



## *Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations*

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**Statement by Prof. Arino Yaguchi  
Alternate Representative of Japan**

**On Item 70: Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

**Third Committee  
70<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
New York, 19 October 2015**

Mr. Chair,

It is a great honor to speak before the Third Committee on behalf of the Government of Japan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In 2008, the Government of Japan recognized the Ainu people as an indigenous people in Japan. The Ainu live in the northern part of the Japanese archipelago, particularly in Hokkaido. They have a unique language, and a distinctive culture and religion. Last year, representatives of the Ainu community participated as members of the delegation of the Government of Japan in the High-Level Plenary meeting of the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, known as the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples.

I would like to take this opportunity to focus on some of our efforts and developments regarding the outcome document adopted at the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples.

First, in the outcome document we reaffirmed our commitments to consult and cooperate in good faith with indigenous peoples before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them, and to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous women in decision-making processes.

In line with this commitment, the Government of Japan established the Council for Ainu Policy Promotion, hosted by the Chief Cabinet Secretary, which has held conferences continuously since 2009. This Council aims to comprehensively and effectively promote Ainu policy, taking the views and opinions of Ainu people into consideration through the participation of their representatives, including women. Our country will continue to cooperate closely with them at the decision-making process.

Second, the outcome document also mentions ensuring equal access to high-quality education, health, housing and other economic and social programs to improve the well-being of indigenous peoples. Japan has already implemented measures to improve the lives of the Ainu people and to advance their social and economic status in Hokkaido. Furthermore, we are developing measures for the Ainu people located outside of Hokkaido, including the establishment of a scholarship for Ainu youth which members of the Ainu community from outside of Hokkaido can also apply to.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, Japan is working and will continue to work closely with the Ainu people to achieve a society where the diversity of all people is respected, with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, we are committed to making efforts to tackle the many issues faced by indigenous people around the world, in cooperation with the United Nations and other actors within the international community.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.