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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of  
Discrimination and Protection  
of Minorities  
Fiftieth session  
Agenda item 7

HUMAN RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Mr. Alfonso Martínez, Mr. Boutkevitch and Ms. Koufa:  
draft resolution

1998/... International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of  
Minorities,

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 General Assembly resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, in which the Assembly proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Recalling also that the goal of the Decade is the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous peoples in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995, in which the Assembly adopted the comprehensive programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Recalling the requests by the General Assembly, in its resolutions 50/157 and 52/108 of 12 December 1997, to assess the objectives of the Decade by quantifiable outcomes that will improve the lives of indigenous peoples and to evaluate the objectives halfway through the Decade and at its end,

Having considered the report of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations on its sixteenth session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/16),

1. Welcomes the observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People on 9 August;
2. Recommends that the celebration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People be held on the first day of the seventeenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in order to ensure as great a participation of indigenous people as possible;
3. Welcomes the decision by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/108 of 12 December 1997 to appoint the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as Coordinator for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;
4. Recommends that the Coordinator for the Decade consider holding a special fund-raising meeting with interested permanent missions and the members of the Advisory Group to encourage financial contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the Decade and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, as well as the appointment of qualified staff, including indigenous persons, to assist with the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights relating to the indigenous programme;
5. Also recommends that attention continue to be given to improving the extent of the participation of indigenous peoples in planning and implementing the activities of the Decade;

6. Further recommends that in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995, the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples be adopted as early as possible during the International Decade;

7. Welcomes Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/20 of 9 April 1998 in which the Commission decided to establish an open-ended inter-sessional ad hoc working group on the permanent forum for indigenous peoples in the United Nations system;

8. Recommends that the permanent forum be established as soon as possible in the course of the Decade with functions that do not duplicate those already conferred on the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, financed through the regular budget of the United Nations and securing full participation of all interested indigenous peoples,

9. Congratulates the Advisory Group for the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for the work it accomplished, for its initiatives and for the transparency of its working methods and decisions;

10. Expresses its appreciation to the Government of Spain for hosting the Workshop of Indigenous Journalists in January 1998;

11. Encourages the High Commissioner for Human Rights to consider organizing a follow-up workshop to put into practice the recommendations arising from the Madrid Workshop;

12. Recommends that the Commission on Human Rights request the Economic and Social Council to authorize the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize a three-day technical meeting immediately prior to the seventeenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in order to undertake the mid-point review of the Decade;

13. Emphasizes the importance of ensuring the largest possible indigenous participation at the technical meeting;

14. Recommend the following draft decision to the Commission on Human Rights for adoption:

"The Commission on Human Rights, taking note of  
resolution 1998/ ... of ... August 1998 of the Sub-Commission on

Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, endorses the recommendation of the Sub-Commission that the Economic and Social Council authorize the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to organize a three-day technical meeting immediately prior to the seventeenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in order to undertake a mid-point review of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

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