



MESSAGE STICK

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Quarterly Newsletter

Prepared by the United Nations Secretariat for the Permanent
Forum on Indigenous Issues
Division for Social Policy and Development, DESA, United Nations

Vol.3. No.1. January to March 2005

CONTENTS

Introduction

Highlights of activities:

International Expert Workshop on Methodologies regarding Free, Prior and Informed Consent and Indigenous Issues

Representation of the UNPFII at important meetings of relevance to its mandate

Inter-Agency Cooperation

Indigenous Women's Issues

Tsunami Disaster

STICK¹, the newsletter that highlights the activities undertaken by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and its Secretariat for the period from January to March 2005.

UNPFII members participated in various international meetings invited by different UN Agencies, Inter-Governmental organizations and indigenous organization such as IFAD, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the IADB and they attended meetings organized by indigenous organizations.

The International Expert Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free Prior and Informed Consent and Indigenous Peoples took place in New York in January 2005.

Also, Inter-Agency cooperation has being increasing, in particular with the UN Youth Unit.

During the CSW many indigenous women participated and a resolution was adopted, the first ever of its kind.

Special pages on our website were created on important issues, especially on the forthcoming session of the UNPFII.

We hope that you will find this edition of the Message Stick informative and useful. We look forward to receiving your feedback and may be reached at the following address for comments, questions, and suggestions:

indigenoupermanentforum@un.org

Secretariat of the UNPFII

Welcome to the
MESSAGE

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.

Representation of the UNPFII at important meetings of relevance to its mandate

Participation of Ms. Nina Pacari at the Indigenous Advisory Council of indigenous specialists and leaders at the IADB, Washington DC.

Mr. Jacanamijoy had attended the Inter-American Development Bank's consultation process for the *Strategic Framework for Indigenous Development and the Operational Policy for Indigenous People* in November 2004 and Ms. Pacari attended the follow-up meeting held in January 2005 in Washington DC.

To read the *Strategic Framework for Indigenous Development and the operational Policy for the Indigenous People*, please visit http://www.iadb.org/sds/IND/site_401_e.htm

Participation of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz and Ms. Ida Nicolaisen at the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

The SPFII organized a high-level panel on Integrating Indigenous Peoples' Perspectives on Development to Reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in cooperation with Tebtebba Foundation and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The side event was held within the framework of the 2005 Governing Council meeting of IFAD in Rome from 15-17 February 2005.

The panelists was comprised of indigenous experts from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, Permanent Forum Members, IFAD staff, as well as government representatives from the Republic of Finland and the Republic of the Philippines.

Ms. Nicolaisen stated that "The achievement of the MDGs not only requires a truly global partnership at all levels, but also an understanding of the sensitivities and needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable people in our global society, and the underlying factors responsible for creating these conditions. Indigenous peoples constitute more than 370 million of the world's population, and make up approximately 90 percent of the world's linguistic diversity. They also inhabit most of the world's areas with the highest amount of biodiversity".

Ms. Stamatopoulou, Chief of the SPFII highlighted that "One of the main recommendations made by the Forum in its first 3 sessions is that those agencies, funds and programmes that have not already done so should adopt policies on indigenous peoples—and this has already been the case with UNDP, WHO, ADB and the Council of Europe. We also know that UNICEF is working on such a policy at the regional level in Latin America and that the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank are in the process of finalizing such a policy".

Additional information and statements presented at the high-level panel are available at the Permanent Forum website: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/MDGs/MDGs_IFAD_side%20event.htm

Participation of Ms. Tauli-Corpuz at the Round table in preparation for the upcoming High Level Segment of ECOSOC

Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz made a statement on 16 March 2005 at this roundtable on how the international community must focus on indigenous peoples when develop strategies to achieve the MDGs. The Roundtable was organized in preparation for the upcoming High Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council from 29 June - 1 July.

The results of the fourth UNPFII session will make a valuable contribution to the 2005 regular session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) especially its high level segment which is devoted to "Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities".

Participation of Mr. Littlechild at the preparatory meeting for Phase II of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) - International Indigenous Thematic Planning Conference.

At its third session in May 2004 the UNPFII recommended that the UN system continue its advocacy work on indigenous connectivity in preparation for Phase II of WSIS, taking into account the outcomes of the Global Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Information Society. The Permanent Forum applauded and supported the decision taken by WSIS to establish multi-stakeholder portals that allow communication between indigenous peoples at the national level.

Within this context, an International Indigenous Thematic Planning Conference was organized by the Aboriginal Canadian Portal Working Group in conjunction with its National Connecting Aboriginal Peoples Forum and the SPFII. This meeting was held from 14 to 18 March 2005 in Ottawa to prepare for WSIS phase II that will take place in Tunisia in November 2005.

Please find attached the Draft Summary Report (*Annex 1*) of the conference, as delivered to all participants for more information also visit our website at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/WSIS/newsottawaevent.htm>

Participation of Mr. Littlechild at the proclamation of Indigenous Peoples Day in Phoenix, Arizona.

Mr. Littlechild on behalf of the UNPFII received a proclamation of Indigenous Peoples Day from Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon in March 12th, a promoting worldwide recognition of the term.

Mr. Tupac Enrique Acosta, coordinator of Tonatierra community action organization in Phoenix, said Gordon's recognition of the term "indigenous peoples" and what it represents sends a signal to the governments of the world, he also highlighted that this recognition reveals that grassroots-level action is the basis for global change.

Mr. Littlechild spoke to the gathering's working groups on the importance of economic development and self-determination in indigenous communities and addressed international treaty obligations, which bind the states to recognize and protect the rights of indigenous peoples within the global context of migratory workers' human rights.

International Expert Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free Prior and Informed Consent and Indigenous Peoples

The principle of free, prior and informed consent was identified as a major challenge by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its first, second and third sessions. In response to Forum's recommendation and the Economic and Social Council decision 2004/287 of 22 July 2004, the SPFII convened an International Expert Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free Prior and Informed

Consent and Indigenous Peoples from 17 to 19 January 2005.

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/library/coimbrareport.pdf>

The Workshop was attended by Mr. Littlechild, Ms. Nicolaisen, Mr. Tamang and Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, members of the UNPFII; 67 experts from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, Governments and indigenous organizations. The Workshop examined the international and domestic instruments and practices relevant to the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), heard examples of the application of the principle, identified challenges and made recommendations to the Permanent Forum. In its conclusions and recommendations, the Workshop identified elements of a common understanding of free, prior and informed consent as well as a number of recommendations of a general nature, and specific recommendations addressing participation, capacity building, and good practices for the consideration of the Permanent Forum at its fourth session.

The conclusions and recommendations, which appear in chapter IV of the report of the Workshop (E/C.19/2005/3) have been posted on the web site of the Permanent Forum at http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_workshop_fpic.htm

Inter-Agency Cooperation

The SPFII in cooperation with the UN Youth Unit sponsored Ms. Jennifer Awingan, an indigenous young leader from Asia, to participate in the consultative meeting on youth in preparation for the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. The event was held in Portugal, from 31 January to 3 February 2005. As a result, a number of recommendations were made, relevant to indigenous youth. Information can be accessed at:

Indigenous Women's Issues

a. Presentation of the Task Force on Indigenous Women (TFIW) report to the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE)

The TFIW was initiated following a decision of IANGWE at its February 2004 session and the recommendations of the Permanent Forum at its third session regarding indigenous women. The short-term goals of the TFIW accomplished until now were reported to the annual session of the IANGWE in February 2005. The report is available at the Forum's website at http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/Report_Task%20Force_%20on_IW_final.doc. The goal of the TFIW in the coming years is to identify successful examples and disseminate this information, follow-up on specific recommendations of the UNPFII and produce practical tools.

b. 10- year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) and the Outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000).

The SPFII promoted the participation of indigenous women at official and other events held in March 2005 within the context of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Some sixty indigenous women were present. Indigenous women participated in a total of seven official and side events, held two press conferences, attended an one-week training seminar, adopted a declaration and proposed a resolution that was finally adopted at the Commission of the Status of Women, the first ever of its kind. Ms.

Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Nobel Peace Laureat, participated in the official celebration of International Women's Day and Ms. Felicitas Martinez Solano, an indigenous young woman from Mexico, participated as a keynote speaker on the panel on "Future perspectives of the promotion of gender equality: through the eyes of young women and men".

The SPFII also organized a side event on "Indigenous Women: 10 years after Beijing". The panelists were Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, Member of the UNPFII; Ms. Lucy Mulenkei, African Indigenous Women's Organization - Indigenous Information Network; Ms. Tarcila Rivera, CHIRAPAQ, Centro de Culturas Indígenas del Perú; Ms. Stela Tamang, South Asia Indigenous Women Forum and Ms. Beverley Jacobs, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada. The SPFII also hosted two press conferences for indigenous women and cooperated closely with MADRE and the International Indigenous Women Forum for other panels and a week-long training workshop for the more than sixty indigenous women leaders present during the Commission on the Status of Women.

c. The SPFII launched a webpage on the website of the Forum devoted to Indigenous Women.

For more information related to the meeting, please visit our website at:
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/womenindig_ht_MMtmp735d76bf/womenindig.htm

News from the Secretariat of the UNPFII

Participation of Ms. Stamatopoulou, Chief of the SPFII at the World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil

Since 2001, the World Social Forum (WSF) has been held annually as a civil society

counterpoint to the World Economic Forum, which brings together the world's political and business elite in the Swiss resort town of Davos every year. For the first time ever at this year's WSF (Porto Alegre, Brazil, 26 to 31 January), specific space and activities for indigenous participants were featured.

Ms. Stamatopoulou, Chief of the SPFII, attended the "Puxirum of Indigenous Arts and Knowledge" (PUXIRUM de Artes y Saberes Indígenas) meeting organized by the Coordinating Body for Indigenous Organisations of the Amazon Basin (COICA). "We are the other world," declared the organizers of the indigenous segment of this year's World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, the fifth global gathering of non-governmental groups under the theme, "Another world is possible". The diversity dialogues addressed the problems and aspirations of indigenous peoples from around the world, such as land rights and sustainable settlements, traditional knowledge, constitutional rights, autonomous systems of justice and self-governance, and diversity as a dimension of democracy.

Ms. Stamatopoulou, also participated at the conference on human rights, education and gender where she highlighted themes as: (i) Indigenous women and the international indigenous movements, (ii) Special challenges within the international human rights system regarding indigenous women, (iii) Conceptual issues and other challenges regarding patriarchy and indigenous women.

Relevant information launched on the UNPFII Website and preparations for the fourth session of the UNPFII

In the New Year, 2005, the SPFII launched important information on the website regarding:

- New Members for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for January 2005 to December 2007: in this webpage the Members picture, a short bio or curriculum vitae were included.
- Regarding the fourth session of the UNPFII, an information note for indigenous peoples' organizations, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC was posted in English, Spanish, French and Russian. Please find this information in the following link:
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/4session/4session.htm>
- A special webpage on Phase II of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) / International Indigenous Thematic Planning Conference was posted, this information is available in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese, to read the information please visit our website:
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/WSIS/newsottawaevent.htm>
- The General Assembly proclaimed the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People on 22 December 2004, commencing on 1 January 2005. A note inviting contributions from indigenous peoples organizations, non-governmental organizations and Member States and the United Nations system on the Programme of Activities for the Second Decade was issued by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in February 2005. The resolution on the Second Decade (A/59/174) is available in languages at the UNPFII website:
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_2.htm

The SPFII has been working on preparations for the next session of the Forum. Contributions received show that most agencies integrated in their reports elements of the special theme of the fourth session,

Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples. The special website on MDGs was created and it has general and specific information such as: the Millennium Declaration, MDGs Country Reports, the Millennium Campaign, MDGs Global Watch, Civil Society Organizations and MDGs, for the Technical paper on MDGs by the IASG on Indigenous Issues, "Integrating Indigenous peoples' perspectives on development to reach the MDGs", among other information, please see:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/MDGs/MDGs_IPO_campaign1.htm

The UNPFII data base is being updated according to the information provided by the UN agencies on implementation of Permanent Forum recommendations. It will appear on the website as soon as it is available at <http://unhq-appspub-01.un.org/desa/unspfii.nsf>

The UNPFII sent a commentary to the Millennium Project, in September 2004, indicating that indigenous peoples are lagging behind other parts of the population in connection with the Goals in most, if not all, the countries in which they live, and indigenous women commonly face additional gender-based disadvantages and discrimination. Following this commentary, the final report of the United Nations Millennium Project issued in January 2005 mentions indigenous and tribal peoples in Chapters 7, 8, 11 and 12, the final report can be found at:

<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/fullreport.htm>.

The SPFII conducted a preliminary desk review of 20 MDGs country reports from countries with indigenous or tribal populations and noted that 68% of these MDGs country reports do not integrate or respond to the indigenous or tribal peoples' situation and concerns. The MDG country reports may be accessed through website:

<http://www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports.html>.

Tsunami Disaster

The SPFII has been attending weekly meetings of the Inter Agency Standing Committee of the United Nations Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs and other meetings of its Inter-Agency Task Force on Tsunami, which provide updates on

the humanitarian situation in various countries, as well as the status of relief operations. Upon the onset of the Tsunami disaster, the SPFII brought up the issue of the indigenous communities adversely affected by the Tsunami. The statement of the Permanent Forum is available at the <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>.

TABLE OF NEWS AND ACTIVITIES BY MONTH

JANUARY

- Participation of Ms. Nina Pacari at the Indigenous Advisory Council of indigenous specialists and leaders at the IADB, Washington DC.
- International Expert Workshop on Methodologies Regarding Free Prior and Informed Consent and Indigenous Peoples, United Nations, New York.
- Relevant information launched on the UNPFII Website.

FEBRUARY

- DESA issued a note inviting contributions from indigenous peoples organizations, and Member States and the United Nations system on the Programme of Activities for the Second Decade.
- UN Youth Unit sponsored an indigenous young leader from Asia to attend a meeting in Portugal.
- Participation of Ms. Stamatopoulou, Chief of the SPFII at the World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil.
- Participation of Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz and Ms. Ida Nicolaisen at the Governing Council of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Rome, Italy.
- SPFII preparations for the fourth session of the UNPFII.

- Presentation of the Task Force on Indigenous Women (TFIW) report to the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE), New York
- 10- year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) and the Outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000), New York.
- Participation of Ms. Tauli-Corpuz at the Round table in preparation for the upcoming High Level Segment ECOSOC, New York.
- Participation of Mr. Littlechild at the proclamation of Indigenous Peoples Day in Phoenix, Arizona.
- Participation of Mr. Littlechild at the preparatory meeting for Phase II of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) - International Indigenous Thematic Planning Conference, Ottawa, Canada.

MARCH