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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Indigenous Information Network, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Excellencies and all esteemed delegates and participants of the 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the International Indigenous Women's Forum (IIMI) and Indigenous Women's Regional Networks, collectively represent the voices, concerns, and aspirations of Indigenous Women across the globe. We stand committed to accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of Indigenous Women, Girls and Youth, by addressing poverty, institutional strengthening, and promoting financing with a gender and intercultural perspective for the full realization of our individual and collective rights.

At the heart of our statement is the recognition of the intersectionality of gender, poverty, and Indigenous identity. Indigenous Women often face multiple layers of discrimination and marginalization, impeding their access to resources, decision-making processes, and institutions.

We are particularly concerned about the unequal allocation of resources towards the priorities of land, environment, territory and the limited political participation of Indigenous Women in key decision-making arenas as outlined in the CEDAW General Recommendation No. 39.

Indigenous Women organizations have proven our capacity to independently manage financial resources effectively and make substantial contributions to our communities. We believe that Indigenous Women do not need to be put under the umbrella of mainstream organizations but should be directly supported and financed.

The Ayni Fund model of IIMI, exemplifies the successful implementation of Indigenous philanthropy, yielding positive results, and showcases that Indigenous Women are capable of leading our own wellbeing and should be acknowledged.

In the light of this UNCSW 68th Session, we recommend that international financing mechanisms and policies should be inclusive, culturally sensitive, and designed with a deep understanding of Indigenous cultures, practices, and needs.

We call for the substantive inclusion of Indigenous Women in decision-making processes at all levels including national, local and indigenous self-governments, particularly in matters related to land, environment, territory and administration of justice.

We demand that financial resources be allocated equitably, with a specific focus on supporting initiatives led by and for Indigenous Women. We encourage the establishment of funding mechanisms that are accessible, transparent, and responsive to the needs of Indigenous Women.

We urge the UN Women Trust Fund on Violence Against Women to allocate a significant percentage of their funding directly to Indigenous Women's organizations. This move will promote inclusivity and recognize the unique challenges and solutions that Indigenous Women bring to the table.

We call for a more comprehensive approach to resource allocation, recognizing the specific needs of Indigenous Women in areas such as education, health, access to justice, economic empowerment, and protection of their fundamental rights. It is essential to consider the traditional knowledge and practices of Indigenous Women, integrating their voices and respecting their sovereignty.

We urge Member States, international institutions, and civil society organizations to recognize the valuable Indigenous Women's contributions and allocate adequate resources to meet their specific needs. The achievement of gender

equality and the empowerment of all women and girls cannot be realized without the full inclusion and effective participation of Indigenous Women.

In conclusion, we stand as one in calling for an intersectional and inclusive approach to resource allocation, acknowledging the particularities of Indigenous Women and supporting our development, self determination and empowerment.

We stand ready to collaborate and commit to continuing to work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to ensure that resources are allocated equitably and effectively, and to promote gender equality and the rights of Indigenous Women at all levels.

This statement was endorsed by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.
