



Droits et Démocratie
Rights & Democracy

Centre international des droits de la personne et du développement démocratique
International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

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16 June 2006

Geneva Representative
Members of the Council on Human Rights
By fax

Excellency,

Our organizations feel it is critical that the U.N. Human Rights Council take the action necessary at its June 2006 session to enable the General Assembly to give effect to the recommendation of the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues calling for:

the adoption without any amendments of the draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as contained in the proposals of the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights Working Group on the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly during its sixty-first session, in 2006 (Fifth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, May 2006, E/C.19/2006/L.3/Add.1, of 23 May 2006, adopted by consensus on 26 May 2006).

As organisations working in the field of human rights, we have seen time and again that the promise of universal respect for and protection of human rights remains unfulfilled for the world's Indigenous peoples. In every region of the world, Indigenous families and communities face impoverishment, ill-health and violence as the consequence of systemic discrimination, historic inequalities and the ongoing marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

It is our opinion that the draft Declaration is ready for adoption. The proposed text that emerged from the 11th session of the U.N. Working Group on the draft Declaration is the culmination of lengthy and exhaustive deliberations among states and Indigenous peoples. Given the broad support for the Working Group proposal

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among states as well as Indigenous peoples, we believe there is no reason for further delay.

We urge the members of the Council to seize this historic opportunity to acknowledge the human rights of some of the most vulnerable peoples of global society by ensuring that at long last the Declaration is put forward for adoption by the General Assembly this year. In doing so, the U.N. will strengthen the global human rights system as a whole, as well as assisting in the promotion and protection of the human rights of Indigenous peoples.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Brett
Representative (Human Rights &
Refugees)
Quaker UN Office

Mr. Sidiki Kaba
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Marie Léger,
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Peter Splinter
Representative to the United
Nations in Geneva
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c.c. H.E., Mr. Luis Alfonso de Alba
President-Designate, First Session of
the Human Rights Council

Geneva Representatives of
Observer States