

Thirteenth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Intervention on Agenda Item 7 (d): Post-2015 development agenda

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Thank you Madam Chair.

Kablaaw kadakayo (Greetings Everyone)
Amma Inna Agtutubo (Fathers, Mothers, Youth)
Inmay makitabuno (Who are gathered here)
Karbengan apan itandudo (to Advance our rights)

This is a joint intervention of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance, the Committee on the Protection of Natural Resources in Manipur, and the Centre for Research and Advocacy – Manipur.

Some would say that indigenous peoples traditions are backward, but some of these have ensure an environment for the next generation and have been proven to be sustainable.

Many of indigenous communities worldwide have historically been suffering from “development aggression” or the destruction and plunder of indigenous lands, territories and natural resources by States and private corporations, that marginalized and impoverished them. Development aggression started way back during the period of colonization, and have usually come in the form of mining, mega-dams and other large-scale extractive industries as in the case of the Philippines and Northeast India. Contrary to their claim of bringing development to indigenous communities, development aggression has been a root cause of the underdevelopment and further marginalization that indigenous peoples continue to experience today.

In light of ongoing negotiations and dialogues between and amongst governments, UN agencies, civil society and indigenous peoples, we reiterate our vision for development that they must upheld. For indigenous peoples, genuine development could happen if the basic development principles of people’s participation, respect for indigenous peoples’ self determination rights over their land and territories, gender equality, social justice, self-reliance and sustainability are recognized and respected. This is self-determined and sustainable development that is guided by our traditional values and systems of cooperation and solidarity. It is built starting at the village level. It promotes our indigenous values on the nurture and management of resources for present and future generations.

Self-determined and sustainable development also incorporates development justice or the redistribution of the fruits of development to the impoverished sections of our societies including indigenous peoples, comprehensively addressing inequality, and using resources for the people’s welfare. Development aid should serve the interests of indigenous communities as this is a historic debt that then colonizers owe to countries especially of the South.

We would like to express our deep concern with the ongoing emphasis on private sector/Corporate bodies to lead and take centre stage for development in a post 2015 scenario. Private sector involvement is afflicted with human rights challenges in North East India, the Cordillera region of Philippines etc, ranging from exclusive decision making, mis prioritization,

misinformation, limited impacts appraisal impacts, ecosystem devastations, lack of accountability etc. Corporate bodies involved in pursuing mega dam construction and oil exploration in Manipur and across India's North East clearly demonstrates the disrespect and arbitrariness of indigenous peoples' rights to be affected by such large scale projects. We also express our concern with the limited focus on integrating human rights based approach to development in defining the post 2015 agenda. A development agenda without human rights will only consolidate the destruction and multiple crisis of our mother earth, wrought by the aggressive pursuance of insatiable greed of corporate bodies and deepen the process of marginalization, impoverishment of indigenous peoples. The decision making process towards defining SDGs is also an enormous challenge for indigenous peoples as most of the decision making and forms, usually takes place in places inaccessible to us.

We would like to reiterate previous recommendations to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, States, private corporations, and International Financial Institutions, and forward the following key recommendations:

1. Urge governments to stop large-scale mining, energy projects, and other extractive industries that rob indigenous peoples of their right to genuine development. Repeal State laws and policies that allow for the entry of extractive industries in indigenous territories such as the Philippine Mining Act.
2. Repeal State laws and policies that allow for the militarization of indigenous communities and which supports development aggression such as the Operation Plan Bayanihan counter-insurgency policy of the Philippines, and the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958 in Manipur, NE India.
3. Uphold indigenous peoples' principle of self-determined and sustainable development in all dialogues and negotiations.
4. Ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for post 2015 is centred on respecting and promoting human rights based approach to development, especially the indigenous peoples' rights.
5. The UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, 2007 should be one of the key reference document for the new Sustainable Development Goals.
6. The definition of SDGs should clearly integrate concerns of indigenous communities worldwide concerning the role of business and private sector led development without a clear regularly and accountability framework.
7. Ensure rightful participation of all indigenous peoples in all decision making process towards defining the Sustainable Development Goals of 2015. Full and effective participation of the indigenous youth shall also be ensured since they have a vital role of inheriting, and linking these goals to the next generation and shall ensure continuity and sustainability.

Tarigagay ti umili (The people are dreaming of)

Panagdur-as nga sustenable (Sustainable Development)

Agkaykaysa nga gun-oden (Let us unite to achieve it)

Usaren Bukod a panagkeddeng (Using our Self-determination)

Agyamanak unay ken Agbiag (thank you very much and long live)