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## Third Committee

### Summary record of the 18th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 19 October 2015, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Dempsey (Vice-Chair) ..... (Canada)

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*In the absence of Mr. Hilale (Morocco), Mr. Dempsey (Canada), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 69: Rights of indigenous peoples**  
(A/70/84-E/2015/76 and A/70/301)

**(a) Rights of indigenous peoples**

**(b) Follow-up to the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**

1. **Mr. Tituana** (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that CELAC reaffirmed its commitment to implement the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and supported the efforts to find ways to enable the participation of indigenous people's representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues concerning them. CELAC looked forward to the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with a view to enhancing the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

2. The irreversible eradication of poverty — which would require global, regional and national efforts, as well as efforts by local governments and communities — was a prerequisite for sustainable development and equality of opportunity, which, in turn, could not be attained without the inclusion of vulnerable groups and peoples, including indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples. In that regard, CELAC welcomed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which recognized the interlinkages between eradicating poverty, combating inequality, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion. The promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence was also of fundamental importance. Disaggregated statistics and indicators were needed to monitor and follow up on the 2030 Agenda; in that connection, dialogue between producers and users of data must be given priority and adequate resources allocated in order to compile pertinent, timely and reliable information.

3. CELAC recognized the importance of traditional sustainable agricultural practices, traditional systems

of land tenure and seed supply and access to financing and markets. It had decided to support efforts to strengthen the productive base, placing emphasis on access to water for irrigation through proper management of water basins, the recovery of soil fertility by replenishing green cover, compost production, terrace cropping, and the protection of biodiversity through the recovery and production of native seeds and improved seed production, in line with the legislation of each country. The vital role of collective action of indigenous peoples and local populations in preserving biological diversity must be taken into consideration. Steps must be taken to protect patents on the traditional and ancestral knowledge of indigenous and tribal peoples and local communities in order to prevent violation by third parties and ensure that indigenous peoples received a fair share of the benefits derived from their use.

4. CELAC consistently promoted the rights and dignity of vulnerable and marginalized groups. It supported the empowerment and capacity-building of indigenous women and youth, including their participation in decision-making processes on matters that affected them, particularly in the areas of health, education, employment, the protection of their land and transmission of traditional culture. Measures to promote awareness of their rights were also important. The CELAC countries were committed to cooperating with indigenous peoples, through their own representative institutions, in order to develop and implement national action plans, strategies or other measures and implement the outcome document of the World Conference.

5. **Ms. Boissiere** (Trinidad and Tobago), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Caribbean States were committed to addressing the issues of their indigenous peoples in national development plans; including them in decision-making at all levels, particularly in decisions that affected their lifestyles and cultural integrity; and ensuring that their fundamental rights and freedoms were upheld. The Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community underscored the contribution of indigenous peoples to the development process and undertook to protect their historical rights and respect their culture and way of life.

6. The 2030 Agenda, with its pledge that no one would be left behind, was particularly relevant for indigenous peoples, who were among the marginalized

groups in many societies. CARICOM welcomed the Agenda's inclusion of indigenous peoples as a vulnerable group that should be empowered. It also took note of the inclusion in the report of the Special Rapporteur (in document [A/70/301](#)) of several good practices identified by Member States and indigenous peoples to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on matters affecting them. Meaningful dialogue between Member States and indigenous peoples should be fostered so that matters that affected indigenous peoples could be adequately addressed.

7. As small-island developing and low-lying coastal States facing the accelerated phenomenon of climate change, the Caribbean States were well aware of the importance of indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge on living in harmony with nature. Indigenous peoples had been recognized as agents in climate change mitigation and disaster risk reduction in the SAMOA Pathway and in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. CARICOM Governments had identified traditional sustainable agricultural practices, sustainable land use and conservation as areas for cooperation on ecosystem management. In the Caribbean region, all peoples, including indigenous and tribal peoples, were able to pursue legal action to resolve matters affecting their lifestyles, without fear of victimization. The CARICOM countries would continue to implement legal, policy and operational frameworks in order to ensure the promotion and protection of indigenous and tribal peoples.

8. **Ms. Colín Ortega** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, said that with respect to the development of a system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it was important to note that the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference ([A/70/84](#)) was preliminary in nature. The Group of Friends therefore encouraged the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, Member States and indigenous peoples to continue consultations on the further elaboration of the plan, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

9. The Group of Friends believed that the review of the Expert Mechanism must ensure the participation of indigenous peoples; in that regard, the Group welcomed Human Rights Council resolution 30/11 on the procedural steps needed to ensure the review's success. The Group of Friends commended the Secretary-General for the concrete proposals in his report ([A/70/84](#)) on enabling the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions, and in particular the proposal regarding the appointment of co-facilitators or advisers, including indigenous representatives, to lead an open-ended consultation process. The consultative process must be inclusive, and it should begin as soon as possible, on a clearly established timeline. Options for the procedural and institutional steps and selection criteria necessary to enable the participation of indigenous peoples at the United Nations should be considered by the General Assembly at its current session. In the effort to ensure that indigenous peoples from all regions of the world were represented, attention should be given to regions that were often underrepresented in United Nations forums and mechanisms on indigenous issues.

10. **Mr. Whiteley** (Observer for the European Union) said that the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania, the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine, aligned themselves with his statement. The European Union commended the efforts made at national, regional and international levels to implement the recommendations of the outcome document of the World Conference and welcomed the rapid progress achieved in relation to the review of the Expert Mechanism. The European Union's contributions to that review would aim to strengthen the complementarity between the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and with all other mechanisms and mandates of the Human Rights Council; and to ensure that the working methods of a modified Expert Mechanism would have real impact at the national level.

11. It was important to apply existing good practices on enabling the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives at the United Nations on issues affecting them. In that regard, he noted the Secretary-General's suggestion that the President of the General

Assembly should consider leading an open-ended consultation process on the possible procedural and institutional steps and selection criteria necessary to enable the participation of indigenous peoples at the United Nations.

12. In order to enhance its long-standing efforts to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples across the world, the European Union had launched a review aimed at strengthening relevant policies to ensure their coherence with the Declaration and with the outcome document of the World Conference. At two separate consultation events in 2015, indigenous peoples had acknowledged existing European Union commitments to their rights and made pertinent recommendations for a strengthened European Union policy. Those recommendations had confirmed the relevance of the European Union's policy of raising the human rights situation of indigenous peoples during high-level human rights dialogues with partner countries as well as providing financial support through numerous programmes. Many of those programmes addressed the legal and institutional frameworks and access to justice while aiming to strengthen social, economic and cultural rights, with a specific focus on environmental and land issues. Human rights defenders and civil society representatives of indigenous peoples were also given particular attention.

13. The new European Union action plan for human rights had an enhanced focus on the human rights that were most affected by an increasingly globalized production, trading and business environment, without compromising the premise that all human rights were indivisible and interdependent.

14. **Mr. Thöresson** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples was a long-standing priority. Fulfilling the objectives of the Declaration would require consistent work at the national and international levels. Stressing the importance of enhanced participation of indigenous peoples' representatives in the relevant United Nations forums, he called for an inclusive process in the follow-up of the commitments in the outcome document of the World Conference. The Nordic countries hoped that the Secretary-General's recommendations regarding indigenous peoples' participation would be duly considered and welcomed the significant contribution to the report of the

Secretary-General (in document [A/70/84](#)) by indigenous peoples' representatives and organizations, which had submitted 425 responses.

15. The Nordic countries supported the work of the three United Nations mechanisms for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous issues — the Special Rapporteur, the Expert Mechanism and the Permanent Forum — and stressed that they should remain complementary; coordination between them should be strengthened in order to avoid duplication of work and enable synergies. The review of the Expert Mechanism would provide an opportunity for dialogue on indigenous issues with all relevant stakeholders.

16. It was vital to safeguard the rights of indigenous women and girls, who experienced complex human rights violations, and suffered from various forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. Those violations, including their causes and consequences, must be thoroughly addressed. Lastly, he underscored the need for the United Nations to develop a system-wide approach to promoting the rights of indigenous peoples, including in the context of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

17. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that there were 54 indigenous peoples in Peru, who spoke a total of 47 languages; through their traditions, knowledge and customs they were making invaluable contributions to the country's culture and identity. The imperative to leave no one behind, set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, must include indigenous peoples, hence the need to implement better practices and laws and develop better institutions. Peru promoted and guaranteed social equality and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples, in accordance with the relevant international instruments. Legislation on the right to prior consultation had been enacted in 2011, making Peru one of the first countries in the region to implement the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) in that regard. To date, 12 consultations had been held between the State and indigenous peoples, involving over 20 indigenous groups and 600 communities. Seven consultations had concerned the development of the hydrocarbons sector, including environmental protection, compensation and profit-sharing.

18. In line with its belief in intercultural dialogue as the ideal means of upholding the rights of indigenous

peoples, Peru had established joint forums at the local and national levels. In one petroleum-producing region, a contingency fund for environmental protection had been created and was being administered by a board with indigenous peoples' representatives, and funds had been allocated to protect the property rights of local communities. A working group which included indigenous peoples had been set up to provide a standing platform for the coordination of public policies involving indigenous peoples, and was facilitating dialogue with the leaders of seven indigenous federations with broad national representation. Important agreements had been reached on adapting public services to indigenous traditions and ways of life. Multilingual services were provided in civil registries and courts of law, and there were over 200 officially recognized interpreters.

19. In terms of indigenous land and territory, five reserves covering approximately 3 million hectares had been established to protect isolated peoples, and five more were planned. A registry of isolated peoples and a registry of indigenous reserves had been set up to collect data with a view to better tailoring protection measures and better addressing the needs of indigenous persons and communities. Moreover, an official database on indigenous peoples had been established and the general household survey had been updated to include indigenous peoples of the Amazon living in extreme poverty. Those measures aimed to reduce the high levels of poverty faced by indigenous peoples and facilitate their access to social programmes.

20. **Ms. Hernández** (Mexico) said that over 15 million indigenous people lived in Mexico, speaking 68 languages, and they formed part of the national identity and heritage. Mexico had taken legislative action to promote the rights and freedoms of indigenous peoples and communities, in line with the country's Constitution. Nevertheless, her Government recognized that it still faced significant challenges in that area and would continue to work to overcome them, giving particular attention to such vulnerable groups as indigenous migrants, children and adolescents, girls, women, indigenous persons with disabilities and older persons. Recognition and respect for indigenous peoples' cultural identity were prerequisites to ensuring full enjoyment of their rights. To that end, intercultural dialogue allowed her Government to identify ways to promote inclusive

development and a culture of peace. To ensure that indigenous peoples were considered subjects of law, the international community should encourage States to establish appropriate mechanisms for the full exercise of indigenous rights, in accordance with the Declaration.

21. Mexico looked forward to the formulation of a system-wide action plan on incorporating indigenous perspectives and representation into the Organization's work in a manner beneficial to the world's indigenous peoples. Her Government pledged to work with United Nations agencies in order to achieve inclusive development and fulfil its international obligations concerning indigenous peoples, enabling them to benefit from and participate in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

22. **Ms. Phipps** (United States of America) said that her Government supported the creation of a system-wide action plan to guide United Nations agencies with regard to the implementation of the Declaration. The plan would encourage agencies which had not focused adequately on indigenous peoples' concerns in the past to do so in the future, in the most efficient way. Under the plan, agencies should consider their comparative strengths and work in consultation to eliminate any duplication in activities. Once the relevant recommendations had been formulated, they should be submitted to the appropriate governing boards for consideration and endorsement, resulting in a unified approach within agencies. Moreover, the plan should contain a relatively small number of clear, broad objectives that each agency could apply to its responsibilities.

23. Her Government encouraged further progress on enhancing participation by indigenous peoples at the United Nations, which was critical to empowering indigenous peoples and allowing a greater range of relevant views to be heard by critical stakeholders. However, it urged that consultations on that issue should take place within the Economic and Social Council in order to make them as inclusive and participatory as possible, rather than in the General Assembly, where participation was limited to Member States. In addition, a fixed-term rather than an open-ended process would serve to focus the discussion. Accordingly, her delegation called for the adoption of a procedural resolution which would request the Economic and Social Council to follow up on the

recommendations on enhanced participation in the outcome document of the World Conference.

24. The United States welcomed the progress made during the September 2015 session of the Human Rights Council on reviewing the mandate and composition of the Expert Mechanism, which was well placed to take on the task of partnering with countries to assess their progress in attaining the goals of the Declaration. Its functions should be updated to reduce duplication and conference services costs. Her Government planned to hold at least one consultation with United States indigenous representatives before the expert workshop on revitalizing the Expert Mechanism met in early 2016.

25. **Ms. Natividad** (Philippines) said that her Government supported the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism and welcomed the progress made in the development of a United Nations system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration. Her Government remained committed to the protection and full realization of its peoples' basic human rights, including those of indigenous peoples. By enhancing implementation of the national policy framework on indigenous peoples' education, and strengthening the capacity of public schools and learning programmes, the Philippines endeavoured to provide every indigenous learner with access to an inclusive and culture-based education. In July 2015 the Department of Education had adopted a curriculum framework to guide schools and other education programmes in their engagement with indigenous communities. A conditional cash transfer programme helped to ensure that the children, aged 3 to 18, of the poorest families were enrolled and remained in school, on condition that they maintained an attendance rate of at least 85 per cent of class days per month. As of August 2015, over 570,000 indigenous households were beneficiaries of the programme. A modified conditional cash transfer programme complemented that programme and was designed to facilitate the access of families in need of special protection, including itinerant indigenous families and those in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas, to health, education, and other basic services. In 2015, there were over 218, 000 active registered beneficiaries.

26. The protection of indigenous peoples and their rights was guaranteed by the Constitution and relevant

legislation. The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act, of 1997, had recognized the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination, the applicability of customary laws governing property rights, and the requirement that their free, prior and informed consent be obtained in relation to any developments that might have an impact on them. There was also the draft Basic Bangsamoro Law, which sought to end the decades-long strife in Mindanao through the establishment of a political entity for the Bangsamoro peoples, and was the product of inclusive consultations and constructive dialogue with all relevant stakeholders.

27. The Philippines welcomed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, its inclusion of indigenous peoples. In their implementation of the Agenda, Governments should continue to engage with its indigenous peoples. Recognition of their rights and aspirations would contribute significantly to national unity and equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

28. **Ms. Sandoval** (Nicaragua) said that Nicaragua was proud of its indigenous and African heritage; her Government had made significant efforts to reverse the past exclusion of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities. Nicaragua had an inclusive and intercultural legal framework that guaranteed the full enjoyment of rights by indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples to bilingual intercultural education, collective land ownership, health and justice, among other rights. Public policy had been strengthened with a view to empowering indigenous persons and persons of African descent. Between 2007 and 2014 her Government had titled 22 indigenous and Afro-descendant territories, amounting to 30 per cent of the national territory, thereby restoring rights to over 190,000 inhabitants in 289 communities. Her Government also supported capacity-building for indigenous women and girls, including their participation in decision-making in matters that affected them, in particular in the areas of health, education, employment, protection of their land and natural resources, and the transmission of traditional knowledge, languages and practices. It had also introduced measures to promote awareness and understanding of the rights of those groups.

29. It was very important to review the participation of indigenous peoples in the work of the United Nations. Their status should be recognized as distinct from that of non-governmental organizations.

30. **Mr. González Franco** (Paraguay) said that Paraguay was a pluri- and multicultural society. There were about 117,000 indigenous people, who accounted for only 1.7 per cent of the population; they belonged to 19 ethnic groups and were distributed across 493 communities nationwide. One unique feature of Paraguay was that it had two official languages, one of which, Guaraní, was an indigenous language. Paraguay was proud of its indigenous heritage, which had played and would continue to play a key role in the development of the country's cultural identity.

31. Indigenous communities were protected by Paraguayan law. The Constitution invalidated the doctrine of "discovery" and recognized the presence of indigenous peoples prior to the formation of the Paraguayan State; it safeguarded their right to communal ownership of sufficient land to ensure the preservation and development of their distinct ways of life and also guaranteed their right to participate in political life and in decision-making that affected their rights.

32. With regard to the rights of indigenous peoples, his Government's most important challenges were: expanding their access to their own land; food security; housing; access to drinking water and to electricity; and expanding scholarship programmes for indigenous youth to complete university degrees. A law on the indigenous health system had recently been adopted based on respect for cultural diversity; the law established a national health directorate for indigenous peoples and a national council consisting of representatives of each indigenous group.

33. **Ms. Shlychkova** (Russian Federation) said that, as one of the sponsors of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, her Government was pleased that the outcome document of the World Conference had been adopted by consensus. The Russian Federation had always supported indigenous minorities in their aspiration to the fuller and more effective enjoyment of their rights and would continue to do so. Her Government believed that in implementing the provisions of the outcome document, it was important to concentrate on promoting sustainable development for indigenous peoples and preserving their environment, traditional way of life, cultural values and heritage.

34. The review of the mandate of existing mechanisms, in particular the Expert Mechanism, was

of great importance to the attainment of the goals set forth in the Declaration. Her delegation believed that there were a sufficient number of existing mechanisms and procedures within the United Nations system which, within their mandates, were capable of promoting the strengthening and observance of the rights of indigenous peoples. Unfortunately their potential was not being fully utilized by the representatives of indigenous peoples. A careful approach should be taken to considering any changes. Duplication of functions should be avoided as it had financial implications and could undermine the effectiveness of the entire system for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples.

35. The Russian Federation had various programmes to protect the culture of indigenous peoples and their access to education and health care. A new mechanism had been introduced whereby corporations provided financial compensation to indigenous peoples for the use of natural resources. The main tool for implementing the outcome document and the Declaration must be the good will of States, alongside work to support indigenous peoples and protect their rights and freedoms. International mechanisms should provide assistance to States at their request.

36. **Mr. de Aguiar Patriota** (Brazil) said that Brazil, in keeping with its commitment to implement the Declaration and the outcome document of the World Conference, would host its first National Conference on Indigenous Policies in December 2015. The Conference would cover the whole range of public policies concerning indigenous issues in Brazil and would be the culmination of a year-long preparatory process comprising some 200 meetings and seminars at the local and regional levels. Brazil would also host the first World Indigenous Games from 23 October to 1 November 2015, which would bring together approximately 2,000 indigenous athletes from nearly 30 countries.

37. The system-wide action plan for the implementation of the Declaration should be developed in consultation with Member States, indigenous representatives and the various agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system. Brazil commended the Inter-Agency Support Group's initiative to establish a working group for that purpose. His Government also welcomed the proposed review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism, as it attached great importance to enabling the representatives and



institutions of indigenous peoples to participate in relevant United Nations meetings. Any consultation process regarding indigenous representation should include representatives from all regions of the world; special attention should be paid to regions that were often underrepresented at existing United Nations forums and mechanisms on indigenous issues. One way to ensure the balanced geographical representation of indigenous peoples in the consultation process would be to appoint the members of the Permanent Forum as advisers to the Secretary-General in the drafting of new rules for the participation of indigenous peoples' institutions in relevant United Nations forums, consistent with paragraph 40 of the outcome document.

38. **Mr. Osbuei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the significance of the role of indigenous peoples in social, cultural and economic life could not be overemphasized; yet they were often the poorest of the poor, even in their homelands. Implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference as well as the Declaration would contribute to the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples, who were valuable partners in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The upcoming climate change conference in Paris would provide an occasion to highlight the vulnerability of indigenous peoples to the consequences of climate change. The relevant United Nations agencies should play their respective roles in that regard, and the system-wide action plan to implement the outcome of the 2014 conference was therefore an important step. However, given the absence of United Nations development agencies in the northern hemisphere, it was unclear how the special development needs of indigenous peoples who lived there would be met.

39. His delegation believed that the actual and potential impact of international investment and free trade agreements on the rights and well-being of indigenous peoples, as recognized by the Special Rapporteur in her report (in document [A/70/301](#)) deserved further serious consideration, in close consultation with indigenous peoples themselves.

40. **Monsignor Grech** (Observer for the Holy See) said that the international community would need to recover an authentic sense of collective responsibility for the well-being of its fellow human beings and the world if it was to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda. Accordingly, it was crucial to promote

and protect the human rights, identity, culture and traditions of indigenous peoples; their traditional wisdom and experience should be taken into account when identifying approaches to preserve and foster their well-being and interests. Indigenous communities should be the principal dialogue partners of the international community, and must be protagonists in their own development. Providing them with an opportunity to participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda would help ensure that they were not left behind and provide an important perspective to the international community.

41. Indigenous peoples took a common sense approach to their use of the land and engagement with national governments, providing a counter example to contemporary practices that were often rooted in selfish consumerism and were associated with environmental degradation and unsustainable approaches to development. Although best placed to care for their lands, indigenous peoples in various parts of the world were under pressure to abandon them to make room for agricultural or mining projects undertaken without regard for the degradation of nature and culture. International, national and local policymakers and actors must respect the rights of indigenous peoples to their homelands and natural resources. Fair legislation should regulate the relationship between indigenous peoples and extractive industries operating in ancestral lands. The Holy See was committed to the integral development of the world's indigenous peoples and reaffirmed its conviction of their central role in the work of the United Nations.

42. **Mr. Montiel** (Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples ([A/70/84](#)), said that the report was based on information received from Member States and indigenous peoples' organizations and representatives through written questionnaires and face to face consultations and provided an overview of the progress made in the four specific areas upon which the Secretary-General had been requested to report.

43. On the question of follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference, he said that



Member States had taken few specific follow-up actions, possibly because of the short time which had elapsed since the end of the Conference. The actions which had been taken indicated a need to raise awareness of the outcome document and of the Declaration. Member States, the United Nations system and indigenous peoples themselves all had roles to play in that regard.

44. On the development of a system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the goals of the Declaration, he said that in October 2014, the Secretary-General had designated the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs as the official responsible for coordinating the action plan. A draft action plan had been prepared, following consultations with Member States, indigenous peoples and the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues, which focused on strengthening the implementation of the Declaration at United Nations headquarters and country levels, including through awareness-raising and capacity-building.

45. In terms of the Secretary-General's recommendations on how to use, modify and improve existing United Nations mechanisms to achieve the purposes of the Declaration, the report focused on the Expert Mechanism, which had been specifically mentioned in the outcome document. The work of the Expert Mechanism in providing thematic expertise to the Human Rights Council had been valuable, but its impact needed to be strengthened. The Human Rights Council was currently reviewing that issue and, in resolution 30/11, it had requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to convene an expert workshop to review the mandate of the Expert Mechanism and to prepare a report on that workshop.

46. As to specific proposals to enable the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions at the United Nations, the Secretary-General encouraged Member States to continue developing measures to enable the effective participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in meetings of relevant United Nations bodies on issues affecting them, through representatives chosen in accordance with their own procedures. The Secretary-General recommended that the President of the General Assembly should consider appointing co-facilitators or advisers, including indigenous representatives, to lead an open-ended

consultation process among, inter alia, Member States, indigenous peoples' representatives and existing United Nations mechanisms to discuss the possible procedural and institutional steps and selection criteria necessary to enable the participation of indigenous peoples at the United Nations.

47. **Ms. Yaguchi** (Japan) said that representatives of the Ainu community, a Government-recognized indigenous people who lived primarily in Hokkaido, had participated as members of the Japanese delegation at the World Conference. In line with the commitments made in the outcome document of that Conference, her Government had established a Council for Ainu Policy Promotion, which would take into account the views of Ainu people through the participation of their representatives, including women. Japan would continue to cooperate closely with those representatives in decision-making processes.

48. Her Government had implemented measures to improve the lives of the Ainu people and improve their social and economic status in Hokkaido. In addition, it was developing measures to benefit Ainu people located outside Hokkaido, including a scholarship programme for Ainu youth. Japan would continue to work closely with the Ainu people to achieve a society that respected diversity. Her Government was committed to tackling the issues faced by indigenous people around the world, in cooperation with the United Nations and other actors within the international community.

49. **Ms. Rodríguez de Febres-Cordero** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her country's Constitution guaranteed indigenous peoples' social, political, economic and cultural rights, the right to ethnic and cultural identity, the right to follow their own economic policies and to political participation and the right to restoration of their ancestral land. In 2014, her Government had established the Presidential Council for Indigenous Peoples; it had also established a Vice-Ministry for Intercultural Training and Education and Ancestral Knowledge to promote multilingual and bilingual education and training, encourage the participation of indigenous women in national and international public life, and design policies to record, disseminate and catalogue ancestral knowledge. Furthermore, 52 laws and policies on the protection of indigenous peoples and communities had been adopted.

50. Regarding education, as of 2014 there were over 1,800 indigenous institutions in 13 municipalities providing education in indigenous languages and over 10,000 indigenous students were studying at universities. Health policies with an intercultural focus had been developed and indigenous health-care services had been strengthened. Workshops had been organized on issues including territorial rights and land demarcation; between 2005 and 2015, Venezuela had granted 93 land titles, covering nearly 3 million hectares of land to benefit over 79,000 indigenous people. Furthermore, between 2007 and 2015 nearly 1.5 million indigenous women in highly vulnerable situations had been assisted through social projects. Under the Constitution, measures had been taken to ensure that justice was administered in accordance with indigenous norms and procedures and in line with the national legal framework. The indigenous peoples who had been exterminated as a result of colonial atrocities must be remembered and their history, culture and rights must be reclaimed.

51. **Mr. Yao** Shaojun (China) said that the international community should use the opportunity provided by the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the first year of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to advance the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. There was a need for a clear understanding of the concept of indigenous people. That concept was the product of Western colonial history. Not all countries had indigenous peoples, and native residents were not the same as indigenous peoples. Confusing or distorting the concept was not in line with the spirit of the Declaration and the outcome document, and was not conducive to the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of genuine indigenous peoples.

52. The Sustainable Development Goals relating to indigenous peoples, particularly Goals 2 and 4, must be implemented. China called on relevant countries, some developed countries in particular, to actively implement those goals and thereby attempt to rectify historical injustices inflicted upon indigenous peoples. Attention should also be paid to the important role of indigenous peoples themselves in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

53. China attached great importance to the issue of the participation of indigenous peoples' representatives and institutions in the affairs of the United Nations,

which must be addressed appropriately. It hoped that all parties could continue to engage in consultations on the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report in order to reach a settlement acceptable to all which would increase the participation of bona fide representatives and institutions of indigenous peoples in United Nations affairs and prevent some non-governmental organizations from impersonating indigenous peoples in United Nations meetings.

54. The positive role of international investment and free trade in promoting the rights of indigenous peoples should be given full play. Relevant enterprises and national governments should respect the legitimate rights and needs of indigenous peoples and engage in full consultations with local indigenous groups in order to ensure their prior informed consent. Governments needed to improve institutional arrangements to enable indigenous peoples to enjoy their fair share of economic dividends from international investment and free trade, and to help improve, inter alia, their employment, education, health and housing.

55. **Mr. Bondiuk** (Ukraine) said that Ukraine was strongly committed to the implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference and had undertaken a number of practical steps at the national and local levels to guarantee the cultural, linguistic and religious rights of the indigenous peoples of Crimea, primarily the Crimean Tatars.

56. The occupation of Crimea had created a situation of tension, aggression and intolerance. Over 10,000 Crimean Tatars had been forced to leave Crimea and had settled mostly in other parts of continental Ukraine. The practices of the occupation authorities included forced citizenship, moral, psychological and political pressure, politically motivated persecution, entry bans for leaders of the Crimean Tatars' mejlis, and the kidnapping of Crimean Tatars, Ukrainians and residents of the Crimean peninsula who openly supported Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

57. Leading international human rights organizations had drawn attention to the sharp deterioration of the human rights situation of Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars in occupied Crimea. Human rights violations occurred regularly and systematically, including restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly, the creation of artificial obstacles in accessing education and using native languages, and the absence of fair

trials. Those violations were reflected in several recent reports, including a report by an unofficial Turkish delegation which had visited Crimea in April 2015, the report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) human rights assessment mission on Crimea, of July 2015, and the 11th report on the human rights situation in Ukraine by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The occupation authorities disregarded the status of the Crimean Tatars as the indigenous people of Crimea and consistently ignored all the recommendations made in those reports. Human rights violations and crimes against indigenous people in Crimea were not being investigated properly and the perpetrators were not being brought to justice.

58. A separate report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and an international monitoring system on the ground in Crimea were urgently required. The United Nations system had to play a leading role in stopping persistent acts of intimidation targeting Crimean Tatars by ensuring immediate access and the constant presence of international organizations on the ground to monitor and prevent threats to the security and lives of local residents, including Crimean Tatars. The international community must increase its pressure on the Russian Federation to ensure respect for international law and the protection of Crimean Tatars. Ukraine would continue to defend the rights of the Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians in Ukrainian Crimea by all legal means.

59. **Mr. Clyne** (New Zealand) said that his Government continued to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples in New Zealand on the basis of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. Details of his Government's actions had been provided in the questionnaire submitted by New Zealand in July 2015 to the World Conference, and in statements made at the Permanent Forum and the Human Rights Council.

60. It was important to recognize the challenges faced by States in implementing the Declaration and the World Conference outcome document. For New Zealand, a particular challenge involved the appropriate consideration of its existing legal and constitutional frameworks, which had been carefully developed over many years and continued to evolve. For example, on the issue of rights to and restitution of traditionally held land and resources, New Zealand had developed its own distinct approach, through well-

established processes for resolving claims under the Treaty of Waitangi; the approach respected the important relationship of the Māori to their lands and resources, while also maintaining the existing legal regimes for the ownership and management of land and resources.

61. On the question of the development of a system-wide action plan to support the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration, the progress made by the working group of the Inter-Agency Support Group was encouraging and New Zealand fully supported the action areas identified by the working group in its draft set of guiding principles.

62. New Zealand strongly supported efforts to improve existing United Nations mechanisms to achieve the ends of the Declaration. The Expert Mechanism's new mandate should include a stronger role in facilitating the implementation of the Declaration at the national and international levels. New Zealand had some misgivings about the recommendation in the Secretary-General's report that the modified mandate should enable the Expert Mechanism to engage in direct communications with Member States, as it would be hesitant about creating additional modalities that might be duplicative and distract the collective efforts of the international community from existing procedures, or that could undermine the bodies already mandated with those responsibilities. His delegation hoped that the negotiations on the review could be concluded during the thirty-third session of the Human Rights Council, given that the Special Rapporteur's mandate would be reviewed at that time.

63. With regard to the recommendations on the participation of indigenous peoples at the United Nations, his delegation reiterated that any consultation process must be inclusive and should be concluded at the current session of the General Assembly. New Zealand was open to exploring different possibilities for that process to ensure that the General Assembly could consider the matter in an efficient way.

64. New Zealand was mindful of the potential impact of investment and free trade agreements on the rights of indigenous peoples. Having concluded a large number of free trade agreements, New Zealand had protected the rights of Māori under those agreements through a clause referring to the Treaty of Waitangi, reflecting the recommendation regarding exception

clauses in paragraph 77(f) of the report by the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples (in document [A/70/301](#)).

65. **Mr. Jaafar** (Malaysia) said that in Malaysia, indigenous peoples were accorded special protection under the Federal Constitution, which included provisions for the protection of the rights of indigenous people in the peninsula and in Sabah and Sarawak. Malaysia's five-year plan for the period 2016-2020 focused inter alia on improving the access of Malaysia's indigenous community to quality health care. An allocation of US\$10 million had been provided for the construction of 165 new clinics in rural areas, particularly areas with a high concentration of indigenous communities.

66. In June 2015 his Government had accepted all the recommendations made by the national human rights commission on the issue of land rights affecting the rights of indigenous peoples. That approval had been the culmination of a series of consultations with state authorities, agencies and representatives of indigenous communities, as well as the publication of the national human rights commission's report on the land rights of indigenous peoples. His Government had established a cabinet committee for the land rights of indigenous peoples which would be tasked with addressing, monitoring and implementing the recommendations.

67. The five-year plan for 2016-2020 would include programmes to encourage higher educational institutions and vocational institutes to provide more places for students from indigenous communities in the peninsula and those living in rural and remote areas in Sabah and Sarawak. The Federal Department of Indigenous Peoples Development and its state and district offices continued to promote the direct participation of indigenous peoples in Malaysia's rapidly evolving socioeconomic landscape, and appropriate resources were being allocated to that end. His Government had introduced income-generating programmes and commercial agricultural activities tailored specifically for indigenous communities to further spur their socioeconomic advancement, in line with the target of further reducing poverty among the indigenous peoples to 25 per cent by the end of 2015. Malaysia would continue to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples with the goal of integrating them into the mainstream of national development, in close consultation with all

stakeholders, particularly the indigenous peoples themselves.

68. **Mr. Bai** (Fiji) said that his delegation encouraged the Special Rapporteur to continue engaging on the issue of climate change as it could disproportionately affect indigenous peoples, particularly indigenous communities living in vulnerable areas in traditional community structures.

69. Investment clauses in free trade agreements could be onerous for developing countries. Such clauses favoured countries which had large, often multinational companies which were able to make investments which could detrimentally impact local industries, employment and livelihoods in less developed countries. The impact was disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable sections of society, such as women working in the informal sector, unskilled workers, and indigenous communities. In Fiji, indigenous peoples were the majority; they were well protected under the Constitution and had access to free education, enabling them to participate in an informed way in the workforce and in decisions concerning them. However, Fiji also had a large rural and peri-urban population which lived at the subsistence level and, as consumers, such communities, whether indigenous or not, could be disproportionately affected by policy decisions regarding free trade agreements. Consultations with local communities, conducted through appropriate government mechanisms, were of great importance in ensuring that such policy decisions were made on an informed basis and in the best interests of the national economy. Countries such as Fiji, which were already vulnerable to external shocks and at risk of marginalization in the multilateral trading system, had to take particular care when entering into free trade agreements.

70. **Ms. Sabja** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that her Government reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference and, in that regard, welcomed Human Rights Council resolution 30/11 on the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism. It was essential to prioritize the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, in particular their rights to land, territories and natural resources. Her Government was developing a strategic action plan for the implementation of the rights of indigenous peoples and was implementing policies in the context of the elimination of colonialism and patriarchy. Its

“living well” agenda for the period up to 2025, which was focused primarily on establishing a more inclusive, participatory and democratic State through the eradication of extreme poverty, included taking into account the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples concerning the medicinal properties of plants, animals and minerals, as well as developing knowledge and technology to promote food security and sovereignty.

71. The vital role of indigenous peoples in economic, social, environmental and cultural development had been recognized in the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and must be taken into consideration in action on areas such as the revitalization of agriculture, traditional seed supply systems, integral development, land and territorial rights, access to water, sanitation, health care, education, training and knowledge, and appropriate and accessible technologies. Member States and the international community should strengthen the commitments undertaken in the 2030 Agenda to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples — in particular women and girls, people of African descent, youth, older persons, migrants, persons with disabilities and vulnerable persons — as well as their commitments in the areas of climate change, biodiversity and forests.

72. **Mr. Cassidy** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that ILO had taken a number of concrete steps since the World Conference to ensure that indigenous peoples were fully able to enjoy their rights. The international community must focus on ensuring tangible progress at the national level that would improve the daily lives of indigenous people around the world, in line with the commitments set out in the outcome document of the World Conference.

73. ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries had had a far-reaching impact on the laws and societies of ratifying Member States. Major reforms had been achieved, including constitutional recognition and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, identification and visibility of indigenous people in census data and the recognition of land rights. States parties had developed specific laws on consultation, often with support from ILO. The Convention had also helped to shape laws and policies in non-ratifying States and had influenced the work of international organizations at the global and regional levels. The

Human Rights Council and the General Assembly had both highlighted its contribution to the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, and the outcome document of the World Conference had called on Member States to ratify the Convention in order to facilitate coordinated and systematic action.

74. At a seminar organized by ILO, the Governments of Denmark and Mexico and other partners in 2014, representatives of Governments, indigenous peoples, workers and employers, as well as independent experts, had taken stock of the progress that had been made in the 25 years since the adoption of Convention No. 169 and had made recommendations to enhance its reach and impact through the strengthening of consultation mechanisms, participation and institutional dialogue. They had also stressed the need for better protection of land rights and for interventions in areas such as education, employment, health and social protection. At its 2015 conference, ILO had adopted an increased programmatic focus on indigenous peoples and had outlined desired policy outcomes that would require targeted action and the use of specific indicators to measure progress. Gender and disability issues would be mainstreamed, with gender equality and non-discrimination becoming cross-cutting policy drivers.

75. Member States must take into account their obligations under ILO Convention No. 169 when entering into other international agreements and avoid situations where such agreements could affect their ability to give full effect to the provisions of the Convention. It was important to promote the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention No. 169 together, in a coherent and consistent manner, as the two instruments strongly complemented each other and were consistent in setting out key rights and approaches, such as the right of indigenous peoples to be consulted on measures that might affect them directly and the right to participation. In that connection, he asked the Special Rapporteur to elaborate on the apparent juxtaposition in paragraph 31 of her report (in document [A/70/301](#)) of the right to free, informed and prior consent under the Declaration and the right to consultation established in the ILO Convention No. 169. ILO looked forward to the finalization and implementation of the United Nations system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to the Declaration, as there was an urgent need for the United

Nations system to provide effective support to national stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, taking into account both the Declaration and ILO Convention No. 169.

76. **Mr. Teffo** (South Africa) said that his delegation welcomed the progress that had been made towards the development of a system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the Declaration. It had become clear during the discussions on the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism that there were differing views on how the review process should be conducted and on what the mandate of the Expert Mechanism should be. Some of the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report, such as issuing general observations and interpretations regarding the provisions of the Declaration and seeking, receiving and considering communications and other information, were suggestive of treaty monitoring functions, even though the Declaration did not have the same status as a convention. In that regard, it was surprising that most of the main advocates of the Declaration were completely opposed to the inclusion of references to the implementation of its provisions in draft resolutions. His delegation encouraged the sponsors of draft resolutions to support the elaboration of a convention on the rights of indigenous peoples that would ensure that States reported on the implementation of its provisions.

77. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on ways and means of promoting participation at the United Nations of indigenous peoples' representatives on issues affecting them ([A/HRC/21/24](#)), there were clearly differences of opinion among indigenous peoples concerning the Secretary-General's suggestion that co-facilitators could be appointed to lead an open-ended consultation process on the possible procedural and institutional steps that could be taken in that regard. Some of those views had been informed by the experience of the preparatory process for the World Conference. His delegation hoped that the process would be inclusive and transparent and involve the substantive contribution of indigenous peoples from all regions.

78. His Government shared the concerns expressed in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples (in document [A/70/301](#)) concerning the impact of international investment and free trade on the human rights of indigenous peoples. His Government had been taken to an international

arbitration process for a so-called investor-State dispute settlement when it had sought to implement affirmative action policies aimed at preventing discrimination against persons who had previously been excluded from certain opportunities on the basis of their race. For that reason, among others, it was now engaged in the process of reviewing with a view to subsequently terminating bilateral investment treaties. It was indefensible that transnational corporations utilized the law when they took States to international arbitration but favoured guidelines or self-regulation mechanisms to address the adverse impacts of their activities on human rights. South Africa and Ecuador had therefore initiated a process aimed at addressing some of the concerns raised in the report through the establishment of an intergovernmental working group with a mandate to elaborate a legally binding instrument to ensure accountability by transnational corporations.

79. **Ms. Rodríguez Pineda** (Guatemala) said that her delegation welcomed Human Rights Council resolution 30/4 on human rights and indigenous peoples, in particular the request for the Expert Mechanism to prepare a study on the right to health and indigenous peoples with a focus on children and youth and the decision to hold a panel discussion on the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, including those with disabilities, which her delegation hoped would result in specific United Nations projects and programmes to promote the rights and empowerment of indigenous women and girls. She reiterated the importance of ensuring the active participation of indigenous peoples' representatives in the review of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism.

80. Sustainable development would not be possible without the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples and people of African descent, including women, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, children and youth. Up-to-date data disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity would be essential to the development of local, national and regional projects aimed at promoting the development of indigenous peoples whilst leaving no one behind. Without equality, social and financial inclusion and access to credit, indigenous peoples would not be able to access justice, participate in civil and political life or live full and dignified lives. Her Government therefore supported the empowerment of indigenous women, including their participation in decision-making



processes on issues that concerned them, particularly in the areas of health care, education and employment.

81. **Mr. Marani** (Argentina), noting that the 2030 Agenda made explicit references to indigenous peoples, said that a sustainable and dignified level of development would be achievable only through a more equitable society. The generation of data on indigenous populations would be a basic requirement for the development and implementation of public policies in that regard.

82. The protection and promotion of human rights, including those of indigenous peoples, was State policy in his country. The 1994 Constitution recognized the prior presence of Argentina's indigenous peoples, ensured respect for their identity and established their right to bilingual intercultural education. His country was one of the 20 States parties to ILO Convention No. 169 and had endorsed the Declaration at the time of its adoption in 2007. It had implemented bilingual intercultural education, begun a housing construction programme that benefited and involved indigenous communities, and adopted a media law which had enabled more than 10 indigenous communities to establish their own radio stations. His Government had also conducted a mapping exercise which had identified 578 communities in 20 provinces, covering an additional 5 million hectares, and recognized 4.5 million hectares as the communal property of indigenous peoples.

83. The rights of indigenous peoples must become a priority of the international community. His delegation therefore supported the increased participation of indigenous peoples' representatives in the work of the United Nations system and stood ready to further enhance their involvement. The work that had begun in the framework of the World Conference must be maintained and enhanced. While Member States had made good progress towards the inclusion of indigenous peoples and on ensuring that their rights were recognized and respected, a stronger commitment was needed to ensure that addressing the long-neglected demands of indigenous peoples remained a priority.

84. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that his country was one of 12 Member States that had contributed information to the report of the Secretary-General on the formulation of a system-wide action plan (A/70/84). Indigenous peoples, along with their

traditions and contributions, had historically been ignored or unappreciated. As a response, and in an effort to recognize the ancestors and national identity of the Salvadorian people, his Government had adopted an amendment to the Constitution recognizing indigenous peoples and committing to adopt policies to maintain and develop their ethnic and cultural identity, world view, values and spirituality. Indigenous peoples were also treated as a priority population sector, for which specific measures would be formulated in all sectoral policies, in the national development plan for the period 2014-2019. As part of that plan, the Ministry of Health was preparing to implement a multicultural public health policy for indigenous peoples which would combine traditional knowledge and modern medicine.

85. With regard to the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, various State institutions had undertaken efforts to enable his country to ratify ILO Convention No. 169 and disseminate its content. His Government invested \$40,000 annually in initiatives to revitalize the Náhuat Pipil language and culture, including language immersion education for pre-school children. Civil society organizations had published the first Náhuat-Spanish dictionary and grammar guide, as well as a Náhuat calendar.

86. In line with the commitments undertaken in the outcome document of the World Conference, his Government had begun to develop a national action plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration. Implementation of the plan would involve Government institutions and indigenous peoples' representatives working together to identify specific measures to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and to continue to improve their social and economic situation.

87. His Government was committed to achieving a better world for all, in line with the 2030 Agenda, whilst recognizing that, for historical reasons, special measures would be required in the case of certain population groups. While the national and international processes already underway did not address all of the demands of his country's indigenous peoples, he was hopeful that the obstacles would be overcome through dialogue and collaboration.

88. **Ms. Mainali** (Nepal) said that her country was home to 125 ethnic groups and almost as many mother tongues. Indigenous people represented almost 40 per



cent of the country's inhabitants and were found in various geographical locations and socioeconomic strata. However, the majority were living in poverty as a result of a lack of access to productive resources and opportunities. Her Government was therefore carrying out the necessary policy and structural reforms for the implementation of ILO Convention No. 169 and was fully committed to the implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference. The 2015 Constitution protected the fundamental human rights of indigenous peoples, ensured their participation on the basis of inclusion and proportional representation at all levels, and made the development of marginalized and disadvantaged communities a priority. It also recognized all mother tongues of the country as national languages and provided for special arrangements to ensure that indigenous groups were able to participate in decision-making processes whilst preserving and maintaining their traditional knowledge, skills, experiences, culture and social practices. In that connection, an indigenous woman had recently been elected as Speaker of Parliament for the first time. The Constitution also protected the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities and the National Human Rights Commission.

89. Her Government allocated a significant portion of its development budget to programmes targeting marginalized groups, including indigenous communities. It had also adopted policies and programmes to promote social justice and affirmative action for marginalized and disadvantaged groups, and coordination committees had been established in each district to coordinate, monitor and evaluate those programmes. Legislative provisions had been introduced to ensure the participation of indigenous and minority communities in the civil service. Her Government was making efforts to protect, promote and preserve the knowledge and cultures of indigenous peoples, who had been contributing to the conservation of the environment for centuries, in order to protect the environment and promote sustainable development at the local level. It was also working to integrate the 2030 Agenda into its existing plans, policies and programmes, including its ongoing efforts to repair the damage caused by the earthquakes earlier in 2015. It was committed to gender equality and women's empowerment and was taking particular action to protect the rights of indigenous women and other groups who were vulnerable to double discrimination.

Her Government hoped to see enhanced, sustained and predictable partnerships with the international community in its efforts to promote the rights of indigenous peoples, complete the necessary reconstruction work and implement the 2030 Agenda.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*