

**Indigenous Peoples' Major Group Statement on the Small Island Developing States (SIDS)
CSD18 Review Session, UN-HQ, New York
10 May 2010**

Thanks Mr Chair. The Indigenous Peoples major group welcomes this special session on SIDS; and acknowledges the statements made by the panel, government delegations and other major groups. We endorse the general positions presented by delegations of SIDS on global issues of climate change which needs significant action from the CSD. We express the close affinity between the situation of many SIDS and indigenous peoples, including those in other states.

With the current environment crisis, specifically the climate change crisis, we have witnessed more enormous and more devastating disasters of hurricanes, tsunamis, rising sea levels, earthquakes and more frequent storms experienced specifically by the SIDS. Many SIDS and other small islands within larger states are populated by indigenous peoples who have been traditional stewards of their biological and cultural diversity, and the various ecosystems found in their lands and waters. When these lands and resources disappear; or are gravely altered due to these disasters and climate change crisis, the local populations suffer the first and the worst impacts; and their survival is at stake.

Aggravating such serious situation, the SIDS are also hosts to various extractive industries of large-scale mining and logging which brought about more serious environmental degradation with the unregulated toxic wastes to their lands and waters. Mining particularly in low lying coastal regions is also in question more generally; as this has seriously impacted sustainable livelihoods greatly depending on the lands and waters of SIDS.

While the local communities in the SIDS, including indigenous peoples, have coped and adapted to these challenges in earlier years; the present-day magnitude and destructive nature of these extractive industries and the devastating disasters resulting from the climate change crisis have seriously challenged their resilience and capacities to adapt.

Mr. Chair, in such vulnerable situation of the SIDS, how will the CSD, member states and all the stakeholders share the burden and responsibility to respond to this ecological and climate crises and move towards a more concrete sustainable development of the SIDS?

It is imperative that the CSD, member States, corporations and all stakeholders make ourselves aware and actively be included in all levels of engagements on these issues affecting all peoples; including indigenous and land based peoples within the SIDS. We persist that the CSD and member states should ensure to provide necessary mechanisms for a full and more effective participation of all stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities; at all stages of the review and decisions on policies, programmes and projects that are being planned, designed and implemented towards SIDS-specific sustainable development. Likewise, corresponding support for capacity development with technological and logistical requirements should be seriously defined and provided for all these processes and projects, specifically for disaster risk management and for specific sustainable development initiatives within the SIDS, and hopefully will provide benefits for the most vulnerable local communities within the SIDS. We reiterate and appeal to the CSD, member States, corporations and all stakeholders to uphold the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in whatever policies, programs and projects that are planned, designed and undertaken in indigenous peoples communities within the SIDS; including the climate change architecture.