



United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

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Communication from the Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues:

A Third International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples

In 1993 the General Assembly proclaimed the 1994-2003 as the First Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples following the first International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Ten years later, the General Assembly proclaimed a Second Decade, to commence on 1 January 2015, which comes to an end on 31 December 2014.

Over the course of the two Decades, we have seen some progress. The two decades have contributed to a growing awareness of the situation of Indigenous peoples and the urgent need to promote, protect and respect their human rights. The most important milestone was the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. The past two decades have also seen the establishment of the Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Earlier this year the General Assembly organized a High-level Plenary Meeting known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples that resulted in an Outcome Document that contains numerous commitments by Member States to take concrete action to implement the principles contained in the UN Declaration.

These are all important and necessary steps. However, we need to ensure and reinvigorate momentum to genuinely implement the UN Declaration and the Outcome Document. The first two decades helped advance the recognition of Indigenous peoples' human rights and laid the foundation for taking action. Now is the time for action.

A Third Decade can provide a framework and consolidate clear milestones for the achievement of the UN Declaration and the Outcome Document, while ensuring sustained, continued and focused attention and action on indigenous peoples at the international level. In this respect, a Third Decade can promote strengthened dialogue and cooperation between Indigenous peoples, member states and UN agencies in order to achieve the aims of the Declaration with the support of the overall UN system, especially at the national and local level.

It is essential that we build on the work that has already begun and that we take advantage of the momentum that we have gathered. A Third International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples that focuses on the comprehensive implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples can assist us in maintaining and adding to this momentum.

I urge Member States to follow up on their commitments and to take further advantage of this opportunity to continue to work with Indigenous peoples in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect.