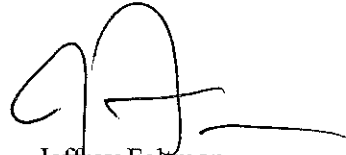


Note to Mr. Hongbo

**DPA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE REPORT OF THE
PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES**

As requested, please find attached a summary of the actions undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs on indigenous issues during 2012.

I am encouraged by the cooperation of our two Departments on this important issue and look forward to continue strengthening our collaboration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JF', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeffrey Feltman
22 January 2013

DPA's activities related to indigenous peoples

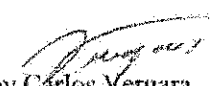
1. In February-March 2012, DPA/Americas Division provided support to the UN Resident Coordinator in Panama, who, along the OHCHR Regional Representative, facilitated dialogue between the Government of Panama and representatives of the Ngäbe Buglé indigenous peoples. The UN facilitation was in support to the mediation of the Catholic Church of Panama. The main result of the dialogue was the approval of legislation banning mining and protecting water and environmental resources in the Ngäbe-Buglé region.
2. In Colombia, starting in June 2012, the UN Country Team, with the cooperation of the DPA-supported Peace and Development Advisor, facilitated a series of conversations between the Government of Colombia and the indigenous communities of the northern Cauca region, following tensions in that area. The Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide (OSAPG) continued working with colleagues inside and outside of the United Nations system to monitor the status of establishment/implementation of the *planes de salvaguarda* (safeguard plans) mandated by the Constitutional Court in Colombia for the protection of 35 indigenous groups at risk of extinction. This monitoring builds upon an assessment visit to the country, with a particular focus on the situation of the Awa community, undertaken by the OSAPG in July 2010 in cooperation with the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
3. Also in Colombia, in early September, the UN was requested by the Congressional Peace Commissions, to organize Regional Gatherings (*Mesas Regionales*) to collect civil society inputs on the first three substantive issues to be discussed in the context of the peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the guerrillas of the Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC): rural development, political participation and the drug problem. In October 2012, members of DPA's Stand-By Team carried out a mission to Colombia to support those efforts. Close to 3000 people representing a broad swath of civil society, including representatives of indigenous peoples associations, participated in nine different regions and prepared proposals for the peace talks.
4. With a view to strengthen the Department's understanding of issues related to indigenous peoples, DPA's Focal Point on Indigenous Issues participated in the Fourth Intensive Course on Truth Commissions. The course was organized by the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and the Barcelona City Council. The course took place from 23 to 28 September 2012 in Barcelona, Spain. Its curricula included a segment on the inclusion of the rights of indigenous peoples in the design and implementation of truth commissions.
5. In October 2012, the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum (CPPF) organized, in coordination with DPA/Americas Division, a one-day meeting on Gender in Latin

America and the Caribbean. One of the meeting's segments addressed the role of indigenous women leaders in Latin America. The meeting benefitted from the participation of one staff member of the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (DESA).

6. Two staff members of DPA/Americas Division participated in a one-day meeting, organized also by CPPF, to share best practices regarding the prevention and management of extractive conflicts in Central America. Participants discussed the following topics: a) mining trends in Central America; b) the impact of extractive industries on indigenous peoples; c) development and sustainability of extractive industries; and d) conflict prevention mechanisms. The UN Resident Coordinators in Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Panama, as well as the Deputy Resident Representative in Honduras participated in the meeting. Relevant UN entities, including BCPR, ILO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNEP and UNIPA also attended. Participants benefitted from the participation of Doctor Mirna Cunningham (Nicaragua), the former Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The meeting took place in Panama City, Panama, on 7 November 2012.

7. In December 2012, DPA deployed an expert of its Stand-By Team to Santiago, Chile to advise the UN Country Team in the provision of technical support to a consultative meeting with 200 indigenous leaders entitled "Great Gathering of Indigenous Peoples regarding Prior Consultation" [*Gran Encuentro de los Pueblo Indígenas sobre Consulta Previa*]. The meeting took place from 30 November to 2 December 2012 and was organized by the government entity specialized on indigenous issues, the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONADI) [*Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena*]. The meeting's objective was to discuss a regulatory mechanism for the implementation of ILO Convention 169 provisions on consultation. During the meeting, UN staffers from the ILO and OHCHR presented guidelines on the ILO Convention 169. The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of indigenous peoples, Professor James Anaya, participated via videoconference.

8. The 'UN Peacemaker' online tool for mediators allows users to specifically search for peace agreements mentioning "Minorities, Indigenous Peoples and Other Groups" within a database of 750 documents. This includes Indigenous People's rights/identity, land rights, religion/culture/language, participation or representation. UN Peacemaker will be re-launched in January 2013. UN Peacemaker is part of the overall effort of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to provide advice and support to the UN Secretary-General, his Representatives, Member States and practitioners in their efforts to resolve international disputes and internal conflicts.


Compiled by Carlos Vergara,
DPA's Focal Point on Indigenous Issues
18 January 2013