadership responsibility for educating further generations in that same careful and respectful survival.

We again appeal to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to enlist the assistance of UNESCO, UNEP, and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in the following activities:

1. Disburse information concerning this Global Campaign to Protect Sacred Species to Indigenous Peoples,
2. Support regional conferences concerning the traditional knowledge of Sacred Species,
3. Assist Indigenous communities to preserve traditional knowledge of Sacred Species for their own educational purposes,
4. Prepare and disburse a global report on the status of Sacred Species, and
5. In each region, facilitate appropriate strategies for the protection of Sacred Species.

In providing primary education for children, we must give special attention to the content of that education. We can not educate our children that all of Earth's resources are only to be managed for the comfort of humanity. We must educate our future generations that all beings, according to Natural Law, have a purpose and are all related and will support humanity if treated respectfully.

In this endeavor, we request the Permanent Forum include the achievement of Conferences to Protect Sacred Species in eight regions of the Indigenous world and a final report on the Status of the Sacred Species of Indigenous Peoples be a goal for the Second Decade. We furthermore request a commitment of support from UNESCO, UNEP, and MEA in this endeavor become a measure in the evaluation of the Permanent Forum in the 5th session.

We believe that Indigenous Peoples hold the sacred knowledge of survival and in these times of violence and destruction, if shared and held sacred by others, can be the way to peace and prosperity.

We thank you for your precious time and attention. We appreciate the wise voices of all of our brothers and sisters. Mitakuye Oyas'in. We are all related.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie Little Thunder, Chair

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