



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

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Welcome to the **MESSAGE STICK**¹, the newsletter that highlights the activities undertaken by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and its Secretariat for the period from July to September 2005.

The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) held its annual meeting convened this year by UNICEF, in its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama City, Panama. More than fifteen United Nations (UN) agencies and other intergovernmental organizations were represented at the meeting.

Also, the technical workshop on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge was held in Panama, attended by 12 indigenous experts from various regions, representatives for UN agencies, the Chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and members of the UNPFII.

The world's leaders, meeting at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 14 to 16 September, agreed to take action on a range of global challenges,

including those related to indigenous peoples.

At its fourth session (May 2005) the UNPFII decided to extend the logo competition for another year. The Forum's Secretariat has invited indigenous children everywhere to submit their artwork by 20 December 2005.

UNPFII members were invited to attend various international meetings by different UN Agencies, Inter-Governmental organizations and indigenous organizations.

Preparations for Indigenous peoples' participation at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) phase II is covered in this newsletter.

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:

indigenouspermanentforum@un.org

Secretariat of the UNPFII

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. Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum at the panel of Functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and member states at the ECOSOC Coordination segment on 7 July 2005, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, during the meeting of Chairpersons of the Functional Commissions of ECOSOC, underlined the benefit of an open dialogue with other subsidiary bodies of the Council with the aim of exchanging information on the situation of the lives of the more than 370 million indigenous people around the world in the context of achieving the MDGs. She also expressed the Forum's readiness for cross-fertilization meetings between the different commissions and subsidiary bodies of the ECOSOC.

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz reiterated some practical recommendations: (i) A system should be established so that the secretariats of the functional commissions regularly transmit to other commissions, multi-year programmes of work and agendas of future sessions; (ii) Joint meetings of Bureaux and their secretariats should be instituted, and budgetary provisions should be made from the regular budget to that effect; such meetings should discuss coordination and how to promote multi-disciplinary approaches on subjects of common concern; (iii) Commissions, through their secretariats, should distribute to the other commissions resolutions and recommendations of special relevance to each commission; (iv) Given its mandate to promote mainstreaming of indigenous issues, the other commissions should extend invitations to the Permanent Forum to participate at relevant meetings and the Forum should do the same.

To read Ms. Tauli-Corpuz intervention, please visit the following website:
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/Vicky%27s_speech_ECOSOC.doc

Participation of Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari at the Ibero-American Meeting on the Rights of Indigenous Children and Adolescents, 7 - 8 July 2005, Madrid, Spain

Some indigenous leaders and eighty indigenous children and adolescents from 17 different Latin American countries, together with Ms. Lux de Coti and Ms. Pacari, members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, members of several United Nations agencies and representatives from the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) participated in the meeting, which was organized by the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, with the assistance of AECI and the UNICEF National Committee in Spain.

Her Majesty Queen Sofia of Spain participated in the Ibero-American Meeting whose Final Declaration was presented at the Ibero-American Ministerial Conference on Children and Adolescents in September in León, Spain.

To find the *Final Declaration* and more information about the meet please visit at:
<http://www.unicef.es/contenidos/329>

Participation of Mr. Littlechild at the International Symposium on the World's Indigenous Languages: Coming Together in Diversity, 9 – 11 August, Japan

The International Symposium was organized by the Aboriginal Affairs Branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada in the context of the *Grand Intercultural Symphony, Nature's*

Wisdom (Exposition 2005 theme) and *The Wisdom of Diversity* (Exposition 2005 Canadian theme) which provided a backdrop for the presentation and exploration of international cultural diversity issues, in general, and, specifically, the revitalization and strengthening of the world's indigenous languages through the *International Symposium on the World's Indigenous Languages* at the Expo Aichi 2005, in Japan.

The Symposium provided a forum to discuss the revitalization, preservation and promotion of indigenous languages from international perspectives. Participants were experts and practitioners on endangered and indigenous languages—they were government officials, non-governmental organizations representatives, indigenous educators and activists, representatives of UNESCO, OHCHR and Mr. Littlechild, member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

Please click on the following link to learn about the Symposium:
http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/progs/pa-app/progs/iswil-silim/about_e.cfm

Participation of Ms. Tauli-Corpuz at the panel “In Larger Freedom: The Challenge of Partnerships from Indigenous Peoples’ Perspectives”, presented at the 58th Annual DPI/NGO Conference United Nations, New York, 7-9 Sept. 2005

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the UNPFII was invited to the panel session on “In Larger Freedom: The Challenge of Partnerships” in September 7. This panel highlighted the work of NGOs in support of the Secretary-General’s call to strengthen national and international campaigns to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz highlighted that the establishment of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2000, is one of the best global expressions of partnership between indigenous peoples, governments, intergovernmental bodies, NGOs and academic community. She also mentioned that the Permanent Forum has become the institutional framework for the various actors involved in indigenous peoples’ development to come together and discuss in more detailed studies and proposals on how to address indigenous peoples’ issues.

Ms. Tauli-Corpuz appealed to reinforce further the partnership and solidarity with indigenous peoples. She stated that creating equal partnerships is the route towards a more secure and equal world, towards meaningful and sustainable development, towards larger freedoms.

To read her complete speech, please visit:
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/V_speech_DPI-NGO.doc

Indigenous Women’s Issues

Participation of Ms. Kokajev, at the VI International Meeting on Gender Statistics “from Beijing to the Millennium Development Goals”, 27 - 29 September, Aguascalientes, Mexico.

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was invited to attend this international meeting that included discussions on indigenous women in gender statistics. Ms. Kokajev was invited by UNIFEM, the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (National Institute of Statistic, Geography and Informatics) and the Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (Women National Institute) to address recommendations adopted by the Forum at its third and fourth sessions linking

indigenous women and data collection and disaggregation.

Ms. Kokajev informed the meeting that the UNPFII was concerned with the invisibility and absence of indigenous peoples in statistical data and with the situation of indigenous women who still suffer from multiple forms of discrimination, both as women and as indigenous individuals. She also highlighted the fact that statistical data generated through meaningful participatory processes, taking into account the principle of free, prior and informed consent, constitute a fundamental step for strengthening the capacity of governments and indigenous peoples to evaluate their situation and design participatory solutions.

Ms. Kokajev invited the institutions present to take into account the conclusions and recommendation of the UNPFII regarding data collection and disaggregation for indigenous peoples and especially for indigenous women in their future work. Finally, she suggested to the organizers of the meeting to present its outcome in the next session of the UNPFII, in May 2006.

To find Ms. Kokajev intervention, please visit:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/doc_speeches.htm

Activities of the Task Force on Indigenous Women

The Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Interagency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE), convened by the Secretariat of the Forum, continues its workplan for this year, which is the collection of good practices cases of the UN system's work on indigenous women. The collection will be ready for dissemination next year.

Annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, 19

- 21 September 2005, Panama City, Panama

In September, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG) held its annual meeting convened this year by UNICEF, in its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama City, Panama. The IASG is a group of agencies dedicated to promoting indigenous issues and strengthening coordination between agencies on indigenous issues and twenty-three UN and other intergovernmental organizations are members. More than fifteen United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations were represented at the meeting in Panama, with United Nations staff from headquarters and from country and regional offices. Two members of the UNPFII also participated, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and Mr. Aguiar de Almeida.

This year's meeting focused on strengthening the links between the UNPFII and the work of the United Nations system at regional and country level and reinforcing United Nations coordination at country and regional levels.

The Group decided to request the UN system's Regional Directors in Latin America to identify regional focal points for each agency in the region with the mandate to promote a common regional activity; it recommended to UN Country Teams to create thematic groups on indigenous issues, and establish a follow-up mechanism to ensure that recommendations of the Forum and other indigenous-related policies are implemented at regional and national levels. The Group also discussed how to get involved in the reviewing of UN Common Country Assessments prepared in the region, with a view to strengthening the inclusion of indigenous issues in these country analysis processes, and subsequently in country programmes. Furthermore, the Group suggested that the UNPFII consider

appointing focal points in each country that could advise the Country Team on indigenous issues and promote the recommendations of the Forum. The Group also agreed to prepare a draft tool kit for UN's work with indigenous peoples at country level. Following up on the work of the UNPFII on data collection and disaggregation, a survey of data collection systems in UN agencies and other intergovernmental organizations will be submitted to the Permanent Forum at its next session. These conclusions will be shared with UNDG with a view to expanding such experiences to other regions. In addition, the IASG decided to prepare a paper surveying the indigenous-related indicators within each agency and present it at the Forum's fifth session in May 2006.

Please check our website in the near future for the report of the IASG.

The Technical Workshop on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, 21 - 23 September 2005, Panama City, Panama

The workshop was organized as follow up on the recommendations of the Permanent Forum (E/2005/43) and hosted by the UNICEF Regional for Latin American and the Caribbean. The workshop was attended by 12 indigenous experts from various regions (Latin America, Asia, Pacific, Africa, North America, the Arctic and Russian Federation), representatives from 9 UN agencies, 2 members of the Permanent Forum and the Chairperson / Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

During the two and half day workshop, participants exchanged information and extensively discussed ways on how different United Nations entities working on traditional knowledge can better integrate a more collaborative, complementary and holistic approach to traditional knowledge in order to enhance better understanding of indigenous

concerns and their possible solution. The outstanding quality of papers presented by indigenous experts were highly appreciated; they substantively contributed to formulate specific recommendations to the UN system and other intergovernmental organizations with a view to better integrating indigenous perspectives in their work on traditional knowledge. The report and recommendations were adopted by the workshop and will be submitted to the Fifth Session of the Permanent Forum.

All papers presented at the workshop and the report have been posted on the website of the Secretariat.

DESA Intra- Departmental Cooperation

Consultative meeting on "Strengthening of Local Governments with Indigenous Authorities in Ecuador", 27 – 28 July, Quito, Ecuador

The Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (SPFII) and the Division of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs co-managed an interdivisional project, on issues related to institutional capacity of local governments led by indigenous authorities, within the framework of the recommendations emanating from the third and fourth sessions of the UNPFII.

In July 2005, a consultative meeting with indigenous leaders was organized in Quito, Ecuador. 17 representatives of municipalities with indigenous authorities, including mayors, council members, experts and NGOs representatives expressed the need for a concerted effort to support their institutions on the issues proposed in this project. Those issues include intercultural relations, organizational issues and participation of communities in local governance, institutional relations of Local Governments

with other organizations at regional and national levels, management of resources and information as well as documentation, dissemination of experiences, exchange of good experiences, lessons learned, and sharing of information.

Workshop on Engaging the Marginalized: Partnerships between Indigenous Peoples, Governments and Civil Society (International Conference on Engaging Communities) 14 – 17 August, Brisbane, Australia

The capacity-building workshop on Engaging the Marginalized: Partnerships between Indigenous Peoples, Governments and Civil Society was organized by SPFII in cooperation with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia. It was attended by 160 indigenous individuals, government experts at the local level, representatives of civil society organizations and other interested participants.

The workshop was chaired by Permanent Forum member, Mr. Dodson, and numerous presentations were made on engaging indigenous peoples at the international, national and local levels by SPFII, UNDP, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and indigenous experts from Australia, New Zealand and Bangladesh and New Caledonia (France). A checklist on mechanisms for engaging indigenous peoples in public policy design, and program implementation was then developed based on group discussions amongst participants. The outcomes of this workshop were also annexed to "The Brisbane Declaration on Engaging Indigenous Communities".

More information on the workshop, please visit:

http://www.unpan.org/engagingcommunities2005_workshop4.asp

Census data by ethnicity: a new UN webpage

The Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Forum, has created a new webpage on data regarding national and ethnic groups based on the last censuses in various parts of the world.

Please see

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sco/ncerns/popchar/default.htm>

A link to this page is also available through the website of the Secretariat.

DESA's Intra-Departmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues meeting, 29 September, New York

The purpose of the meeting was to share information on recent developments concerning indigenous issues at the UN and brainstorm on a framework for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) technical cooperation programs in countries with indigenous peoples.

In addition to the regular focal points in each division, the colleagues in charge of technical cooperation programs were also invited. Representatives from the following divisions attended the meeting:

- Development Policy Analysis Division
- Division for the Advancement of Women
- Division for Sustainable Development
- Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests
- Division for Social Policy and Development (Social Integration Policies/ Youth Unit)
- Division for Public Administration and Development Management
- Statistics Division

News from the Secretariat of the UNPFII

Participation of SPFII at the Youth Assembly at United Nations Headquarters, August 4.

Young people who attend the Youth Assembly learned about the long struggle for indigenous peoples to reach the United Nations until the Permanent Forum was established as a highest level on indigenous issues at the UN system, and how the Forum is addressing the issue of indigenous children and youth.

Around 200 young people attend the session, where the audience also received words from an indigenous Quechua elder from Peru, who expressed his vision and how young people can seek a better world for all.

Commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, 9 August 2005, United Nations Headquarters, New York

A panel discussion and film screening have been added to the programme for this year's observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

An Indigenous Elder and sculptor from Peru opened the event with a traditional welcome and blessing. Messages for the Day issued by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and Coordinator of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues were delivered. Indigenous performers participated at the cultural event.

In the afternoon a panel discussion called "The Cause of Indigenous Peoples is Ours" was held with the participation of Ms.

Stamatopoulou, of the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Ms. Taracena of the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations, Ms. Gibbons of UNICEF and Mr. Borrero of the NGO Committee on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Finally, the new film produced by SPFII "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations" was screened.

To read the complete information about the International Day, please visit:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_internationalday2005-1.htm

MORE NEWS

The Economic and Social Council approved the fourth session draft decisions of the UNPFII

The Economic and Social Council held its annual regular session in July 2005, took note of the report of the UNPFII at its fourth session and approved the draft decisions proposed by the Forum (see E/2005/43, Part I).

Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People

Information on the Second Decade at the UNPFII website under News and Events
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_2.htm

There you will find *the draft comprehensive Program of Action* presented to the General Assembly at its 60th session based upon comments received from the UN system, governments, indigenous peoples' and civil society organizations. Also, you can read the General Assembly resolution (A/RES/59/174) that proclaimed the Second Decade. The General Assembly is expected to adopt the programme of action of the Second Decade by December 2005. The item "indigenous

Issues" will be considered by the Third Committee of the General Assembly on 19 and 20 October 2005.

Launching of the Logo competition 2005 for indigenous children

At its Second Session (May 2003), the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues decided "to organize an indigenous youth art competition for the design of a logo for the Forum..." At its fourth session (May 2005), the Forum decided to extend the competition for another year, and now invites indigenous children everywhere to submit their artwork by 20 December 2005.

The logo will form the basis of the visual identity of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. It will be published on the web site of the Permanent Forum and will be used on publications and public information materials. The winning design will be presented during the Fifth Session of the Permanent Forum in New York in May 2006, and twenty additional entries will be selected for exhibition at United Nations Headquarters during the session.

To find the requirements for the competition and the entry form in languages, please visit the following site:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/logocompetition2005.htm>

Discussion on the pre-sessional meeting of the UNPFII in Greenland in February 2006

In July, Mr. Lynge initiated a meeting with Ms. Tauli-Corpuz and a representative of the Greenland Home Rule Government to discuss ways in which Greenland could play a supportive role in the work of the Permanent Forum. Mr. Lynge, who is also President of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) Greenland, suggested that the Home Rule

Government organize in partnership with ICC an informal pre-sessional meeting of the Permanent Forum in Nuuk in February 2006. In addition to the pre-sessional meeting, another meeting will take place at the same time in Nuuk, Greenland, on partnerships with indigenous peoples.

United Nations 2005, New York, 14 – 16 September

The UN Summit 2005 met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and brought together Heads of State and Government to review progress made since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000. This Declaration represents an ambitious set of values, principles and objectives for the global challenges of the twenty-first century, as well as deadlines for collective action.

The interrelated issues of development, security, human rights and institutional reform were the core subject-matter of the Summit.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/60/L.1) mentions Indigenous Peoples at paragraphs 46, 56 d-e and 127. To find the complete information, documents, statements, etc. please visit:

<http://www.un.org/summit2005/>

Follow-up on the World Summit on an Information Society, Phase II, Tunisia from 14 - 19 November

At the World Summit and Information Society (WSIS) Indigenous Thematic Planning conference for Tunisia held in Ottawa, Canada (March 2005) an International Indigenous Steering Committee (IISC) was formed. The IISC is committed to working together to bringing indigenous peoples to Tunisia for a second global meeting called "Indigenous Peoples and the

Information Society", to ensuring a robust and inclusive agenda, and to ensuring the international dialogue regarding indigenous connectivity does not end with the second phase of WSIS.

The IISC is presently composed of: two indigenous members (preferably one male and one female) from each of the seven socio-cultural regions of the world as recognized by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

This effort is led by the WSIS International Indigenous Steering Committee (IISC), in collaboration with the Aboriginal Canada Portal and Connectivity Working Group and the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; they will be hosting a booth at the ICT4All exhibition of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. The ICT4All exhibition runs November 14 – 19, 2005 in Tunis, Tunisia.

For more information, please keep checking our website:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/news/news_2.htm

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- Discussion on the pre-sessional meeting of the UNPFII in Greenland in February 2006
- Consultative meeting "Strengthening of Local Governments with Indigenous Authorities in Ecuador", 27 – 28 July, Quito Ecuador

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- Second Decade of the World's Indigenous People
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- Commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, 9 August 2005, United Nations Headquarters.
- Participation of Mr. Littlechild at the International Symposium on the World's Indigenous Languages: Coming Together in Diversity, Japan, 9 – 11 August 2005
- Participation of Mr. Dodson at the Workshop on Engaging the Marginalized: Partnerships between Indigenous Peoples, Governments and Civil Society (International Conference on Engaging Communities) 14 – 17 August, Brisbane, Australia

SEPTEMBER

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- DESA Intra-Departmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues
- Annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, 19 - 21 September 2005, Panama City, Panama.
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