



**United Nations**

# **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

**Report on the twentieth session  
(19- 30 April 2021)**

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# **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

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*Note*

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## Chapter I

### **Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention**

#### **A. Draft decisions recommended by the Permanent Forum for adoption by the Council [REF: E/C.19/2021/L.3]**

1. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

##### **Draft decision I**

##### **International expert group meeting on the theme “Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent”**

The Economic and Social Council decides to authorize a three-day international expert group meeting on the theme “Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent”.

##### **Draft decision II**

##### **Venue and dates of the twenty-first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

The Economic and Social Council decides that the twenty-first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues shall be held at United Nations Headquarters from 25 April to 6 May 2022.

##### **Draft decision III**

##### **Report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on its twentieth session and provisional agenda for its twenty-first session**

The Economic and Social Council:

(a) Takes note of the report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on its twentieth session;

(b) Approves the provisional agenda of the twenty-first session of the Permanent Forum as set out below:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Discussion on the theme “Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent”.
4. Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
5. Dialogues:

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- (a) Dialogue with indigenous peoples;
  - (b) Dialogue with Member States;
  - (c) Dialogue with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;
  - (d) Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
  - (e) Regional dialogues;
  - (f) Thematic dialogues.
6. Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues.
  7. Provisional agenda of the twenty-second session of the Permanent Forum.
  8. Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its twenty-first session.

## **B. Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council**

2. The Permanent Forum has identified the proposals, objectives, recommendations and areas of possible future action set out below and, through the Economic and Social Council, recommends that States, entities of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, indigenous peoples, the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) assist in their realization, in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

3. It is the understanding of the Permanent Forum that the proposals, objectives, recommendations and areas of possible future action to be carried out by the United Nations will be implemented to the extent possible within the context of the approved programme of work of the relevant entities.

### **Recommendations of the Permanent Forum**

#### **Discussion on the theme “Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16”**

[Ref. E/C.19/2021/L.4 with rapporteur’s edits as read out during adoption of report]

4. The aim of Sustainable Development Goal 16 is to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. This ambitious and important goal can only be met with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provides a clear framework for the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, recognizing their right to self-determination and self-governance, participation in decision-making and access to justice.

5. The Declaration also recognizes indigenous peoples’ rights to the lands, territories and resources that they have traditionally owned or occupied. It is worth noting that these same territories contain 80 per cent of the world’s biological diversity. Indigenous peoples have proven themselves to be wise managers of their lands, which they have developed in a sustainable manner. This is especially important given that conflicts frequently arise over competition for natural resources,

including in border regions, as the traditional territories of indigenous peoples often straddle national borders. Indigenous peoples' management of these lands, territories and resources is not only good for the environment and biological diversity, but is also important for maintaining international peace and security.

6. It is also vital that Governments recognize indigenous peoples' institutions, especially their representative institutions. These institutions help promote and protect the cultures, livelihoods, identities and languages of indigenous peoples and other essential elements of their lives. These institutions should be supported and strengthened as essential elements of diverse and multicultural States. The Permanent Forum notes that many Governments already recognize indigenous peoples' representative institutions at the municipal and national levels. However, they are not yet recognized at the international level.

7. The recognition of indigenous peoples' representative institutions is particularly pertinent in conflict-affected and post-conflict regions. Indigenous peoples' role in peacebuilding is essential for reconciliation and for strengthening resilience to extremism and radicalization, particularly among indigenous youth. Indigenous peoples' institutions should be viewed by States as allies in the efforts of the Security Council to establish peace and security.

8. Peace and security are important at all levels. The Permanent Forum is deeply troubled by continuing accounts of violence against indigenous women and girls across the globe. The Permanent Forum hears the stories of indigenous women and girls who are murdered or go missing year after year, with little visible progress. Furthermore, such violence is perpetrated with callous impunity that must be addressed with a renewed sense of urgency.

9. The Permanent Forum is concerned by the killings, violence and harassment targeted at indigenous human rights defenders, which are also frequently committed with impunity. The Permanent Forum is concerned that, despite international condemnation, these criminal acts of violence persist, especially in a small number of countries in South and Central America, Africa and Asia.

10. The Permanent Forum recognizes the importance of the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace in Colombia. The Permanent Forum urges Colombia to promote and guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular by achieving the goals and indicators set out in the "ethnic chapter" of the peace agreement. The Permanent Forum urges the Special Jurisdiction for Peace of Colombia to prioritize the conduct of a high-profile investigation to highlight the violations of the collective rights of indigenous peoples that occurred during the armed conflict and to identify the patterns and perpetrators of this violence.

11. Climate change threatens the very existence of many communities in both the immediate and long term, while deforestation, increased urbanization and industrial agriculture continue to put pressure on the territories and ecosystems in which indigenous peoples live. Large-scale infrastructure development and the exploitation of natural resources, including minerals critical for so-called green technologies, in indigenous territories by private and State-owned companies, without the participation and consent of the affected peoples, leads to the loss of livelihoods, culture and identity. Moreover, legitimate protests and opposition to such activities on indigenous lands are increasingly being criminalized.

12. The global engagement of indigenous peoples at the international level has led to some positive institutional developments, including the establishment of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples can

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play an important role in the fight against climate change. Member States and UN entities should ensure that any activities related to the use of the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples respect Indigenous peoples' own protocols and consent agreements for managing access to their traditional knowledge. Strengthening and ensuring the full participation of indigenous peoples at all levels is also critical for the design and implementation of climate policies, plans, programmes and projects at the local, national and global levels.

13. The Permanent Forum commits to facilitating informal online regional dialogues between Member States and indigenous peoples on autonomy and self-governance to support the development of guiding principles for the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples to autonomy and self-government. The Permanent Forum invites the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous People's Issues to participate in the organization of these regional dialogues and in the preparation of a discussion paper on this matter to be presented at the twenty-first session of the Forum. The Permanent Forum also invites the cooperation of the Group of Friends of Indigenous Peoples to encourage the active participation of Member States in this endeavour.

14. The Permanent Forum also commits to facilitating a process among indigenous peoples and Member States with the aim of rethinking and supporting international efforts to ensure peace, security and peacebuilding and ensuring the effective participation of indigenous peoples in these processes.

15. The Permanent Forum considers climate change as a driver of insecurity, exacerbating conflicts over lands, territories and resources. The Permanent Forum calls on the Security Council to consider Indigenous Peoples as partners. Close consultation with indigenous peoples is required to ensure the respect of the rights of indigenous peoples in conflict and post conflict situations.

16. Private sector stakeholders should, in the application of their guidelines and safeguard policies ensure the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Respect for the free, prior and informed consent is essential for enabling indigenous peoples to participate in, and engage with, private sector activities, including in forestry, agriculture, fishing and extractive industries.

**Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples (item 5 (d))**

[Ref. E/C.19/2021/L.6 with rapporteur's edits as read out during adoption of report]

17. The Permanent Forum welcomes the ratification on 15 April 2021 by the Bundestag of Germany of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and reiterates its recommendation to all Member States that have not ratified said Convention to do so as early as possible.

18. Effective access to justice for indigenous peoples implies access to both the State legal system and their own systems of justice. Without accessible State courts or other legal mechanisms through which they can protect their rights, indigenous peoples become vulnerable to actions that threaten their lands, natural resources, cultures, sacred sites and livelihoods. Concurrently, the recognition of indigenous peoples' own justice systems is pivotal in ensuring their rights to maintain their autonomy, culture and traditions.

19. The lack of effective recognition of the indigenous justice systems by State institutions, as well as the ongoing discrimination against them in the State justice

system and inadequate access to redress and reparation, are among the key challenges faced by indigenous peoples around the world. Strengthened support for indigenous justice systems is key to promoting human rights, the rule of law, the achievement of justice for all and the promotion of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 16.

20. The Permanent Forum is dismayed by continuing disproportionately high rates of incarceration of indigenous individuals, especially indigenous men, in many countries around the world. Even more troubling are the accounts of all too many deaths in custody.

21. With few commendable exceptions, indigenous peoples have been neglected in large part in the contingency measures of government authorities in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. As a result, their needs and requirements are not taken adequately into account or addressed by national programmes and policies. The Permanent Forum agrees with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples that effective responses to the pandemic and recovery measures need to be a collaborative effort between indigenous institutions and State institutions. Combining indigenous knowledge of what is best for indigenous communities with State services and financial support will ensure effective outcomes.

22. The Permanent Forum underlines that necessary response measures to epidemics or pandemics can never justify the repression of the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and assembly in the context of legitimate protests in the defence of lands, territories, resources and the environment.

23. The Permanent Forum welcomes national engagement of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with Brazil, Finland, Mexico, New Zealand and Sweden on projects related to, among others, the development of national action plans for the implementation of indigenous peoples' rights, processes related to land demarcation and land titling, and facilitating the repatriation of sacred ceremonial objects. The Forum highlights the agreement facilitated by the Expert Mechanism among the Museum of World Culture in Sweden, the Yaqui people in Mexico and the United States of America on the repatriation of the *Maaso Kova* as a commendable best practice. The Forum encourages States and indigenous peoples to build on the successful country engagement practices and avail themselves of the Expert Mechanism's unique analytical capacity and potential to support dialogue between indigenous peoples and Governments.

24. The Permanent Forum is concerned by the high number of indigenous children being removed from their families and placed into public social care, in particular in developed countries. In this regard, the Forum noted with satisfaction the Expert Mechanism's engagement on the rights of the indigenous children. The report of the Expert Mechanism on the indigenous child will be discussed at its forthcoming session, in July 2021.

25. The Permanent Forum expresses its grave concern about the lack of observance and implementation of indigenous peoples' rights, as enshrined in the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This underscores the need for more awareness-raising and capacity-building regarding indigenous peoples' rights, not only for indigenous peoples themselves, but also for government and justice officials, as well as for private sector actors and civil society at large. In this regard, the Forum welcomes the e-learning course on indigenous peoples' rights developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with the support of the Expert

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Mechanism and United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples. The course, which is available on the OHCHR website, is a small but important contribution towards building capacities for the promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' rights.

26. The Permanent Forum recalls its invitation to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) to initiate a general comment on the collective rights of indigenous peoples to lands, territories and natural resources. The Permanent Forum welcomes the decision of the CESCR to draft a general comment on Land and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. However, the Permanent Forum expresses its concern with the limited participation of Indigenous Peoples in drafting the general comment and invites the CESCR to consider facilitating participation of Indigenous peoples. The Permanent Forum invites the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples to provide support in this regard.

27. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Organization of American States establish a consultation mechanism, composed of experts from indigenous peoples, as part of the effort to ensure national implementation of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

29. The Permanent Forum urges States to address the stark inequality between indigenous and non-indigenous people in all aspects of life, which has been heightened as a result of COVID-19, by implementing in full the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in all their legal norms and public policies related to indigenous peoples.

30. Given increased violence against indigenous peoples in the Amazon region, the Permanent Forum urges the Member States of the region to take urgent, extraordinary and coordinated measures to protect the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, with the aim of maintaining their ownership and use of their territories. The Forum also calls upon the United Nations system and specialized agencies, including OHCHR, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and ILO, to support Member States in the protection of indigenous peoples' habitats and cultures in the Amazon region in cooperation with indigenous peoples.

31. The Permanent Forum recommends that all indigenous peoples make use, whenever appropriate, of the early warning measures and urgent procedures established by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. These early warning measures and procedures are aimed at preventing existing situations from escalating into conflicts and respond to problems requiring immediate attention to prevent or limit the scale or number of serious violations of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Forum also recommends that the Committee's Working Group on Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedures urgently address the serious human rights violations and the criminalization of indigenous peoples in the Amazon in order for the Committee to take effective measures.

32. Member States must urgently address violence against indigenous peoples, including State violence, gender-based violence, forced assimilation and forced child removals, discrimination in the justice system and other forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on gender, religion, disability, age and LGBTIQ identity. The Forum encourages the Expert Mechanism, at its earliest convenience, to

engage with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and with the participation of indigenous peoples, regarding the removal of indigenous children.

33. The Permanent Forum invites the secretariat of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to share information, at its twenty-first session, in 2022, regarding the progress made in incorporating the rights of indigenous women into the work of the Committee. It also invites States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination against Women to incorporate specific rights-based indicators and information on indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women, in their periodic progress reports on the implementation of the Convention.

34. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Human Rights Council mandate the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, with the contribution of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, to undertake a study on incarceration, deaths in custody and indigenous peoples.

35. The Permanent Forum notes that, over the course of the global COVID-19 pandemic, opportunities for consultations and participation in decision-making have increasingly moved online. Although in-person meetings and interaction should always be the preferred option, on-line consultations and decision-making present opportunities for enhanced participation. However, these online options expose existing inequalities and a digital divide that is especially detrimental to the participation of indigenous peoples in many parts of Africa, Latin America, the Pacific and in rural areas around the world. Recognizing that virtual dialogues, consultations and other events will continue beyond the pandemic, the Forum emphasizes that existing mechanisms to support the participation of indigenous peoples in processes that affect them must adapt to this new environment and support the online participation of indigenous peoples. This includes purchasing data packages and facilitating access to electricity and necessary hardware and in-country travel to gain access to stable Internet connections. The Forum notes that current administrative processes of the United Nations do not facilitate such participation and therefore requests that the Secretary-General instruct relevant United Nations entities to make the necessary arrangements as a matter of urgency.

**Follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (item 6)**

[Ref. E/C.19/2021/L.7 with rapporteur's edits as read out during adoption of report]

36. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by Member States in 2015, the Permanent Forum has repeatedly highlighted the importance of ensuring the meaningful and full participation of indigenous peoples in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Unfortunately, the world is not on track to meet globally agreed targets. This has been particularly evident during the period of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, in which existing inequities have been exacerbated, placing the survival of indigenous peoples at greater risk. During the pandemic, indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and girls, have not only been left behind, but have been left even further behind.

37. Bearing that in mind, the Permanent Forum considers it an opportune moment to reconsider and adjust the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to design a non-extractivist, sustainable agenda that fully incorporates a human rights-based approach.

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38. The Permanent Forum is concerned that the concept of building back better has been interpreted by some States as a means to continue the execution of harmful development projects, which for indigenous peoples means repeated violations of their collective and individual rights, expropriation of their lands and resources, criminalization of indigenous human rights defenders, increased poverty, inequality and food insecurity, violence against indigenous women and girls, and limited access to justice.

39. The concept of building back better also implies opportunities to recognize and value the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples in safeguarding and conserving the environment, actions which can significantly advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also implies addressing the lack of educational infrastructure, digital literacy and culturally appropriate education. It also requires the involvement of indigenous youth as they will inherit the responsibility to protect and preserve indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and preserve their traditional lands, resources and sacred sites upon which their cultural heritage and identity are based. Furthermore, indigenous women, as guardians of their traditional and gender-specific knowledge, must participate adequately in land ownership and governance at all levels.

40. The Permanent Forum reiterates its call to Member States to redouble their efforts to ensure disaggregated data collection on indigenous peoples (in accordance with target 17.10) and to include complementary indicators on indigenous peoples in voluntary national reports submitted by Governments for meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Data disaggregated by ethnicity will help Governments to make informed decisions in a culturally appropriate way in response to the specific needs of indigenous peoples. The Forum underlines the importance of applying a human rights-based approach to data collection, including on ethnicity.

41. The Permanent Forum recommends that the United Nations and United Nations system organizations ensure the effective participation of indigenous peoples at the Food Systems Summit in 2021, as well as at all the related processes conducted in advance thereof and thereafter, including the pre-summit to be held in Italy from 19 to 21 July 2021. The food systems of indigenous peoples support sustainability and care for the environment and generate healthy foods important for the eradication of hunger and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

42. The Permanent Forum calls on Member States and international institutions to engage in full cooperation with indigenous peoples in their COVID-19 recovery efforts. The Forum further recommends that all available means of assistance, including financial support by international and national donor agencies and private philanthropic institutions, be allocated to initiatives led by indigenous peoples towards the achievement of the Goals.

### **Follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**

43. Implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, as set out in General Assembly resolution [69/2](#) and the Alta outcome document, is crucial for both meeting the aspirations of indigenous peoples worldwide and for ensuring that their rights and interests are guaranteed in decision-making processes. Further efforts should be made to reach the goal of enhancing the participation of indigenous peoples in the work of the United Nations from a system-wide perspective and in relation to various United Nations bodies and organs.

44. States Members of the United Nations and indigenous peoples must continue their constructive dialogue under the auspices of the President of the General Assembly, within the framework of the relevant decisions of the General Assembly,

the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council. It is also important to continue to make use of and explore ways to improve the opportunities provided through the existing formats and modalities of the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and various entities of the United Nations system. In that regard, the Permanent Forum welcomes the adoption by the Assembly of resolution [75/168](#) and the continuation of the dialogue within the context of the Forum at its twenty-first session.

45. In the study entitled “Representative institutions and models of self-governance of indigenous peoples in Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia: ways of enhanced participation” (E/C.19/2021/8), the authors emphasized that there were various forms and models of indigenous peoples’ participation in decision-making. They indicated that no one form or model was universal and that it was necessary to carefully study existing best practices in order to adapt flexibly to situations in diverse subnational regions. In general, indigenous peoples had representation in both executive and legislative bodies in subnational regions while having or developing their own decision-making institutions.

46. The authors also emphasized that regular and constructive dialogue between States, indigenous peoples’ organizations and private entities was vital and must be free of any discrimination or inequality regarding the status or number of indigenous peoples. The process of establishing a council of ombudsmen on the rights of indigenous peoples and of establishing consultative bodies with State institutions were highlighted as examples of best practices. A pragmatic approach was desirable in terms of using the opportunities that distinct political systems provided for participation in decision-making, in line with the minimum standards set by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It was also important to take into account the situation of indigenous peoples who lived across administrative and State borders. It was necessary to apply the principle of free, prior and informed consent in a comprehensive and systemic way.

47. The Permanent Forum recommends that Member States continue to develop legislation to support genuine indigenous representation and participation in decision-making. Legislative measures that create practical, economic, legal and political difficulties for the establishment and functioning of indigenous organizations and institutions worldwide should be addressed in order to allow for cross-border and international cooperation between indigenous peoples of different countries and with and within international organizations on issues and processes affecting them.

48. Indigenous peoples should be free to continue and enhance the participation of their institutions in various processes locally, nationally, regionally and globally in forms and ways that are culturally appropriate for them and that ensure equality and non-discriminatory access. In that regard, the Permanent Forum recommends that Member States and indigenous peoples involved in international regional cooperation forums exercise an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach towards indigenous peoples living in the countries and territories covered by such forums.

49. The Permanent Forum underlines that the right of indigenous peoples’ to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literature, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons, applies to all indigenous peoples, regardless of population or membership size.

50. The Permanent Forum recommends that States ensure that the participation of indigenous peoples in subnational and local decision-making bodies is based on equality and non-discrimination and on respecting indigenous peoples’ rights to choose their own representatives in accordance with their own procedures.

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**Dialogues: thematic dialogues (item 5 (f))**

[Ref. E/C.19/2021/L.8 with rapporteur's edits as read out during adoption of report]

*Discussion on the International Decade of Indigenous Languages*

51. The Permanent Forum welcomes the proclamation by the General Assembly in its resolution [74/135](#) of the period 2022–2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, following the successful celebration in 2019 of the International Year of Indigenous Languages. The International Decade provides a unique opportunity for creating sustainable changes in complex social dynamics for the preservation, revitalization and promotion of indigenous languages.

52. It is important to recognize that indigenous peoples themselves must claim ownership of their languages and direct the revitalization efforts of their languages, while States should support these efforts and facilitate the transmission of the languages by parents and grandparents to the younger generations.

53. The Permanent Forum welcomes the high-level event entitled “Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages” held in Mexico City in February 2020 and its outcome document, the Los Pinos Declaration [Chapoltepek] – Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages, which laid the foundations for the global action plan for the International Decade.

54. The Permanent Forum also welcomes the establishment of a global task force in 2021 that is tasked with preparing, planning, implementing and monitoring progress on the global action plan.

55. The Permanent Forum takes note of the evaluation report on action by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to revitalize and promote indigenous languages, within the framework of the International Year of Indigenous Languages. According to the report, which was adopted by the Executive Board of UNESCO, UNESCO and the global task force should adopt lessons learned and the recommendations contained therein during the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, including by developing a road map with clear, measurable and time-bound activities and results. The Forum welcomes the inclusion of indigenous experts in indigenous language revitalization in the coordinating team of UNESCO for the International Decade and stresses the continuing need for such experts in the future. With a view to enhancing the global accessibility of all relevant information pertaining to the Decade, the use of the six official languages of the United Nations is crucial.

56. In order to achieve a successful International Decade, it is vital to ensure the worldwide engagement of indigenous peoples and States. The full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at all levels and the involvement of all relevant government ministries, such as those for education, culture and finance in the design, planning, financing and implementation of all activities is crucial. The private sector should also be invited to contribute since information and communications companies can play a unique role in the design, development and usage of contemporary language technologies.

57. The Permanent Forum urges Member States, the United Nations system and private philanthropic institutions to fund activities for the implementation of the global action plan and invites UNESCO, as the lead agency for the commemoration of the International Decade, to prioritize projects led by indigenous peoples. Languages on the brink of extinction must be afforded particular attention.

58. The Permanent Forum invites UNESCO to create, in cooperation with academic institutions and indigenous peoples' institutions, a universal digital platform in which digital resources for indigenous languages can be created, stored and made available to indigenous peoples and researchers in order to preserve linguistic diversity.

59. The Permanent Forum welcomes the recent decision to establish an Ibero-American Institute of Indigenous Languages, with the support of the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean and member States of the region, within the framework of the XXVII Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Soldeu, Andorra, in April 2021, and encourages other regions to follow this initiative.

**Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (item 4)**

60. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic preventing in-person meetings, the Permanent Forum held regional dialogues virtually with indigenous peoples from all seven socio-cultural regions of the world in preparation of its twentieth session. The dialogues highlighted cross-cutting issues affecting indigenous peoples across the globe, including the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, discrimination, the need for disaggregated data and indigenous peoples' rights to lands, territories and resources. A full summary of the regional dialogues is available at the Permanent Forum website<sup>1</sup>. The Permanent Forum is committed to continue to organize virtual regional dialogues in the context of building back better and the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Permanent Forum invites the Secretariat of the Forum to continue to support these virtual regional dialogues.

61. The Permanent Forum highlights the continued misappropriation and illicit use of indigenous peoples' intellectual property and cultural heritage by enterprises and individuals that use it for their own vested interests or benefits. The Permanent Forum stresses that the intellectual property rights held by indigenous peoples, including with regard to data and knowledge, should not be exploited or be taken by private companies and individuals without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned. The principle of free, prior and informed consent and the stringent application of relevant safeguards and policies promulgated by United Nations system entities also applies to intellectual property rights in the context of industrial, forestry, mining and other projects conducted on indigenous peoples' lands and territories. This also applies to relevant international instruments, such as the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefits Sharing of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This also applies to relevant international instruments, such as the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefits Sharing of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

62. Acknowledging the normative work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Permanent Forum recommends that Member States and WIPO ensure protection against the misappropriation of the intellectual property of indigenous peoples. Member States must also enact laws and adopt policies and mechanisms to protect indigenous peoples' intellectual property from misappropriation, including the wrongful use of their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge (including traditional knowledge of nature) and traditional cultural expressions (such as oral traditions, rites, literatures, graphic designs, textile designs, traditional sports and games, and visual and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2021/04/Regional-Dialogues\\_2020-21-Final.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2021/04/Regional-Dialogues_2020-21-Final.pdf)

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performing arts) and the manifestation of indigenous science and technology (including human and genetic resources, seeds and medicines).

63. The Permanent Forum is concerned that the ruling of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Ogiek community in the Mau forest in Kenya has still not been implemented and calls on the Government of Kenya to urgently implement a sustainable system of equitable land tenure to prevent any further forced evictions; publish without delay the recommendations of the task force to advise the Government on the implementation of the decision of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in respect of the rights of the Ogiek community of Mau; enhance the participation of indigenous communities in the sustainable management of forests; and comply with the decision of the Court.

64. The Permanent Forum notes with concern that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has increased sexual and reproductive health challenges worldwide and stresses that there is a need for Governments to implement the commitments they made during the summit held in Nairobi in 2019 to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of on the International Conference on Population and Development.

65. Furthermore, States should strengthen measures, systems and resources to effectively address all forms of violence against indigenous women, such as female genital mutilation; child marriage; sexual abuse; forced labour; modern slavery; domestic, institutional and political violence, including in the context of forced displacement; sexual exploitation; trafficking; armed conflict; and the militarization of indigenous lands and territories.

66. The Permanent Forum urges States and bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Environment Assembly, to include indigenous peoples in a fully meaningful and effective manner in decision-making processes in all areas aimed at tackling marine litter and plastic pollution, and landscape/ecosystem degradation, including in programmes and partnerships and in the future negotiations of international instruments. Such efforts should include recognition of the traditional knowledge, practices and innovations of indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women, in plans and actions to restore landscapes and ecosystems and to address marine litter and plastic pollution.

67. Considering the continued threats facing Indigenous Peoples Living in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI), and due to their unique vulnerability in the time of COVID-19, the Forum recommends that COVID-19 vaccination plans prioritize the local populations located in the territories and adjacent areas of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation and initial contact. The Forum reminds the States that by virtue of their international obligations, specifically those contained in the American Convention on Human Rights, they must adopt measures to safeguard the life and integrity of their citizens, especially when it comes to those population groups that are highly vulnerable, as is the case of the PIACI.

68. The Forum urgently recommends that PAHO and WHO in cooperation with the Permanent Forum and other relevant entities, create a Permanent Working Group to evaluate the ongoing situation of PIACI, and to design, promote and discuss with governments and other institutions, the implementation of urgent measures for the protection of Indigenous Peoples Living in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact.

69. The Permanent Forum welcomes the launch of online courses on Indigenous Peoples' rights by Columbia University, OHCHR, Tribal Link Foundation, UNDP and Universidad Indígena Intercultural of FILAC and recommends to academia, Indigenous and other organizations and the UN system to seek ways to provide access to these courses to Indigenous Peoples living in remote areas without internet or

digital devices. Special efforts should be made to make such courses available in various languages, including Indigenous languages, and to make them accessible to Indigenous youth. The Permanent Forum also recommends the incorporation of more Indigenous knowledge into universities, in consultation with the indigenous owners of the knowledge, designing online course content addressing specific local and national Indigenous issues in different countries, and the increased participation and voices of Indigenous Peoples in online courses.

70. The Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment and development of Indigenous-led funds as a self-governance practice, which promote funding access to indigenous communities and shift power relations in donor and philanthropy processes. The Forum invites the broad donor and philanthropic community to support these initiatives.

**Dialogues: dialogue with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes  
(item 5 (c))**

71. The Permanent Forum welcomes the endorsement by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in November 2020 of a call to action to revitalize the system-wide action plan on the rights of indigenous peoples, as set out in the report entitled “Building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with indigenous peoples: a call to action”. In the report, the Chief Executives Board called for ensuring the more systematic participation of indigenous peoples in United Nations country processes, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and in the implementation of socioeconomic response and recovery plans and the Sustainable Development Goals.

72. The Permanent Forum takes note of the progress made in including indigenous peoples in several of the newly developed United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks developed in 2020 and the COVID-19 socioeconomic response plans. However, the Forum also takes note of the uneven inclusion of indigenous peoples in United Nations country programming consultations and development, and the lack of disaggregated data, which perpetuates their invisibility. The Forum reiterates that indigenous peoples should participate in the preparation of common country assessments as well as the Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and that United Nations country teams should work with Governments to foster effective consultation with indigenous peoples.

73. The Permanent Forum recalls that over 10 years ago, the International Fund for Agricultural Development established an Indigenous Forum, which the Permanent has repeatedly recognized as a good practice and recommended that other UN entities should follow. However, despite these recommendations, other UN entities have not done so, with the notable exception of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform of the UNFCCC. The Permanent Forum reiterates its recommendation to United Nations entities to incorporate indigenous peoples-driven platforms in order to give advice on and to promote indigenous peoples’ issues, as well as consider the participation of the Permanent Forum together with indigenous peoples in such platforms.

74. In the absence of in-person sessions of the Permanent Forum over two years, the Permanent Forum expresses its appreciation of the online dialogues with United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and welcomes the continuation of this good practice in the coming years, beyond the effects of the pandemic. The Permanent Forum expresses its appreciation to the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum for facilitating these dialogues and invites the Secretariat to continue doing so.

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75. The Permanent Forum recognizes that as the global economy promises to “build back better” from the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that international financial institutions, including the World Bank, work in close consultation with indigenous peoples and invest in their communities. Indigenous peoples are partners in restarting the global economy while also maintaining their position given to them by birth as stewards of Mother Earth.

76. The Permanent Forum welcomes indigenous peoples’ contributions to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The Forum underlines the need to develop a new programme of work and institutional arrangements on article 8(j) and other provisions of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples. It recommends that the secretariat of the Convention facilitate a capacity-building process for indigenous peoples to enable them to prepare themselves for the development of new programmes of work and institutional arrangements.

77. The Permanent Forum welcomes the launching by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), during the twenty-seventh session of its Technical Committee on Agriculture, in 2020, of the global hub on indigenous peoples’ food systems. It recommends that FAO continue to facilitate the work of the global hub. The Permanent Forum welcomes the White/Whipala paper on indigenous peoples’ food systems, which was drafted under the coordination of the global hub, and which has been accepted as one of the scientific papers that will serve to inform constituents at the Summit.

78. The Permanent Forum welcomes the dialogues to support indigenous peoples’ preparations for the Food Systems Summit. The Permanent Forum requests Member States and the secretariat of the UNFSS to guarantee the participation of indigenous peoples at the Summit and with a view to ensure due reflection of indigenous peoples’ rights and issues in the relevant outcome documents.

79. The Permanent Forum recommends that FAO organize dialogues for indigenous peoples in such areas as the Arctic, North America, Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia, and the Pacific region to support indigenous peoples’ in preparing for the Summit.

80. The Permanent Forum recommends that FAO develop an action plan to identify priorities with indigenous peoples to support their participation in the 2022 International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture.

81. The Permanent Forum welcomes the decision by the FAO to observe an International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 and encourages Member States to support the participation of Indigenous Peoples in events leading up to the year.

82. The Forum recommends UN Women to conduct a study on Violence against Indigenous Women and Access to Justice, especially in cross-border situations in cooperation with Indigenous Women.

83. The Permanent Forum calls on the organizers of the forthcoming meetings of Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, virtually or in person, that are to be organized later this year. The Permanent Forum encourages donors and civil society organizations to support indigenous peoples’ participation in these events.

84. The Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment of the Steering Committee on Indigenous Peoples of Africa that consists of the African Commission’s Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities and Minorities in Africa as well as

interested members of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. The Permanent Forum invites the Steering Committee to work in cooperation with the members of the Permanent Forum to support the implementation of the System-Wide Action Plan on Indigenous Peoples as well as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the African continent. The Permanent Forum also encourages United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to establish a similar inter-agency group in Asia.

85. The Permanent Forum is concerned about reports of UNDP entering into a strategic partnership with the oil company GeoPark, a private entity that has been accused by indigenous communities of disregarding their rights, to carry out economic development activities in Colombia without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous communities that will be impacted. This contradicts UNDP's own Social and Environmental Standard 6, and the Forum urges UNDP to suspend all related partnership activities until a proper FPIC process can be carried out.

**Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues, specifically challenges related to pandemics and responses to them (item 7)**

[Ref. E/C.19/2021/L.5 with rapporteur's edits as read out during adoption of report]

86. The Permanent Forum expresses thanks to the Government of Finland for hosting its pre-session meeting for 2020. The Permanent Forum also expresses its thanks to the Governments of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Canada, China, the Congo, Denmark, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru the Russian Federation, Spain and the United States, as well as the government of Greenland, for having hosted previous pre-session and intersessional meetings of the Forum. The Forum recommends that States that have not yet done so, consider hosting such meetings in the future. It also requests that the secretariat of the Forum organize pre-session meetings for future sessions of the Forum.

87. Across the globe, indigenous peoples have experienced epidemics and pandemics introduced by outsiders. The epidemics have often led to the dispossession of their lands and to the loss of lives, cultures and languages. The ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has exposed and aggravated a range of pre-existing inequalities faced by indigenous peoples. In particular, it has highlighted the fact that indigenous peoples have inadequate access to infrastructure and services, including health care and education, and to markets; endure poor housing conditions; and experience diminished food security. These circumstances have led to disproportionately high infection and mortality rates among indigenous peoples in many countries.

88. Poor access to infrastructure and services has also exposed indigenous peoples to the indirect socioeconomic effects of the pandemic. The Permanent Forum is particularly concerned about the situation of indigenous children who have not received adequate education during the pandemic, especially in situations in which schools have been closed. The digital divide is a compounding factor that must be addressed with urgency in order to ensure that indigenous peoples are provided not only with access to information and communications technology but also with the necessary education and skills to be able to take advantage of that technology. Distance learning plans must include solutions that address the limited access to electricity, connectivity and the Internet.

89. Despite such challenges, indigenous peoples have exercised their self-determination and organized their own responses to the pandemic. They have relied on and revitalized traditional medicines and practices, established efficient alternative

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communication systems in their indigenous languages, shared food supplies and established procedures for lockdowns.

90. The Permanent Forum emphasizes the importance of the engagement and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in the design and roll-out of measures taken to prevent the contagion, including through the non-discriminatory delivery and administration of vaccines, and in recovery plans and efforts. In that context, the important roles of indigenous women should not be overlooked. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Secretary-General's call to action on human rights provide important tools in guiding those efforts.

91. The Permanent Forum welcomes efforts by member states to organize specific vaccine programs for indigenous peoples and encourages CEPI, Gavi, WHO and UNICEF in their administration of the COVAX Facility to ensure that indigenous peoples are uniquely included in vaccine dissemination efforts. Given the disproportionate effect COVID-19 has had on the mortality of Indigenous Peoples in many countries, the Permanent Forum underlines the urgency of ensuring that all Indigenous Peoples are uniquely considered in vaccine planning and distribution. Due attention should also be given to indigenous peoples affected by conflict- and post-conflict situations and complex humanitarian emergencies.

92. The Permanent Forum recognizes that due to historical and ongoing discriminatory practices in the delivery of healthcare, including administration of vaccines there is distrust that needs to be acknowledged and addressed by governments. Therefore, the Permanent Forum recommends that governments collaborate with indigenous peoples' representatives and leaders, provide culturally appropriate information in indigenous peoples' languages, engage with indigenous healthcare practitioners and provide support to indigenous peoples' organizations that are already providing pandemic related support in their communities.

#### *Indigenous women and girls*

93. The COVID-19 pandemic has particularly affected indigenous women and girls, who already face violence and higher rates of poverty, in conjunction with limited access to health-care services, information and communications technologies, financial services, education and employment, while also suffering from multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion. Violence against women and girls is a "shadow pandemic" that has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the closure of schools, pregnancy rates among indigenous young women and girls have risen. In that context, support for indigenous women's organizations and networks is vital since they are on the front lines of the responses to the pandemic.

#### *Recommendations*

94. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the urgent need for the collection of disaggregated statistical data on the situation of indigenous peoples. Where such data is available, it has shown that the pandemic has affected indigenous peoples differently than other populations, requiring culturally appropriate approaches and solutions. The Permanent Forum reiterates its recommendation to Member States to collect and disseminate disaggregated statistical data on indigenous peoples, in close cooperation with indigenous peoples themselves, to support evidence-based policymaking and programming.

95. The Permanent Forum recommends that the World Health Organization (WHO) create and convene regional round tables to address the issue of indigenous peoples and COVID-19 in order to ensure that the indigenous peoples of the globe are uniquely considered in mitigation efforts. Such round tables would also offer a timely

opportunity to coordinate actions to respond to the impact on indigenous peoples of the pandemic.

96. The Permanent Forum also recommends WHO and PAHO to engage in an intersessional round table on COVID-19 with Forum members to ensure that ongoing mitigation planning and efforts are uniquely adapted to the needs of indigenous peoples, including by applying the intercultural approaches to health such as those applied by PAHO in the Americas.

97. The Permanent Forum recognizes the need to address the emergence of the mental health consequences of the pandemic. The consequences are being felt in all populations, but most acutely in populations that have traditionally been marginalized. The Forum calls for investments and preparations for mental and behavioural health interventions that are culturally adapted. Traditional medicines and practices can play a key role in the health of indigenous communities and individuals by encompassing a variety of dimensions, including the spiritual. The Permanent Forum calls on the WHO/Pan American Health Organization, States Members of the United Nations and indigenous peoples to work together to provide pathways to promoting mental health.

98. The Permanent Forum recommends that WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, together with the Inter-agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, promote dialogue forums at the national and regional levels between government ministries and indigenous peoples to establish culturally relevant strategies to address the epidemiological risks and the food and environmental crises resulting from the pandemic, as well as access to justice and the safeguarding of indigenous peoples' territorial control.

99. Throughout history, indigenous peoples have moved from place to place in search of water, pastureland for their animals, and game; to trade goods from different ecological zones; and even to seek job opportunities in urban areas. Mobility restrictions both within and across State borders have affected indigenous peoples adversely, with the impact on pastoralist groups being particularly severe in the context of their ability to access water and food. The Permanent Forum recommends that States implement specific measures to address the mobility needs of indigenous peoples, including through cooperation with neighbouring States, and that such efforts be made with the full free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples affected.

100. The Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment of the Network of the Centers of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge under the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The Network, which comprises indigenous leaders, experts, professionals and advocates of indigenous and local knowledge, serves to promote the integrity and value of the knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities in science and policy. In addition, the Forum notes the aspects relevant to indigenous peoples that the Platform has rolled out until 2030 in its work programme, and in that regard seeks to further its collaboration with the Platform in its own future work. The Forum invites the Platform and the Network to continue to inform the Forum about the progress of its work, including at the Forum's twenty-first session.

101. The Permanent Forum welcomes the entry into force of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazu Agreement) on 22 April, 2021 and urges those countries that have not yet signed and ratified the Agreement to do so at the earliest opportunity. The Permanent Forum urges those countries that have ratified the Escazu Agreement to ensure its implementation.

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102. During the pandemic, indigenous peoples have been seriously affected by a lack of access to energy, health-care establishments, education centres, infrastructure that supplies clean water, and communication services and information technologies. In their responses to the economic impacts of the pandemic, Governments have made a range of efforts to support economic activity. The relaxing of environmental and human rights standards in order to support activities that will promote economic growth, such as logging, mining, large-scale agriculture and various infrastructure and energy projects, threaten indigenous peoples' territories. The Permanent Forum requests Member States to include indigenous peoples in the preparatory process and the outcome of the high-level dialogue on energy to be held by the General Assembly in September 2021, in order to accelerate action on achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7 and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

103. The Permanent Forum welcomes the fact that the International Union for Conservation of Nature, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, is undertaking preparations for the World Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nature to be convened during the upcoming World Conservation Congress, which will be held in Marseille, France, in September 2021. The Summit is aimed at providing an opportunity to highlight and exchange information about the contributions of indigenous peoples to sustaining biodiversity, combating climate change and promoting sustainable development. The Forum recommends that Member States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations support the participation of indigenous peoples in the Summit. The Forum invites the International Union for Conservation of Nature to share the outcomes of the Summit at the Forum's twenty-first session.

104. The Permanent Forum appoints Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim and Vital Bambanze, members of the Forum, to conduct a study on Indigenous Peoples and resource conflicts in the Sahel and Congo Basin and to present that study to the Forum at its twenty-first session, in 2022.

105. The Permanent Forum appoints Irma Pineda Santiago and Símon Freddy Condo Riveros, members of the Forum, to conduct a study on collective intellectual property and the appropriation of the ideas and creations of indigenous peoples and to present that study to the Forum at its twenty-first session, in 2022.

106. The Permanent Forum appoints Sven-Erik Soosaar, Irma Pineda Santiago and Bornface Museke Mate, members of the Forum, to conduct a study on indigenous languages in the formal education system and to present that study to the Forum at its twenty-first session, in 2022.

107. The Permanent Forum appoints Darío José Mejía Montalvo, member of the Forum, to conduct a study on the rights of Indigenous Peoples facing the global energy mix and to present that study to the Forum at its twenty-first session, in 2022.

## **Chapter II**

### **Venue, dates and proceedings of the session [Ref: E/C.19/2021/L.2]**

108. By its decision 2020/218, the Economic and Social Council decided that the twentieth session of the Permanent Forum would be held at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 30 April 2021.

109. Taking into account the prevailing conditions relating to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the working arrangements for its twentieth session and the available technological and procedural solutions in the interim period, the Permanent Forum convened two formal meetings and nine virtual informal meetings during the session. The proceedings of the virtual informal meetings are reflected in the annex to the present report

110. At its 1st meeting, on 19 April, the Permanent Forum considered agenda item 3, entitled “Discussion on the theme ‘Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16’”. For its consideration of the item, the Forum had before it two notes by the Secretariat transmitting the report of the international expert group meeting on the theme “Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16” (E/C.19/2020/7), and the study on “Indigenous peoples’ autonomies: experiences and perspectives” (E/C.19/2020/5).<sup>2</sup>

111. At its 2nd meeting, on 30 April, the Forum considered and adopted its recommendations submitted under the following agenda items (see chap. I, sect. B): items 3 and 4, item 5 and sub-items (c), (d) and (f), and items 6 and 7.

112. At the same meeting, the Forum considered agenda item 8, entitled “Provisional agenda for the twenty-first session of the Permanent Forum”, and adopted a draft decision submitted under that item (see chap. I, sect. A).

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<sup>2</sup> As a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Permanent Forum was unable to convene its nineteenth session, which was scheduled to be held in 2020, and the consideration of both reports was thus deferred to the twentieth session.

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## **Chapter III**

### **Adoption of the report of the Permanent Forum on its twentieth session**

113. At the 2nd meeting, on 30 April, the Rapporteur introduced the draft decisions and recommendations and the draft report of the Permanent Forum on its twentieth session.

114. At the same meeting, the Permanent Forum adopted its draft report.

## Chapter IV

### Organization of the session

#### A. Opening and duration of the session

115. The Permanent Forum held its twentieth session at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 30 April 2021. It held two formal meetings and nine informal virtual meetings, including three closed virtual informal meetings, to consider the items on its agenda.

116. At the 1st meeting, on 19 April, the session was opened by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. At the opening ceremony, a representative of the Onondaga Nation, Tadodaho Sid Hill, delivered a welcoming address. The Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council (Mexico) delivered statements.

117. At the same meeting, statements were made by the Chair of the Permanent Forum, the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist (on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs), the Vice-President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Secretary of the Interior of the United States of America.

#### B. Attendance

118. Members of the Forum and representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations and bodies, United Nations entities and non-governmental and indigenous organizations attended the session. The list of participants will be published at a later date.

#### C. Election of officers

119. At its 1st meeting, on 19 April, the Permanent Forum elected the following members of the Bureau by acclamation:

*Chair:*

Anne Nuorgam

*Vice-Chairs:*

Vital Bambanze

Geoffrey Roth

Irma Pineda Santiago

Aleksei Tsykarev

*Rapporteur:*

Tove Søvndahl Gant

#### D. Agenda

120. At its 1st meeting on 19 April, the Forum adopted the provisional agenda contained in document [E/C.19/2021/1](#) and decided to postpone its consideration of sub-items 5 (a), 5 (b) and 5 (e), and to include these sub-items in the provisional agenda of its twenty-first session, in 2022.

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121. At the same meeting, the Forum approved its organization of work, as contained in document [E/C.19/2021/L.1](#).

## **E. Documentation**

122. The list of the documents before the Forum at its twentieth session is available at: [www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/unpfi-sessions-2/unpfi-20th-session.html](http://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/unpfi-sessions-2/unpfi-20th-session.html).

## Annex

### **Virtual informal meetings of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

1. On 20 April 2021, the Permanent Forum held a virtual informal meeting on item 3, “Discussion on the theme “Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16.””
2. At the same meeting, Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, member of the Permanent Forum introduced the Note by the Secretariat entitled “Indigenous peoples and climate change” (E/C.19/2021/5).
3. At the same meeting, Ms. Hindu Oumarou Ibrahim moderated the introductory statements by the following panelists: Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Tebtebba Foundation; Mr. Albert Barume, Security Coordinator and Regional Expert of the Security Council Panel of Experts on Mali; and Mr. Jaime Enrique Arias Arias, Member of the Mayor Council of Government of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia.
4. At the same meeting, an interactive discussion ensued, in the course of which the panelists responded to questions raised and comments made by Ms. Hannah McGlade, Ms. Lourdes Tibán Guala, Ms. Tove Søvndahl Gant and Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo, members of the Permanent Forum. The following Member States represented by observers also participated in the interactive discussion: Australia, the United States of America, Canada, Guyana, Guatemala, Spain, the Russian Federation and Denmark. The representatives of the following indigenous organizations also participated: Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON); New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council of Australia; Nation of Hawai’i; CHIRAPAQ and the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas; Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA); the Inuit Circumpolar Council of Greenland; the Union of Indigenous Peoples “SOYUZ” of the Russian Federation; and the Tinhinan Association.
5. At the same meeting, the moderator summarized the key points of the interactive panel discussion.
6. On 21 April, the Forum held a virtual informal meeting on item 7, “Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues, specifically challenges related to pandemics and responses to them.”
7. At the same meeting, Mr. Geoffrey Roth and Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo, members of the Permanent Forum, introduced the Note by the Secretariat entitled “Report of the international expert group meeting on the theme “Indigenous peoples and pandemics”” (E/C.19/2021/7) and the Note by the Secretariat entitled “Study on the rights of indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of the exceptional measures adopted during the pandemic” (E/C.19/2021/9) respectively.
8. At the same meeting, an interactive dialogue ensued, in the course of which questions were raised and comments made by Mr. Vital Bambanze, Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev, Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Ms. Lourdes Tibán Guala, Mr. Bornface Museke Mate and Mr. Grigory E. Lukiyantsev, members of the Permanent Forum.
9. At the same meeting, the Forum held a general discussion and heard statements by the following Member States represented by observers: Canada, Mexico, the Bolivarian

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Republic of Venezuela, Peru, the Russian Federation, Guatemala, Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, New Zealand, Chile, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), the Philippines and Ukraine. Statements were also made by the observer for the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America, as well as by the representatives of the following indigenous organizations: Coordinating Body of the Indigenous Organizations in the Amazon Basin (COICA); Inuit Circumpolar Council; Nation of Hawai'i; Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON); the Saami Parliament of Norway; Confederacion Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB); "Land is Life"; Associacao Dos Povos Indigenas Karipuna; Mujeres Indigenas por la Conservacion, Investigacion y Aprovechamiento de los Recursos Naturales – RED LAC; Forest Peoples Programme; United Confederation of Taino People; Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation and the Asia Caucus.

10. At the same meeting, Mr. Geoffrey Roth and Mr. Darío José Mejía Montalvo responded to the questions raised and comments made during the interactive and general discussions.

11. On 22 April, the Forum held a virtual informal meeting on item 5 (d), "Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," and heard an introductory statement by Mr. Vital Bambanze, member of the Permanent Forum.

12. At the same meeting, Mr. Vital Bambanze moderated the presentations by the following panelists: Mr. Francisco Calí Tzay, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Ms. Laila Vars, Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and Mr. Pablo Mis, Chair of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples.

13. At the same meeting, an interactive discussion ensued, in the course of which questions were raised and comments made by Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago, Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Ms. Hannah McGlade and Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev, members of the Permanent Forum.

14. At the same meeting, the Forum held a general discussion and heard statements by the following Member States represented by observers: Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Chile, Canada, Ukraine, Guatemala, Australia and Brazil. Statements were also made by the observers for the European Union and the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and Caribbean, as well as by the representatives of the following non-governmental and indigenous organizations: Human Rights Watch; International Indian Treaty Council; Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact; Organisasi Pribumi Papua Barat; the Saami Council; Associacao Dos Povos Indigenas Karipuna; and the New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

15. At the same meeting, the panelists responded to the questions raised and comments made during the interactive and general discussions, and the moderator summarized the key points of the discussion.

16. On 23 April, the Forum held a virtual informal meeting on item 6, "Follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." and heard introductory statements on the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" from the following panelists: Ms. Joan Carling, the Tebtebba Foundation; Ms. Janene Yazzie, International Indigenous Treaty Council; and Ms. Myrna Cunningham, President of the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

17. At the same meeting, the Forum held a general discussion on the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and heard statements by the following Member States represented by observers: Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic Countries), Mexico (on behalf of group of friends of indigenous peoples), Guyana, Nicaragua, Chile, El Salvador, Australia and Nepal. Statements were also made by the representatives of the following indigenous organizations:

Asia Indigenous People's Pact and Asia Indigenous People's Caucus; Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON); Indigenous Peoples Organization of Australia; Aty Guasu Kaiowa Guarani; the Kola Saami Association; Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation; and CEM-Aymara.

18. At the same meeting, the Forum discussed the "Follow up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Issues" under item 6, and heard an introductory statement by Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev, member of the Permanent Forum, on the Note by the Secretariat, entitled "Study on the theme "Representative institutions and models of self-governance of indigenous peoples in Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia: ways of enhanced participation" (E/C.19/2021/8). Introductory statements were also made by Ms. Mariam Wallet Aboubakrine and Ms. Daria Egereva, members of the Temporary Committee for the Indigenous Coordinating Body for Enhanced Participation in the United Nations.

19. At the same meeting, the forum held a general discussion on the "Follow up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Issues" and heard statements by the following Member States represented by observers: Canada (also on behalf of Australia, Bolivia, Colombia, Denmark together with Greenland, Estonia, Finland, Guatemala, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, and the United States), Guatemala, the Philippines, Paraguay, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Statements were also made by the representatives of the following indigenous organizations: Saami Parliament in Finland; International Indian Treaty Council; Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON); and the Assembly of First Nations.

20. At the same meeting, Mr. Sven-Erik Soosaar and Mr. Grigory Lukiyantsev, members of the Permanent Forum, made concluding remarks.

21. On 27 April, the Forum held a virtual informal meeting on item 4, "Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," and held a general discussion during which statements were made by the following Member States represented by observers: Finland (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Canada, Paraguay, the Philippines, Namibia, Bangladesh, Guatemala, Cuba and Australia. Statements were also made by the observer for Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and Caribbean as well as the representatives of the following indigenous organizations: Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON); Asia Indigenous Peoples Caucus; Indigenous Information Network; International Indian Treaty Council (IITC); Mujeres Indigenas por la Conservacion, Investigacion a Aprovechamiento de los Recursos Naturales – Red Lac; Indigenous Peoples' Organization of Australia; Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS); and the Ogiek Peoples Development Program.

22. At the same meeting, Mr. Geoffrey Roth, member of the Permanent Forum, made a statement on behalf of Mr. Bornface Museke Mate, member of the Permanent Forum.

23. At the same meeting, the Forum held a panel discussion on the "International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022–2032, under item 5 (f) "Thematic dialogues."

24. At the same meeting, Mr. Sven-Erik Soosaar, member of the Permanent Forum, moderated the introductory statements by the following panelists: Ms. Aili Keskitalo, President of the Sami Parliament of Norway; and Mr. Xing Qu, Deputy Director General of UNESCO and acting Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information.

25. At the same meeting, an interactive dialogue ensued, in the course of which the following Member States represented by observers made statements: Norway (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Latvia, Australia and Peru. The representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization as well as the representatives of the following indigenous organizations also participated: Inuit Circumpolar Council; Association of Indigenous

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Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation Congrès Mondial Amazigh; and the Tebtebba Foundation.

26. At the same meeting, Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev and Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago, members of the Permanent Forum, made statements.

27. Also at the same meeting, the moderator summarized the key points of the discussion.

28. On 29 April, the Forum held a virtual informal meeting on item 4 and heard statements by Ms. Irma Pineda Santiago, Mr. Phoolman Chaudhary, Mr. Vital Bambanze, Mr. Geoffrey Scott Roth, Mr. Aleksei Tsykarev and Mr. Freddy Condo Riveros, members of the Permanent Forum.

29. At the same meeting, the Forum resumed its general discussion on item 4 and heard statements by the following Member States represented by observers: Mexico, Viet Nam, Japan, the Russian Federation, Ecuador, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Chile, Ukraine, Nepal, Guyana, El Salvador, Nicaragua and China. The observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the representatives of the International Labour Organization and the following indigenous organizations also participated: Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education; Escuela Global de Liderazgo de Mujeres Indigenas; CADPI, Elatia Partnership; Confederacion Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales Originarios de Bolivia (CSCOB); Native Council of Prince Edward Island; Asociacion de Mujeres Abogadas Indigenas (AMAI); NGO of Khmara-Ugra "Save Ugra"; Khmers Kampuchea-Krom Federation; Semilla Warunkwa; Coordinating Body of the Indigenous Organizations in the Amazon Basin (COICA); Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (DAR); Asia Indigenous Peoples' Caucus; and the Saami Parliament of Sweden.

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