



## *Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations*

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**Statement by Ms. Azusa Shinohara  
Alternate Representative of Japan  
on  
Item 68: Indigenous Issues**

**Third Committee  
Sixty-fourth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations  
New York  
19 October 2009**

Mr. Chairman,

It is an honor to address this committee on behalf of the Government of Japan on indigenous issues. I am pleased to say that in recent years there has been significant progress in Japan with regard to these issues, and I would like to take this opportunity to focus on these developments.

Mr. Chairman,

Since the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in September 2007, the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous people has attracted great interest, both at the national and international levels.

In June 2008, the Diet of Japan unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the recognition of the Ainu as indigenous people. By adopting this resolution, Japan recognized that the Ainu people have their own language, religion and culture, and that they are indigenous inhabitants of the northern part of Japan, particularly Hokkaido.

In light of the relevant articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Japan expressed the determination to further promote its policies on the Ainu and to establish comprehensive measures for that purpose. It also established the Advisory Panel of Eminent Persons on policies for the Ainu people.

The panel has held periodic meetings since last August, and on 29 July of this year it transmitted a report to the Chief Cabinet Secretary consisting of recommendations

with regard to government policies on the Ainu. The report highlights the necessity of awareness-raising and educational activities aimed at achieving greater nationwide understanding of the Ainu people and at promoting Ainu culture and industry.

Japan intends to work on a continuing basis to implement the recommendations contained in the report.

Mr. Chairman,

At the international level, in order to assist the implementation of the plan of action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, Japan has voluntarily contributed to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues, which promotes international cooperation for the purpose of addressing the challenges confronted by indigenous people in the areas of culture, education, health, human rights, environment, and social and economic development. It strongly hopes that the trust fund will provide funding for projects aimed at addressing indigenous issues throughout the world in an efficient manner.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to state that not only will Japan make efforts at the national level of the kind that have produced progress over the last few years; it will also continue to make efforts at the international level to address these issues confronted by indigenous people the world over.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.