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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

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Draft report

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

Recommendations of the Permanent Forum

Discussion on the theme “Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples within United Nations Member States and the United Nations system, including identifying good practices and addressing challenges” (item 3)

1. Gradual progress, characterized by advancements and ongoing challenges, has been made on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Many States have integrated the principles contained in the Declaration into their legal frameworks, promoting self-determination, land rights and cultural heritage protection. These efforts reflect a growing commitment to aligning domestic policies with international standards on Indigenous Peoples’ rights. United Nations initiatives, such as the system-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration and the call to action of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination set out in “Building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with Indigenous Peoples: a call to action”, have further advanced the integration of the Declaration into institutional practices, fostering greater coherence and accountability.

2. However, significant barriers persist. Indigenous Peoples often face systemic discrimination, exclusion from decision-making and threats to their lands and territories due to, inter alia, development without free, prior and informed consent, extractive industries, armed conflict and climate change. Free, prior and informed consent is a cornerstone of the Declaration and is frequently disregarded,



exacerbating conflict and marginalization. Political will remains uneven, leading to inconsistent implementation and enforcement of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

3. Addressing these challenges requires stronger political commitment, capacity-building and genuine partnerships with Indigenous Peoples. Enhancing legal protections, ensuring access to justice and incorporating Indigenous knowledge into environmental and development strategies are critical. Best practices, such as participatory governance, culturally appropriate education and inclusive policymaking, offer replicable solutions. Continued advocacy, monitoring and international collaboration are vital to closing the gap between aspiration and reality.

4. The Permanent Forum welcomes the study entitled “Evaluating institutional structures to improve the health and wellness of Indigenous Peoples globally: the Indigenous determinants of health measurement instrument” (E/C.19/2025/5) and recommends that Member States and United Nations entities adopt the instrument with a view to prioritizing cultural safety, upholding the principles of the Declaration and accurately measuring the Indigenous determinants of health.

5. The Permanent Forum urges all Member States that have not formally recognized Indigenous Peoples within their territories to do so, in law and practice, under the term “Indigenous Peoples”. Recognition must go beyond symbolic acknowledgement and encompass concrete measures to uphold their individual and collective rights in accordance with the Declaration.

6. The Permanent Forum emphasizes the urgent need to fully implement the Declaration across the United Nations. Key recommendations include adopting the Indigenous determinants of health evaluation instrument, increasing Indigenous Peoples’ participation in decision-making and eliminating structural barriers, violence and discrimination, in particular against Indigenous two-spirit peoples. All United Nations reports, mechanisms and processes must fully reflect the experiences and rights of Indigenous two-spirit peoples. Furthermore, the Forum calls for Indigenous Peoples’ rights and self-determination to be recognized in and integrated into national legislation, policies and governance.

7. Member States should acknowledge the critical role of Indigenous Peoples as guardians of their lands and territories; their traditional knowledge must be fully respected in environmental governance, including the protection and use of medicinal plants, such as the coca leaf and peyote, that hold profound religious, cultural and spiritual significance to Indigenous Peoples, and their ecosystems.

Recommendations for Member States

8. The Permanent Forum calls upon the United States of America and all Member States to uphold their commitments to ensuring the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples who require a visa to attend the sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and other relevant meetings, in line with the joint letter of April 2025 from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. In their letter, they highlight the urgent need to facilitate the timely issuance of visas and unimpeded access to venues, with a view to ensuring the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making, as enshrined in articles 18 and 42 of the Declaration, supported by the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant international human rights instruments. The Permanent Forum also requests that the Economic and Social Council consider relocating the Forum sessions to more accessible United Nations premises.

9. The Permanent Forum calls for the Russian Federation to immediately cease its aggression against Ukraine, condemning it as a grave violation of Indigenous Peoples’

rights under the Declaration. Furthermore, it urges all Member States to take decisive action in supporting a just and lasting peace in line with international law.

10. The Permanent Forum reiterates its call for Canada and the United States to decommission the Enbridge Line 5 oil pipeline, which poses a real and credible threat to the Great Lakes and Indigenous Peoples. Both States must implement the Declaration in connection with Line 5 by respecting the free, prior and informed consent of the affected Indigenous Peoples.

11. The Permanent Forum urges India to immediately uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Manipur who are affected by conflict. The Forum stresses the need for urgent international attention and accountability to address decades of displacement, trauma and escalating suicide rates. The Forum calls for an immediate cessation of violence and insists that the State adopt peaceful measures to end the conflict while holding perpetrators to account.

12. The Permanent Forum calls upon the international community and relevant United Nations entities to increase support and attention to Indigenous Peoples in Ghana and urges Ghana to implement the Land Act, 2020.

13. Member States are encouraged to reaffirm their commitment to prevent the use of Indigenous Peoples' resources, lands and territories without free, prior and informed consent and respect the territorial integrity of Indigenous Peoples. The population of Greenland is over 90 per cent Indigenous; hence, the Declaration applies fully, along with national and international law. Member States are called to honour the territorial integrity and political autonomy of Greenland.

14. The Permanent Forum urges the United States to fully implement the Declaration by strengthening commitments to Indigenous leadership, including by seating the delegate of the Cherokee Nation in the House of Representatives. It welcomes the adoption of the Declaration by the Pawnee, Ho-Chunk, Yurok and Muscogee (Creek) Nations.

15. The Permanent Forum urges the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to comply with the articles of the Declaration that have been incorporated into its Constitution, including those on free, prior and informed consent, protecting Indigenous women and ensuring territorial integrity.

Recommendations for the United Nations system

16. The Permanent Forum welcomes the continued commitment and role of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples in enhancing the participation of Indigenous Peoples within the United Nations system. The Forum notes the financial difficulties faced by the Fund and encourages Member States and funders to support the Voluntary Fund and the trust fund on Indigenous issues.

17. The Permanent Forum commends the progress made at the intersessional meetings of the Human Rights Council, noting that, at the second intersessional meeting of the Human Rights Council on concrete ways to enhance the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the work of the Council, for the first time, Indigenous Peoples from all seven sociocultural regions participated directly. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is invited to share lessons from that process with other United Nations entities. The Forum recommends that the Council, at its fifty-ninth session, establish a separate accreditation status for the representatives and institutions of Indigenous Peoples. The principles of the Declaration should inform the accreditation procedure, with due regard for self-determination, self-identification, equality, non-discrimination and accountability.

18. The Permanent Forum welcomes General Assembly resolution [78/328](#) on enhanced participation and recommends that the Assembly and the Human Rights Council ensure the full and effective involvement of Indigenous Peoples and their representative institutions. It calls upon Member States to financially support the Indigenous Coordinating Body for Enhanced Participation in the United Nations.

19. The Permanent Forum welcomes the establishment of the Subsidiary Body on Article 8 (j) and Other Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (decision 16/5) and the adoption of the new programme of work related thereto (decision 16/4) at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It urges the operationalization of the decision on the continued prioritization of Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge in implementing the Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Forum also acknowledges that the Global Plan of Action on Biodiversity and Health (decision 16/19) draws on the study on the Indigenous determinants of health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ([E/C.19/2023/5](#)).

20. Noting the ongoing negotiations in the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore of the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Permanent Forum urges States to ensure adequate funding for the participation of Indigenous Peoples and to reach an agreement without delay.
