

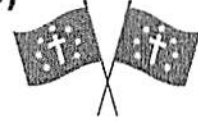


## **ZO RE-UNIFICATION ORGANISATION (ZORO)**

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*(Affiliated Under : United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issue (UNPFII) & Experts Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous People (EMRIP) Since 2004)*

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16th Session of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

UN Headquarters, New York, 24 April - 04 May 2017

To be delivered by VANLAL DUHSAKA, Zo Re-Unification Organisation (ZORO)

on 4th May 2017 from 10:00 AM to 1:00PM

### **Agenda Item 9: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

Madam Chairperson, distinguished states delegates, UN Agencies, honorable indigenous sisters and brothers. Greetings to you and all members of this august forum from Zo indigenous people in South and South East Asia.

2. Zo country inhabited by Zo indigenous nation in the North East India, Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, Arakan and Chin Hills of Myanmar were mostly virgin forests. The whole area covering 91000 square miles approximately are mountainous with elevation ranging from 100 to 3000 meters above mean sea level. The country is endowed with abundant monsoon rainfall which feeds numerous perennial, rivers flowing in between the mountain ranges. The rich country is permanent home of varieties of flora and fauna.

3. The pace of unsustainable developments under the governments of respective states and climate change accelerated deforestation and forest fragmentation. Shifting cultivation on the hills promotes erosion of top soil and forest fire resulting in further degradation of forest and vegetation. The traditional practice of shifting jhum cultivation need be replaced by contour farming system of making terrace and non-conventional irrigation through rain water harvesting. Regulated farming in the valleys and the foot hills leaving the remaining upper hill slopes can be restored as forest. The utilization of Mountain sides in the upper slopes for forest and the lower reaches for farming will usher in a dual improved system for reforestation as well as traditional farming will deliver more production ensuring food security and conservation of the environment.

4. Poverty prevails in Zo country. The capital cost of changing to permanent terrace cultivation is high and is beyond our financial capacity of ZORO. It will be the over all interest of the UN Agencies and international community to render assistance to Zo indigenous communities in their fight for survival for sustainable development. Attached herewith is Concept of Planting Million Trees in Zoram.

As such, we urge states where Zo people lives to: -

- Stop destroying our forests and stop planting commercial trees;
- Provide proactive measures to enable Zo indigenous people access to international funding agencies;
- Provide immediate remedy and justice to violations to our rights to lands and territories.

We, the Zo people also urge UN Agencies, media and international partners to:

- Provide immediate remedy and justice to violations to our rights to lands and territories,
- Monitor with us the progress and gaps of the member states in ensuring our issues and concerns are addressed properly and effectively and in particular use of our lands and territories.

ZORO hope and pray that we are not left behind in the implementation of SDGs and take part in the achievement of Goals by 2030.

Thank you

## Concept of Planting Million Trees in Zoram

In order to meet with the acute problems of Land degradation, soil erosion, water scarcity, global warming and Climate change etc, a project proposal is prepared for the Zo Communities.

**Title of the Project:** Planting Million trees (fruit-bearing trees, medicinal tree species and ornamental tree species) within a span of Five years.

**Objective of the project:** To achieve the SDG goal No.15, i.e Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

**Need of the Project:** As stated earlier Degradation of Land is serious problem in Zoram which has experienced land degradation at an alarming rate owing to the destructive felling of commercial trees and also due to traditional method of slash-and-burn system of cultivation..

**Project Implementing Agency:** The Project of Planting Mission trees in Zoram would be implemented by the Indigenous Zo communities.

**Methodology of Project Implementation:** Fruit-bearing trees, medicinal tree species, ornamental tree species) will be planted within a span of Five years. The ZORO under her Community Organization spread all over Zoram and ZORO shall follow-up the trees planted till it sustained itself.

### Action Plan for Planting Million Trees in Zoram:

Sl	Name of Activity	Duration	Agency
1	Pre-Funding Appraisal i. Identification of Tree species to be planted ii. Awareness generation among the masses	1st Year of sanction	Zo community of Zoram
2	Planting saplings	2nd year of sanction	
3	Weeding, mulching	3rd year of sanction	Community of respective villages
4	Follow-up cum Monitoring	4th year of sanction	
5	Exit protocol	5th year of sanction	Community Owned

The actual planting would be carried out by the Zo communities by involving the entire community. Timeline action plan is as below: -

**Duration:** The project would be implemented within a span of five years.

**Follow up mechanism:** On completion of the project period, the follow-up action would be handed over to the community. The aftercare activity would be solely owned by the Community.

**Expected Outcomes:**

- 1) Million trees including fruit-bearing, medicinal, ornamental trees would be planted;
- 2) SDG goal No.15, i.e Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems; sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse degradation and halt biodiversity loss will be achieved;
- 3) As a result of promoting forest by planting trees, water-bed would be recharged which will be beneficial for the community;
- 4) The Zo Community would be well aware of the consequences of the ecological imbalance, stop the exploitation of forest and
- 5) More participation of the Indigenous Women and youth in preserving our natural forest.