

December 2013



**UN General Assembly: Third Committee
on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

ECOSOC Resumed Session

**Global Conference on Indigenous Women,
Lima, Peru**

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Meeting on Sexual Health and
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**Forthcoming UNPFII Flagship
Publication: Indigenous Peoples' Access to
Health Services – The State of the World's
Indigenous Peoples**

*The Message Stick¹ highlights the activities
undertaken by the United Nations Permanent
Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) as
well as its Secretariat.*

¹ A Message Stick is a traditional Australian Aboriginal method of correspondence whereby runners would deliver messages carved in symbols on a piece of wood to inform other indigenous peoples of upcoming events.

**UN General Assembly: Rights of
Indigenous Peoples**



Mr. Kanyinke Sena, Chair of the Permanent Forum, at a press conference at UN Headquarters on 21 October 2013, as the Third Committee of the General Assembly discusses the rights of indigenous peoples. Photo: Broddi Sigurdarson

On 21 October 2013, the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly discussed the rights of indigenous peoples (agenda item 66). On behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, provided an overview of recent activities related to the Permanent Forum and the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples (2005-2014). Among other issues, The USG highlighted (i) the



findings of the Permanent Forum's expert group meeting on indigenous youth (January 2013), (ii) the increased participation of indigenous peoples with disabilities in UN-related events, including at Forum sessions and the recent UN High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disabilities and Development; (iii) the fact that indigenous women often face triple-discrimination on the basis of their indigenous identity, gender and economic status, and (iv) the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014 and the on-going preparations. The USG reaffirmed the importance of the event as an opportunity to support and strengthen the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. He noted the on-going activities by indigenous peoples for the World Conference that were taking place, including the global preparatory meeting held in Alta, Norway. Looking ahead, Mr. Wu reiterated that "in my capacity as Coordinator of the Second Decade, I want to ensure that States and the UN system engage in genuine partnership with indigenous peoples. We all want the World Conference to be a real success that can improve the lives of indigenous peoples. The World Conference will be important in defining the future global policy agenda on indigenous peoples. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples constitutes the normative framework for this work."

The Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples presented his latest report in which he reflected on his methods of work and lessons learned, and addressed commitment and action by States and other actors to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). During the discussion Member States focused on (i) the preparations for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, (ii) national processes and initiatives to ensure the provisions of the UNDRIP were being implemented, and (iii) the inclusion of

indigenous peoples in the post-2015 development agenda.

Organized by the UN Department of Public Information, a press conference was held with the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum, Mr. Kanyinke Sena, and Mirna Cunningham, member of the Permanent Forum, as well as the Special Rapporteur, to explore issues discussed during the Third Committee meeting in greater detail.

The meeting documents from the general discussion are available [here](#) and the webcasts of both the Third Committee meeting and the press conference are available online at webtv.un.org.

General Assembly Resolution on the rights of indigenous peoples (A/C.3/68/L.30/Rev.1)

On 26 November 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution on the rights of indigenous peoples, which referred to the Alta outcome document as well as other proposals by indigenous peoples be taken into account when preparing the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

The draft Resolution is available at: www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/C.3/68/L.30/Rev.1. The final version will be available at www.un.org/indigenous once it has been finalized.

ECOSOC Resumed Session

During ECOSOC's annual meeting in July 2013 the decision to take note of the twelfth session report of the Permanent Forum was deferred. A resumed session took place in November 2013 where ECOSOC adopted the draft decisions on (i) the UNPFII expert group meeting on sexual health and reproductive rights (15-17 January 2013), (ii) the venue and dates for the thirteenth session of the Permanent Forum (12-23 May 2014),



and (iii) the provisional agenda for the thirteenth session of the Permanent Forum.

With regard to draft decision (iv) on changing the name of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to the 'Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples', ECOSOC decided to "request the Permanent Forum to continue the consideration (...) and to inform the Council of the outcome".

The report of the twelfth session of the Permanent Forum is available here: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2013/43.

Global Conference on Indigenous Women



Over 300 indigenous women from all over the globe gathered in Lima, Peru, from 28 to 30 October 2013 to prepare for the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in September 2014. The conference was a strategic opportunity to enable indigenous youth and women from the seven socio-cultural regions of the world to be informed, reach consensus and establish a common position for the WCIP 2014. Members of the Permanent Forum – Ms. Mirna Cunningham, Ms. Dalee Sambo Dorrough and Mr. Alvaro Pop – and its Secretariat participated at the conference.

The final declaration covers themes related to the responsibility to protect the environment, indigenous peoples' relation to their ancestral

lands, and the sovereign jurisdiction over their lands, the right to self-governance and free, prior and informed consent. It also includes indigenous women's right to freely pursue their own economic, social and cultural development, and the right to culturally appropriate health and education services in their own communities and discrimination.

The Lima Declaration is available in full at:

http://cdn6.iitc.org/wp-content/uploads/182171104-Lima-Declaration_web.pdf

More information about the event is available at <http://mujerindigena.com>.

Annual Meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues



Participants at the annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. Photo: UNICEF

The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) held its annual meeting on 22 and 23 October 2013 at UNICEF Headquarters in New York. The meeting covered issues such as (i) IASG preparations for the World Conference and its strategic linkages with the post-2015 development agenda; (ii) discussions of thematic IASG papers to provide substantive contributions to the WCIP 2014; (iii) follow-up to the twelfth session of the Permanent Forum - with a particular focus on Africa;

and (iv) updates on inter-agency initiatives. Chaired this year by UNICEF, the meeting was attended by SPFII members – Chair, Mr. Kanyinke Sena, Ms. Mirna Cunningham and Mr. Alvaro Pop – and focal points on indigenous peoples from the UN system, as well as the Permanent Representative of Mexico and representatives from Global Coordinating Group for the World Conference (GCG), and the Sámi Parliament of Norway.

The IASG will prepare thematic papers on violence, governance, education, health, indigenous persons with disabilities, reproductive health, land rights and environment as contribution to the World Conference and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Ms. Mirna Cunningham, Permanent Forum Member, Designated as Special Ambassador for FAO's International Year of Family Farming



*Ms. Mirna Cunningham, Member of the Permanent Forum, and Mr. José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO.
Photo: UN photo/Ryan Brown*

On 22 November 2013, the UN launched the 2014 International Year of Family Farming to stress the potential of family farmers to eradicate hunger and preserve natural resources. Ms. Mirna Cunningham, member of the Permanent Forum, was designated as special ambassador for Latin America and the Caribbean for the Year.

More information about the international year is available via FAO at:

<http://www.fao.org/family-farming-2014>.

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

Intersessional meeting between major groups and other stakeholders and the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals

The Co-chairs convened this interactive dialogue to discuss key cross-cutting issues for the post-2015 sustainable development framework and SDGs, including:

- Practical approaches to rights-based SDGs that include all dimensions of sustainable development;
- How can the SDGs be designed to eliminate poverty and inequalities and lead to inclusiveness;
- Making good governance, enabling environment and institutions and multi-stakeholder partnerships the core of implementing the SDGs; and
- Designing SDGs that foster human and economic development within planetary boundaries (including climate change and natural resources management).

Ms. Mirna Cunningham participated at the session, and highlighted indigenous forms of governance as a contribution to achieve sustainable development, with emphasis on their right to self-determination as a key element.

On 25 November 2013, Ms. Mirna Cunningham also participated at the informal consultations on the theme of sustained and inclusive economic growth, to reinforce the need to include indigenous peoples' rights and perspectives in the ongoing discussion.

More information is available at:

sustainabledevelopment.un.org.

Forthcoming: UNPFII Expert Group Meeting on Sexual Health and Reproductive Rights (15-17 January 2014)

The Permanent Forum will organize an expert group meeting (EGM) on sexual health and reproductive rights at UN Headquarters in New York from 15 to 17 January 2014.

This meeting will explore research and analysis, identify good practices and lessons learned and develop policy recommendations to enrich the work of the Permanent Forum and of the UN system.

To attend the meeting please contact Mr. Broddi Sigurdarson (sigurdarson@un.org).

Forthcoming UNPFII Flagship Publication: Indigenous Peoples' Access to Health Services – the State of the World's Indigenous Peoples

SPFII is currently preparing the next edition of its State of the World's Indigenous Peoples. This edition will focus on indigenous peoples' access to health services and will be published by the end of 2013/early 2014.

The 2010 edition covers issues related to poverty and well-being; culture; environment; contemporary education; health; human rights and emerging issues. It is available for download at:

www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/SOWIP_web.pdf.

