



MESSAGE STICK

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Quarterly Newsletter

Vol.2. No.2. April to June 2004

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Welcome to the already fourth issue of MESSAGE STICK¹, the Newsletter from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues! It seems only yesterday that the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues started producing MESSAGE STICK, and we are already growing bigger! Given the success of previous issues, and given numerous petitions for it, we are pleased to announce that from now on MESSAGE STICK will be also made available in Spanish, French and Russian, so that the activities of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues can reach and be known by more people around the world.

In this fourth issue of MESSAGE STICK, we present the activities that the Permanent Forum has undertaken during the months of April, May and June of 2004.

Of especial importance, of course, has been the Third Session of the UNPFII that was held in New York from 10 to 21 May 2004. More than a thousand representatives from NGOs, IPOs and civil society, representatives from 68 countries and 33 organizations of the UN System attended and participated in the Third Session.

The launching of the new UNPFII's website has also been an important event. We have tried to create a user-friendly website in which documents and all information regarding the UNPFII can be easily found. We will be happy to hear your comments and suggestions about it! We would also be pleased to receive comments on the new UNPFII Recommendations Database, which displays and organizes all the recommendations provided by the Forum at its different sessions and their status of implementation. We hope you find it useful, and look forward to your feedback. For any matters, you can contact us at the following address: indigenouspermanentforum@un.org

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.

The Secretariat of the UNPFII



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April

The month of April witnessed the preparations for the Third Session of the UNPFII at the Secretariat of the Forum. Throughout the month, the Secretariat met with the different UN Departments to coordinate preparations for the Third Session, pre-registered numerous participants for the Session, prepared background documentation and conference room papers, organized side events and studied the information provided by Governments and organizations of the UN system regarding the implementation of the UNPFII recommendations from previous sessions.

A pre-sessional briefing for Member States, agencies and NGOs was provided by the SPFII on the 28 April.

The Secretariat of the UNPFII elaborated a database of recommendations that displays the recommendations provided by the UNPFII and classifies them according to organization to which the recommendation is addressed, level of priority, status of implementation, recommendation number and session in which it was produced. The status of implementation of the recommendations was prepared by the SPFII in consultation with the

UN system, and made available to all the members of the UNPFII. The database is now available to the public through the UNPFII's website on the following address:

<http://unhq-appspub-01.un.org/desa/unspfii.nsf>

Its launching took place in June!

On 1 April 2004, the Principals of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) held their annual meeting to decide on the UNDG priorities for the year 2004. Indigenous issues were included as one of the UNDG priorities.

Also during the month of April, the SPFII convened the Inter-Agency Support Group to seek their inputs in order to introduce indigenous issues in a revision of the UNDAF/CCA Guidelines. These guidelines provide the base and orientation for the implementation of development programmes and projects in the field of all the United Nations agencies and programmes.

The SPFII elaborated a contribution to the evaluation of the Indigenous' Peoples Decade, which was submitted on the 12th of April.

May

The month of May was the month of the Third Session of the UNPFII. The Third Session took place from



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10 to 21 May 2004 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The special theme for this session was "Indigenous Women". Participation in the Session included:

- About a thousand NGO, IPO, academic and other civil society representatives, with a very strong participation of indigenous women.
- 68 member states and the Holy See.
- Some 33 organizations from the UN system and other intergovernmental entities, which shows a clear growing engagement of the international system with the Permanent Forum.

With regard to the special theme of the Session, "Indigenous Women", the Forum adopted an impressive body of recommendations, enriching international policies on gender and making a valuable contribution to the 10-year review of the Beijing Conference on Women. Twelve pages of recommendations were adopted.

This session, not least through the voices of indigenous women, also brought into focus the grave impact of conflict on indigenous communities and the need for them to have a meaningful voice in conflict resolution and peace building. A number of

recommendations were adopted by the Forum on this subject.

The Forum's lively meetings were complemented by 42 side events, showing the vitality and engagement of your constituencies, indigenous peoples, the UN system, governments and the media. An international funders meeting was held in New York in the context of the Forum's session.

Two pre-session training courses were held for indigenous participants to the UNPFII Forum, on the 6 and 10 May respectively at the United Nations Headquarters.

You will find all the information regarding the Third Session of the UNPFII on our website, at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_1.htm

The month of May was also the month during which the new website of the UNPFII was launched. It is now available on the following address: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/index.html>. The new website intends to organize and display the information in a more user-friendly manner.

As the end of the current membership of the UNPFII



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approaches, the ECOSOC held elections to choose the members for the next three-year period from January 2005 to December 2007. Please visit our website to access the list of newly elected members for the upcoming period at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/Members2005_2007.htm

Also in May, Mr. Magga, Chairperson of the UNPFII, participated at a high-level panel of the Annual Session of the Forum on Forests in Geneva.

Mr. Turpo, Member of the UNPFII, attended the UNESCO Regional Conference of national commissions, which was held from 3 to 7 May 2004 in Oranjestad, Aruba.

June

After the Third Session of the UNPFII, a post-session briefing for the Friends of the Forum and agencies of the UN system about the Third Session was held, and the Secretariat submitted for processing the Report of the Third Session of the Forum.

During the first weeks of June, the SPFII posted all the information, speeches, documents and pictures of the Third Session on the UNPFII's website. You can access

the special page for the Third Session at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_1.htm. A special version of the page in Spanish will soon be available. UN Press releases for each of the days of the session are also available on the website, in English, French and Spanish. Please click on the following link to access them: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/pressreleases3rdsession.htm>. There you will also find links to other press coverage of the Forum.

Also during the month of June, the SPFII convened the Task Force on Indigenous Women/ IANWGE, which will work to include the issue of indigenous women in all the work of the United Nations regarding women.

Mr. Jacanamijoy, Member of the UNPFII, attended the XVII Assembly of the Indigenous Parliament of America, that took place in Quito, Ecuador, from 2 to 5 June 2004. Mr. Tamang, member of the UNPFII participated in the 20th session of UNFCCC chairpersons of SBI and SBSTA, held in Bonn from 17 to 19 June.

Also during this month, Mr. Jacanamijoy travelled to Santiago, Chile, to participate in the VI General Assembly of the Forum of the Development of Indigenous



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Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, 21 to 25 June 2004. Ms. Mililani Trask, member of the UNPFII participated in the ECOSOC Panel discussion on mainstreaming gender that was held on 22 June at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

the UN System. Have a look at our database on this address: <http://unhq-appspub-01.un.org/desa/unspfii.nsf> and let us know what you think about it! As usual, your comments and suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Given the success of Message Stick and the number of requests the SPFII has received to have Message Stick in other official UN languages, the SPFII has started producing Message Stick in French, Spanish and Russian. The Spanish version of Message Stick is already on our website, available at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/quarterlynewsle_home1.htm. French and Russian versions will be available soon as well.

SPFII prepared contributions to the Secretary-General's Report on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1395 on women in armed conflict as well as the Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Organization.

The official launching of the UNPFII's Recommendations Database took place in June as well! It is now possible to access the list of recommendations provided by the Forum at its sessions and revise the status of their implementation, as prepared by the SPFII in consultation with