

## **Global Indigenous Women's Caucus Sixteenth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, April 24 - May 5, 2017**

Madame Chair, on behalf of the Global Indigenous Women's Caucus (GIWC), we congratulate your appointment as chair of this sixteenth session of the Permanent Forum. Esteemed Members of the Forum, distinguished representatives of Indigenous Peoples, member-states, Sisters and Brothers of the world:

The Global Indigenous Women's Caucus is committed to ensuring that our collective voice is uplifted. This collective voice ensures that our Indigenous sisters' concerns are addressed in a manner that does not put their lives or their families' lives in danger.

Indigenous Women have a sacred relationship to our lands, waters, and territories and through this, a responsibility to protect our lands. We maintain that we had, and continue to have, the right to control and jurisdiction over our lands, waters, and resources within and on our territories.

The GIWC recalls paragraph 38 of the 14th Session of the UNPFII Final Report which highlights Indigenous Peoples' collective rights, and right of free, prior and informed consent to any development on our lands and territories. We also uplift women's right of full access to and participation in local, national, and international decision-making processes.

There is destruction occurring on our lands and in our environment, bringing with it many forms of violence against Indigenous Women. Extractive industries are gaining access to our lands, waters, and territories through State represented organizations and doing so by sidestepping Indigenous Peoples, who hold underlying title and spiritual connection to the lands.

Indigenous Peoples' have the right of self-determination in accordance with Article 3 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and to full and

effective participation in any decision-making that affects us, including that which contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment. Furthermore, we call into question and reject any policies, procedures, and processes within the UN system that undermine or limit these rights.

Based on these rights we submit the following recommendations, that:

1. In accordance with UNDRIP's Article 41, we call upon the Permanent Forum to urge member-states and UN agencies to review their processes to include the full, equal, and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous Women, in decisions affecting our lands, territories, and communities, self-determination, economic, social and cultural rights, and any other matters where Indigenous Peoples and our future generations are concerned.

2. The GIWC reaffirms the recommendation from 12th Session, paragraph 41, which acknowledges that states shall establish a monitoring mechanism to address violence against Indigenous Peoples, including assassinations, assassination attempts, rapes, and other intimidation tactics against Indigenous Peoples who are safeguarding their homelands and territories, with specific attention to actions perpetrated by State and local police, military, law enforcement institutions, the judiciary, and other State-controlled institutions.

3. Recalling paragraph 25 of the recommendation made by the Permanent Forum during the 12th Session, GWIC urges UNESCO, the Convention on Biological Diversity and WIPO to work closely with Indigenous Peoples to develop an instrument to protect traditional knowledge and culture-based economic opportunities and activities as a potential way of strengthening Indigenous Peoples' identities'.

4. Echoing concerns of paragraph 19, of the Permanent Forum's 11th Session report, regarding violence against Indigenous women, we call upon the Permanent Forum to call on Member States to establish a monitoring mechanism to address the issue of

missing and murdered Indigenous Women, and take measures, in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, to ensure that Indigenous Women have full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence as stated in Article 22 of UNDRIP.

5. We affirm our position against Aquacide: the killing of the waters by dams, diversions, privatization, extractive industries, mega-agriculture, hydrofracking, commodification, and other ways that inhibit or preclude Water's ability to nurture and support Life, stated in paragraph 82 of the 10th Session's final report.

7. Extractive industrial development destroys Indigenous Peoples' livelihoods, lands, resources and territories, as well as on the environment as a whole. We support the recommendation in paragraph 39, of the Permanent Forum's 7th Session report, that the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral institutions implement alternative systems beyond the perpetuation of highly centralized fossil fuel-based energy supplies.

8. Furthermore, we demand the World Bank to divest from extractive and fossil fuel industries that continue to contaminate, pollute and poison our lands, territories, watersheds, rivers, oceans, and air. We further call upon UN agencies to divest from financial institutions that fund these damaging industries that threaten Indigenous Peoples and our livelihoods.

9. In closing, we echo the call, for the Permanent Forum, UN Agencies and Indigenous Peoples to work collectively towards making the UNDRIP a Convention, to ensure the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We thank you for your full consideration of these recommendations.