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Forty-seventh session
Agenda item 97 (b)HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING
ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE
ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMSUnited Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous PopulationsReport of the Secretary-General

1. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/131 of 13 December 1985 with the purpose of providing financial assistance to representatives of indigenous communities and organizations who wish to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The Working Group, which was established pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/34 of 7 May 1982, is a subsidiary organ of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and meets annually at Geneva. The Group has a two-fold mandate: to review developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples and to evolve international standards concerning indigenous rights.

2. The Voluntary Fund is administered by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and other provisions relevant to this Fund (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/20). In this task, the Secretary-General is advised by a Board of Trustees composed of five persons with relevant experience on indigenous issues and serving in their personal capacity. The members of the Board are appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year term renewable in consultation with the Chairman of the Sub-Commission. At least one of the members of the Board shall be a representative of a widely recognized organization of indigenous peoples. The report of the first session of the Board of Trustees was presented to the General Assembly at its forty-third session in 1988 (A/43/706).

3. The Board of Trustees held its fourth session in April 1991 in anticipation of the Working Group's ninth session in July 1991, and its fifth session in April 1992 in anticipation of the Working Group's tenth session in July 1992. The Board is composed of Mr. Leif Dunfjeld, Mr. Alioune Séné, Mr. Hiwi Tauroa, Mr. Danilo Türk and Mr. Augusto Willemsen-Díaz, who has served as the Board's Chairman at all of its five sessions.

4. The General Assembly, in its resolution 40/131, laid down certain criteria which beneficiaries of assistance from the Fund must meet. The Board of Trustees has developed more detailed elements for selection criteria, and these criteria are reflected in a questionnaire sent out with letters informing indigenous peoples about activities of the Voluntary Fund prior to meetings of the Board.

5. In its resolution 40/131, the General Assembly foresaw funding by means of voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities. As at 30 September 1992, in response to requests issued by the Secretary-General, contributions had been received in 1991 and 1992 from the following Governments:

<u>Government</u>	<u>Amount</u> (United States dollars)
Australia	15 066
Canada	59 390
Denmark	31 155
Finland	35 465
Greece	10 000
Grenada	200
Japan	40 000
Luxembourg	8 820
Netherlands	16 497
New Zealand	26 611
Norway	49 970
Philippines	870
Spain	14 920
Sweden	28 251
Switzerland	18 891
Tunisia	2 598

6. In addition, during the same period, contributions were received from the following non-governmental sources:

Liberal Democratic Party and various associations (Japan)	7 260
Shimin Gaikou Centre (Japan)	1 500
World Council of Churches	10 000

7. At its fourth and fifth sessions, the Board examined requests for financial assistance for 79 and 64 indigenous representatives, respectively. In the light of the funds available, it recommended at its fourth session the awarding of 31 travel and subsistence grants. The 31 beneficiaries came from 19 countries, namely, Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Zaire. At its fifth session, it recommended the awarding of 41 travel and subsistence grants. The beneficiaries came from 19 countries, namely, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Venezuela. The Secretary-General endorsed the recommendations of the Board.

8. Of the selected beneficiaries, 29 representatives attended the ninth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which took place at Geneva from 22 July to 2 August 1991, and 38 representatives attended the tenth session of the Working Group, which took place at Geneva from 20 to 31 July 1992. For the reports of the sessions, see documents E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/40/Rev.1 and E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/33.

9. The sixth session of the Board of Trustees is scheduled to be held in April 1993 in advance of the Working Group's eleventh session in July 1993.
