



**MR. WU HONGBO
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AND
COORDINATOR OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL DECADE
OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

**Statement to the UN General Assembly
Third Committee
Agenda item "Rights of indigenous peoples"**

New York, 20 October 2014

Mr. Chairman,
Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Special Rapporteur
on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Coordinator of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, I am pleased to present the final report of the Secretary-General on the achievement of the goal and objectives of the Second Decade and its impact on the Millennium Development Goals, contained in document A/69/27.

The United Nations declared the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples to commence on 1 January 2005. The goal was to draw attention and provide concrete action to address the development challenges facing indigenous peoples around the world.

A major highlight is the adoption by the UN General Assembly, on 13 September 2007, of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The UN Declaration establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, well-being and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. It addresses individual and collective rights, reiterates

that indigenous peoples have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination and recognizes their right to self-determination.

The final report also analyses the impact of the Second Decade on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. While Member States have put significant effort into MDG attainment, indigenous peoples have remained largely invisible in the process. Most country reports did not take full account of, and indicators on progress failed to capture the specificities of indigenous peoples. A few countries did address indigenous peoples in their reports.

The final report makes a number of recommendations including the need to recognize and strengthen indigenous peoples' own forms of governance and representatives in order to establish constructive dialogue and engagement with international and national authorities; to establish a United Nations system-wide action plan to promote the rights of indigenous peoples to be included in the five-year action agenda of the Secretary-General; and to establish a third international decade of the world's indigenous peoples.

While there has been some progress in achieving the goals of the Second Decade, a substantial gap remains between the formal recognition of indigenous peoples and the implementation of policies on the ground. Much more remains to be done.

Allow me to express my sincere appreciation of voluntary contributions from Member States to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues, which supports the Permanent Forum to implement its mandate. Since 2005, voluntary contributions have been received from the following Member States: Algeria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Germany, Japan, Libya, Luxembourg, Mexico, Peru, Philippines and Suriname. I urge you to continue to generously contribute to the work of the Forum in achieving its mandate.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On 22nd and 23rd September, the UN organized the historic first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. This was due to the close cooperation and collaboration between Indigenous Peoples and Member States. We, within the United Nations system had the honour to

be with you at every step of this landmark journey that resulted in the adoption of the Outcome Document.

The World Conference outcome document requests the Secretary General to include relevant information on indigenous peoples in the final MDG report. This is a point of convergence for the DESA's work on sustainable development and indigenous peoples.

The Outcome Document also requests the Secretary-General to develop a system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the UN Declaration, and to designate an existing senior official in this regard.

As the Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, and Coordinator of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, I am committed to supporting the efforts of the Secretary-General in ensuring effective follow up of the implementation of the Conference Outcome Document and to continue our work with and for indigenous peoples.

Distinguished delegates,

Although we have become better at talking about indigenous peoples, through declarations, policies or legislation, there remains a major gap between words and actions.

The World Conference outcome document and the post 2015 development process afford an opportunity to make indigenous peoples part of the solution.

We must intensify our work to ensure that policy commitments translate into concrete actions, and make the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples a reality for the indigenous peoples around the world.

Thank you.
