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INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Australia, Bolivia*, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus*, Denmark, Estonia*, Finland*, Greece*, Honduras*, Mexico, New Zealand*, Nicaragua, Norway*, Peru, Philippines, Sweden* and United States of America: draft resolution

1996/... International Decade of the World's Indigenous People
Bearing in mind that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, is the achievement of international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Recalling its previous resolutions and those of the General Assembly on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Recalling also that the goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health, and that the theme of the Decade is "Indigenous people: partnership in action",

* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Recognizing the importance of consultation and cooperation with indigenous people in planning and implementing the programme of activities for the Decade, the need for adequate financial support from the international community, including support from within the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and the need for adequate coordination and communication channels,

Recalling the invitation addressed by the General Assembly to organizations of indigenous people and other non-governmental organizations concerned to consider the contributions they can make to the success of the Decade, with a view to presenting them to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations,

Noting Economic and Social Council decision 1992/255 of 20 July 1992, in which the Council requested United Nations bodies and specialized agencies to ensure that all technical assistance financed or provided by them was compatible with international instruments and standards applicable to indigenous people, and encouraged efforts to promote coordination in this field and greater participation of indigenous people in the planning and implementation of projects affecting them,

1. Affirms its recognition of the value and diversity of the cultures and forms of social organization of indigenous people, and its conviction that the development of indigenous people within their countries will contribute to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental advancement of all the countries of the world;

2. Takes note of the final report of the Secretary-General on a comprehensive programme of action for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and the annexes to that report (A/50/511);

3. Welcomes the decision of the General Assembly to adopt the programme of activities for the Decade contained in the annex to its resolution 50/157;

4. Notes that the programme of activities for the Decade may be reviewed and updated throughout the Decade and that at the mid-point of the Decade the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should review the results of the activities to identify obstacles to achievement of the goals of the Decade and to recommend solutions for overcoming those obstacles;

5. Welcomes the affirmation by the General Assembly as a major objective of the Decade the adoption of a declaration on the rights of indigenous people;

6. Also welcomes the recognition by the General Assembly that among the important objectives of the Decade is the consideration of the possible establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations;

7. Recognizes the importance of strengthening the human and institutional capacity of indigenous people to develop their own solutions to their problems and, for these purposes, invites the Coordinator of the Decade to recommend appropriate means of implementing the recommendation of the General Assembly that the United Nations University consider the possibility of sponsoring, in each region, one or more institutions of higher education as centres of excellence and for the diffusion of expertise;

8. Welcomes the recommendations and requests contained in paragraphs 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 15 of General Assembly resolution 50/157, and invites the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Coordinator of the Decade to implement them as a matter of priority from within existing resources and to provide informal briefings on activities undertaken for the Decade within the United Nations system, including a review of activities in 1995 and those planned for 1996, and to report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session under the agenda item entitled "Indigenous issues";

9. Emphasizes the important role of international cooperation in promoting the goals and activities of the Decade and the rights, well-being and sustainable development of indigenous people;

10. Also emphasizes the importance of action at the national level for the implementation of the goals and activities of the Decade;

11. Encourages Governments to support the Decade by contributing to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Decade;

12. Also encourages Governments, as appropriate, to support the Decade by:

(a) Preparing relevant programmes, plans and reports in relation to the Decade, in consultation with indigenous people;

(b) Seeking means, in consultation with indigenous people, of giving indigenous people greater responsibility for their own affairs and an effective voice in decisions on matters which affect them;

(c) Establishing national committees or other mechanisms involving indigenous people to ensure that the objectives and activities of the Decade are planned and implemented on the basis of full partnership with indigenous people;

13. Further encourages Governments to consider contributing, as appropriate, to the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, in support of the achievement of the goals of the Decade;

14. Welcomes the establishment by the Coordinator of the Decade of an advisory body to provide guidance with regard to the projects and programmes financed from the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;

15. Appeals to Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to support the Decade by identifying resources for activities designed to implement the goals of the Decade, in cooperation with indigenous people;

16. Requests the High Commissioner for Human Rights when developing programmes within the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education to give due regard to the dissemination of information on the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous people;

17. Encourages the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Coordinator of the Decade to cooperate with the Department of Public Information in preparing and disseminating information on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, taking due care to portray accurately the information regarding indigenous people;

18. Notes that the General Assembly, in paragraph 9 of the annex to its resolution 50/157, stated that official observance of the Decade should be part of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II);

19. Decides to consider the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People at its fifty-third session under the agenda item entitled "Indigenous issues".