



ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT FOUNDATION

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Realizing the rights of indigenous peoples at the national level

Statement on the occasion of the International Indigenous Peoples Day
August 9, 2014

Warmest solidarity greetings from the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact- AIPP!

There are major global processes taking place this year, with enormous impacts on indigenous peoples in Asia and across the globe. On September 22-23, 2014, the UN General Assembly will convene a High Level Panel meeting that is known as the “World Conference on Indigenous Peoples” (WCIP). The objective of the WCIP is “to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, including to pursue the objectives of the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)” based on the UNGA Resolution A/C.3/65/L.22/Rev.1 on the WCIP.

As UN member-states are expected to agree on an action oriented outcome of the WCIP, we need to send a strong message to our respective governments to adopt an outcome document that provides measures at the national level for the legal recognition, respect and protection of our rights as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and other international human rights instruments. Our collective rights, especially our rights to our lands, territories and resources, to self determination and sustainable development, continue to be violated by the day with impunity and with no effective recourse mechanism. This alarming situation is contrary to the duties and obligations of states to respect, protect and fulfill these rights. International human rights instruments by states can only make a difference and rectify the historical and continuing absence of social justice, peace and equality if these are implemented on the ground. We thereby urge indigenous peoples to take action and engage with your respective governments and other stakeholders to generate the broadest support to our demands for the outcome document of the WCIP.

The other global process is the negotiations for sustainable development (the so-called post 2015 development agenda). In spite of the engagements of indigenous peoples in this process, we still remain largely invisible in the zero draft. Most developed countries are also refusing to provide adequate means to support developing countries in achieving the goals for poverty reduction such as finance and technology, and at the same time insisting on business as usual including with the private sector. Indigenous peoples globally comprise 5% of the total population but are 15% of the poorest of the poor, with the majority found in Asia.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) has not significantly addressed this huge gap, and the indicators for poverty, among others, are inappropriate for indigenous peoples. Likewise, the massive land grabbing and destruction of our resources in the name of development underpins the worsening marginalization of indigenous peoples. Thus, any universal goals for sustainable development must ensure the respect for our rights, for equitable and sustainable use of resources, and for our effective inclusion in the goals with specific indicators and data-disaggregation that shall account for the protection of our rights and appropriate response to our needs and priorities. We thereby urge states and key development actors to live up to their commitment that “no one is left behind” in the achievement of sustainable development especially at the local and national levels.



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Another related global process is the review of the safeguard policies of the World Bank including its Indigenous Peoples Policy. The leaked draft is very alarming as it includes an “opt out” option for borrowing countries not to implement the Policy or let it be subject to country safeguard system. This provision will only affirm the denial by many states of the existence and rights of indigenous peoples who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of development interventions by the World Bank. In spite of the good faith engagements of indigenous peoples in the review process, the World Bank has chosen to continue its bad legacy with indigenous peoples that will cause more violations of our rights and our further dispossession and discrimination. It is therefore necessary for us to strengthen our movements, together with civil society organizations and human rights advocates to demand greater accountability and respect for human rights by the World Bank.

In line with the celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day, we call upon indigenous peoples and advocates from all walks of life to further strengthen our solidarity and collaboration in pursuing our common vision for social justice, peace and sustainable development. Let us take stock of our gains and advance the realization of our rights with greater commitment and determination. This is our duty to our ancestors and to our future generations. Let us also celebrate our diverse cultures, and take pride of our identities as distinct peoples who are equal to others. On the occasion of Indigenous Peoples Day, let the world know of our invaluable contributions in caring for mother earth and the need to have our voices heard in crafting the world we want. Let the celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day echo our collective aspirations for the realization of our rights to achieve equality and dignity for all.

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