

Comments of Indigenous Peoples' Major Group to the Regional Meeting Asia and the Pacific, 03 May 2010

We wish to comment on the following:

1) Many of the statements in the presentations this morning have identified the importance of metals and mining but pointed to unacceptable environmental and social impacts. This is not a contradiction that we can leave unresolved.

2. We welcome and are interested in the concept of geo-ethics. It is vital in all discussions of sustainability. When we consider ethical features however, we would like to point to traditional knowledge and indigenous values. Many of the conflicts over mining have their base on indigenous peoples' resistance in violation of indigenous peoples' rights including desecration of sacred sites. Indigenous Peoples in many countries continue to protest against mining, dumping of massive toxic chemical wastes into their territories coupled with the continuing incessant violation of their collective and individual rights, social injustice and worsening poverty.

3. We would suggest a positive value in a new approach which recognizes indigenous values of reciprocity, accountability, harmony and responsibility to Mother Earth, among others; which explores an ethical approach to decisions on mining as a key step to sustainability.

4. We also recommend for the establishment of a working group under the CSD process (similar to the CBD), wherein there is more participation of major groups, including indigenous peoples, in interactive discussions to come up with a more positive and integrated approach (including indigenous knowledge and values) to sustainable development.