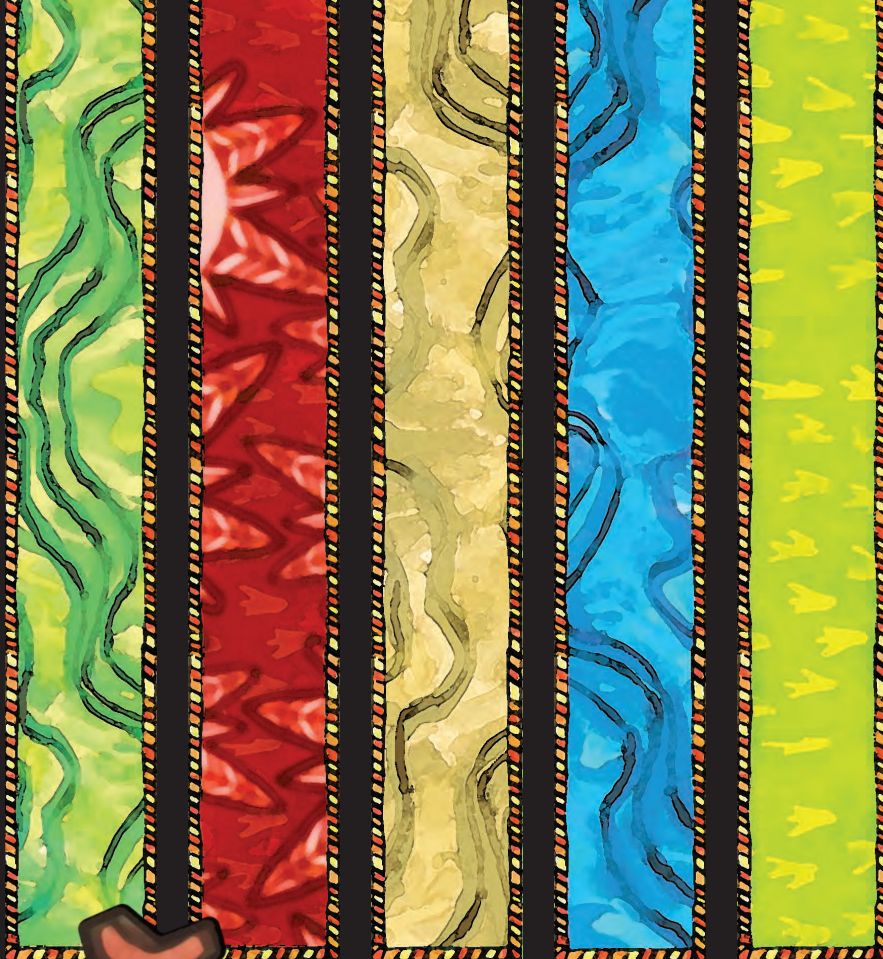


Asia Pacific
Indigenous
Youth
Network



Proceedings of the
Founding Conference
cum Preparatory
Meeting for the UNPFII,
Leadership Training



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Introduction

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) decided on its first session in 2002 to make indigenous children and youth a focal point of its work in recognition of the fact that children and youth are the world's most valuable resource. The indigenous youth is the link between the traditional past and the still-unfolding future of Indigenous Peoples (IP). It is thus very important to harness the valuable contributions that they can make to any development effort, especially in the protection of the environment and biological diversity.

Unfortunately, indigenous youth and women are not accorded equal opportunities for participation in decision-making and the wider socio-political processes. The indigenous youth, in particular, are unable to fully articulate their needs and aspirations; hence, their possible catalytic role in the development process is not realized.

The *'Asia-Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) Founding Conference cum Preparatory Meeting for the UNPFII07-Leadership Training'* sought to address this situation. The week-long capacity building, cultural exchange and skills training aimed to harness the dynamism and idealism of the indigenous youth for international environmental campaigns and their greater participation in activities of the United Nations (UN). It attended to the need to equip the world's IP youth leaders with the tools they need for organizing and active involvement in local and international campaigns.

The conference consisted of three major parts: forest and convention on biodiversity, leadership training and preparatory meeting for the UNPFII07 and the APIYN assembly proper. All is in line with envisioning a greater youth role in the UN Second Decade for Indigenous Peoples.

It was the best venue to bring together youth leaders of indigenous communities and organizations in the region to (1) affirm their commitment to self-determination and to the protection of ancestral land, resources

and indigenous lifeways and (2) to strengthen their organizational and educational capacity towards self-empowerment.

With combined efforts, knowledge and experiences of youth leaders from all over the Asia Pacific region, the conference came up with strong, direct and extensive resolutions and statements. This proves that the youth continues to be an endless fountain of fresh and inventive ideas. Many of these statements, published here, were delivered to the UNPFII that followed in May. An e-mail list was set up for continuous communication between the participants.

The conference was attended by more than 100 young participants coming from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Taiwan, Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Samoa, Hong Kong, Japan, Nepal, Russia and the Philippines. There were 59 organizations and a number of individual participants and observers. Majority of the participants were young women leaders comprising not less than 69% of the delegates. Most of the participants were aged 17-30.

Without a doubt, the conference has raised the capacity not only of the delegates but also of the organizing committee, the coordinating committee, the secretariat and the volunteers. The affirmative results including the strong solidarity initially established with the participants, the adoption of important resolutions and goals and the lessons learned from the conference are more than enough to reward the hard work we went through.

This publication aims to spread the results of the conference's milestone on the indigenous youth movement, to go beyond the world's expectations from the youth, to echo the youth voice of Asia and the Pacific and to set an example for the rest of the world to follow.

The secretariat office here in Baguio is quiet once more, but the work is far from over. **-Ed.**

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Renewing Commitment

for the Defense of Ancestral Land and Self-Determination

My dear colleagues, fellow delegates, friends, guests, men and women, warm greetings of peace and solidarity! Gawi-gawis ay agew kendakayo am-in! Pleasant morning to everyone!

In behalf of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) Regional Secretariat and the Cordillera Youth Center, it is my privilege to welcome every one of you with much gratitude and enthusiasm for this special occasion: the founding conference of the Asia-Pacific Indigenous Youth Network.

The Declaration of the 1st Decade for Indigenous Peoples by United Nations has greatly helped

popularize our situations, aspirations, and our rights as Indigenous Peoples. States and governments responded affirmatively, although with some reluctance, to Indigenous Peoples' demands. The Permanent Forum has strongly urged UN agencies to address the issues of indigenous youth such as education, health, poverty, culture, employment, migration and trafficking, and sexual exploitation of indigenous youth and children. Our indigenous young people have also benefited from the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth which asserted that young people should be provided with quality education, decent work, healthy

environment, leisure and play, and opportunities to direct participation in the socio-political-economic affairs of their communities and states. At the least, our indigenous young people are reminded of our rights to learn, play, participate, and direct our future. And these are welcome developments since they focus greater attention on the issues which we currently face in the Asia-Pacific region.

But still, the problems that our young people confront need further attention and serious effort in order to uplift our condition. Let me then provide a brief overview of the serious problems confronting Indigenous Peoples in Asia.

First, Indigenous Peoples' territories in Asia continue to be heavily militarized, resulting to massive human rights violations. Our assertions of the right over our land and resources as well as our fundamental human rights have been met by repression, deception, impositions and militarization. Indigenous youth are being subjected to intimidation, harassment, illegal arrest and detention, killings and several cases of rape of indigenous women youth have been documented in North East India, Philippines and Burma.

In addition to this are the forced recruitment of indigenous youth to paramilitary forces and the use of schools as military detachments and camps. Further indigenous women youth are subjected to prostitution and sexual abuses by men in uniform. These very inhuman and degrading acts of supposedly the protector of the people are a direct assault on the dignity of women which has very serious social and psychological repercussions.

The sustained militarization of indigenous territories aims to disrupt and weaken community cohesion and the practice of socio-cultural systems to further divide and rule the people. In this situation, the elders and community members cannot already practice, teach and demonstrate thoroughly to the children and youth these socio-cultural practices and thus the indigenous youth suffer from the lack of understanding, knowledge and appreciation of their own distinct culture. This is one major factor causing identity crisis amongst the indigenous youth.

Second, the worsening imposition of imperialist globalization is causing development aggression, leading to large scale destruction and exploitation of ancestral lands and resources. These projects are energy infrastructures like dams, corporate mining, commercial agriculture and plantations, cash crops production, tourism

and others which are being implemented in violation to our collective rights over our land and resources. It is highly deplorable that these destructive projects are being financed by Asian Development Bank, Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the World Bank and Bilateral donors and funders and implemented by or operated by local and or multinational companies, gaining huge profits but are not made accountable to the adverse impacts of their projects.

When I attended the Nice 'n' Natives events sponsored by the Conscious Collaboration Charitable Trust Fund held in Aotearoa, New Zealand, I learned that one of the main problems of the Maori peoples, the Indigenous Peoples of New Zealand, is the seabed mining which will soon destroy the sea shores and will pollute the water, the source of livelihood of the nearby community.

The alarming situation of development aggression have already caused wide scale physical and economic displacements, poverty and induced conflicts among Indigenous Peoples. Further, the environmental disasters and destruction caused by these projects is worsening the health and well being of Indigenous Peoples.

Development aggression always comes with militarization in response to widespread resistance by indigenous communities to the outright violation of their collective rights especially to land and resources. Resistance to forced eviction and displacement of indigenous communities from their traditional lands to give way to imposed development projects led to breaches of civil and political rights such as the right to property, right to life, the right to security of person, right to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and others.

Third, the continuing non-recognition of indigenous culture and socio-political systems and continuing discrimination of Indigenous Peoples is causing further marginalization of Indigenous Peoples. This is a major factor in the social problems and other problems affecting the indigenous youth. Given the globalization of western culture imposed as superior to other cultures, indigenous youth have been victims to this by embracing western culture while denying their own culture, in order to avoid discrimination by the wider society. In the process, they begin to imbibe this western culture and become alienated from their own culture. Likewise, the discrimination, and disregard to the practice of indigenous socio-political systems is weakening community unity and cohesion. The sense of identity of indigenous children and youth is also consequently

weakened in the face of further marginalization of the traditional practices of Indigenous Peoples.

Fourth is political misrepresentation and the lack of basic services for Indigenous Peoples as forms of national oppression.

The non-recognition of the right to self governance of Indigenous Peoples as a matter of self determination is causing political misrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples' interests and welfare. The continuing imposition and domination of "modern" political system is causing more conflict and disharmony in indigenous communities, especially since this type of system does not provide for accountability as compared to indigenous system of governance.

Likewise, there is a need for further democratization of the political system to ensure the participation of the youth to represent their interest and welfare, as well as to ensure the respect for their rights. It is important that the young people are provided the opportunities not only to participate in consultative processes, but also in fundamental decision making, and should be educated to become active members involved in the political, social, and economic life of their communities.

Due to the utter lack of basic services such as education and health in indigenous communities, mass poverty among Indigenous Peoples is very worrisome and alarming. These denials of services by States demonstrate their disregard to the welfare of Indigenous Peoples, especially to children and youth. Because of poverty, many indigenous families cannot send their children to school, and there are often unequal opportunities for young women to pursue their education. Education for all is a key aspiration and should be a basic right of all youth and children, including indigenous youth.

But governments in developing countries allocate very small budget for education while encouraging the further commercialization of education. At the same time, the need for appropriate education to indigenous youth and children has not been fully addressed thereby maintaining the practice of discrimination among Indigenous Peoples in the educational system. This situation put the indigenous children and youth vulnerable to anti-social activities than to go to school. Furthermore, the formal education system is seldom responsive to the particularities and specific needs of indigenous youth and children, given the persistence of indigenous cultures. There is a continuing challenge to develop a holistic pedagogy that seeks to incorporate



Photo by Ryan Moses Manzano.

formal education and indigenous knowledge and learning systems that is accessible, relevant and responsive to the needs of indigenous communities.

Because of poverty, discrimination and disintegration of indigenous socio-cultural systems, there is also a growing number of indigenous youth who turn to alcoholism, drug addiction and child prostitution. Among some indigenous groups, there is also a high percentage of criminality and other anti-social activities which

must be addressed comprehensively and with sense of urgency.

Given the life-and-death issues of Indigenous Peoples, we are pained to witness the further deterioration of the situation. The widespread destruction of our land and territories is threatening our very own dignity and identity. Our future is at stake if we do not act now and change the situation. As the future leaders of our communities, we the indigenous youth should take up the challenge of making our invaluable contributions to the struggle of our peoples in defense of our territories, our dignity, our identity and our future.

Our participation to this historic gathering already signals our common interest to build our collective strength to assert our rights as Indigenous Peoples. This gathering takes off from the first International Indigenous Youth Conference (IIYC) which was also held here in Baguio city in April 2002. The problems confronting Indigenous Peoples here in the region and in the international community brought us together in the formation of a solidarity network to share our common experiences and struggles for self-determination. This very successful and significant event marked the start of our collective efforts at the regional level to address our situation and make our contribution in defense of land life and resources. The second International Indigenous Youth Conference in April 2005 was held in Canada. It was my first time to attend such international conference and I was amazed with the solidarity work we have started formally in the year 2002.

Today, as I look at you eye to eye, I can say that the commitment to work together to pursue what has been started by International Indigenous Youth Conference has become stronger.

As indigenous youth from the various parts of Asia and the Pacific, our gathering here marks another milestone in the Indigenous Peoples movement that now includes the indigenous youth. We can certainly make significant and strategic contributions to advance the movement of Indigenous Peoples movement in our communities, and at the national, regional and international levels. As indigenous youth who remains vulnerable to denying our roots and identity, we should take pride of who we are and take up the challenge to develop the best leaders amongst our ranks that shall become models of good leadership based on the principles and positive values of Indigenous Peoples.

Our situation now demands the best in us by giving our all out efforts and attention in the Indigenous



Photo by Elton Jun Veloria.

Peoples movement, the youth movement and the overall struggle to establish genuine peace, justice and development for the marginalized peoples of the world. As youth with open minds, let us be the best students in understanding the root causes of our situation and issues. Let us maintain our critical minds and always listen to what our people are saying. Let us be the best students in learning our history, our cultures and ways of life, and the struggles and lessons of our people. Let us learn from our elders the principles and values of trust, generosity, selflessness, humility, simplicity, hard work and perseverance in advancing our common goals and aspirations.

As youth with time in our hands and with talents and skills, let us persevere in empowering our communities through the painstaking work of organizing and mobilizing our people to defend our rights and work for our welfare. History has shown that it is the organized strength of the people that can lead to fundamental



Photo by Ryan Moses Manzano.

Our right to self-determination or Tino Rangatiratanga will not become a reality if we do not assert and defend it.

transformation of societies ruled by oppression and exploitation. We should organize our communities and play a pivotal role in advancing the Indigenous Peoples movement at all levels.

As we gather here today, let us renew our commitment to carry out the struggle of our ancestors for the defense of land, life and resources. Let us work together to achieve our vision for a just society where we as Indigenous Peoples live in peace and harmony in our territories. Our right to self-determination or Tino Rangatiratanga will not become a reality if we do not assert and defend it. It is only in our strong collective unity, solidarity and action can we make this a reality.

Our theme for this very important gathering directs us to move forward our struggle with the best of our ability. We must dare to stand and fight for the rights

of our people. We the indigenous youth are gifted with different positive traits, skills, and potentials. We must then develop all of these into a strong and collective weapon to combat the oppression of our people. Let us bond in unity, solidarity and action to secure our future.

In the five days that we are gathered here, let us share our knowledge, experiences, culture and talents. Let us further strengthen our solidarity and celebrate our identity and cultures. Let us continue to learn and provide each other strength and inspiration in the daunting tasks ahead of us in serving our people. I believe that when we go back to our own communities, we are more confident, committed and inspired to continue our work with greater strength and vigour.

Long live the Indigenous People's movement! Long live international solidarity! Dare to fight and win the struggle for self-determination!

Once again my dear fellow delegates, I salute everybody for attending this important event. On behalf of the regional APIYN Secretariat and the Cordillera Youth Center, I thank you very much.

Jennifer Awingan \ Coordinator \ Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network

background of the conference

Dear Delegates, elders, guest and visitors, a pleasant good afternoon to all of you!

First, we would like to express our gratitude to the University of Baguio community, Saint Louis University and the University of the Cordilleras for hosting the Founding Conference of Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network.

Exactly today, five years ago, 83 young indigenous leaders from around the world with the exception of Africa, gathered here in Baguio City for the first International Indigenous Youth Conference (IIYC). That historic event was organized by the Cordillera Peoples Alliance–Youth Commission (CPA-YC) and its allied organizations and was supported by the Primate World Relief and Development Fund, World Church Council and co-hosted by the City of Baguio.

The increasing challenges at home and around the world on Indigenous Peoples and the youth, and



the strong need for the youth to take responsibility in the ongoing processes for the assertion of indigenous rights; challenged the Cordillera youth to take greater action. The participation of CPA-YC in the 1999 Dogrib International Conference in Rae-Edzo, Northwest Territories, Canada further strengthened our resolve to organize the 1st IIYC.

The IIYC, attended by delegates from 19 countries in Asia, Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America, was organized with the goal of mutual sharing and learning among indigenous youths, towards forging a common voice in response to the challenges of globalization and its impact on Indigenous Peoples around the world.

A caucus of the participants representing 31 organizations from the Asia and Pacific Regions resolved to form the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) as

the first step towards building an international indigenous youth movement/network, to learn from each other, to forge and strengthen our unity and solidarity. It was overwhelmingly supported, endorsed and resolved by the IIYC itself to support APIYN in building other regional indigenous youth networks.

The international gathering also developed and strengthened the solidarity relations among indigenous youth representatives from around the world and addressed the need to empower the indigenous youth so that they can play a bigger positive role in addressing the problems faced by Indigenous Peoples worldwide. Other resolution includes the establishment of an indigenous youth network in their respective global regions, while strengthening their local organizations.

It was with great enthusiasm that we formed the APIYN 5 years ago with the following objectives:





The network aims to contribute towards building the capacity and self-confidence of the indigenous youth in the Asia-Pacific region through providing systems of information, exchange and networking. It seeks to mobilize the catalytic role of the indigenous youth in development efforts by facilitating the exchange of ideas, analyses, and experiences, which they in turn can contribute and share with their indigenous communities.

To promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples; to coordinate and facilitate exchange programs and integration among the Indigenous youth in Asia Pacific; to campaign and lobby on issues that confront the Indigenous Peoples and the Youth; and to strengthen the organizational capacity of APIYN and expand its membership.

Two years ago in Vancouver British Columbia, Canada, the territory of the “Unceded Coast Salish Nation,”

we came to renew our commitments to the resolutions of the first IYC as protectors of the land and vowed to strengthen our solidarity to fight for self-determination. The efforts of the APIYN in the Asia and the Pacific regions served as a platform for organizing the indigenous youth in the region as starting point for a global indigenous youth movement that is soon to be established.

Today, we gather for the founding conference of APIYN to renew our commitments to the resolutions and unities we had during the first and second IYC. Further, we are here to strengthen our ranks, build our capacities, learn from each other, and build our network wider and stronger, amidst the growing challenges we face as we endeavor to perform our task to change the world for the better.



An Overview of the Conference

A Narrative Summary

Arrival of Delegates and the Opening Ceremony

The delegates started to arrive in Baguio City as early as April 16, 2007, allowing some of them to have an ocular tour of the city. While majority arrived on the early morning of April 18 and three more participants arrived on April 19. The volunteers welcomed the delegates at the airport in Manila.

In April 18, the opening ceremony commenced at the University of Baguio (UB)-Dap-ayan Hall. More than 200 delegates, guests and visitors from the locality attended this colorful event characterized by cultural performances and exchanges. This particular event was hosted by UB and the UB Ubbuk Kaafuan, a cultural organization of students of UB. The ceremony started with a welcome address by Dr. Virgilio Bautista Sr., Founding Chairman of the university and was followed by the presentation of the background/objectives and the program of the conference by Jennifer Awingan, the event Coordinator.

A challenging keynote address was then delivered by Chester Tuazon, the Chairperson of the Progressive Igorots for Social Action, one of the local host organizations. The formal opening featured a theatre play on the plight of our IP communities and the environment and the role of the young indigenous leaders to preserve and protect it prepared by the APIYN cultural team from PIGSA, Dap-ayan ti Kultura iti Kordilyera and Pagawisan Tako Am-in. It was followed by cultural

performances from various local organizations. The program ended with a dinner served by the Hotel and Restaurant Management students of UB.

The Press Conference

Prior to the opening, a press conference was held at the university campus. APIYN released a press statement stating the features, programs and objectives of the week-long events. It was followed by a 15 minute questions and answers session with media people coming from six media outfit including a national television outfit. Highlights of the events were presented and were later printed on the local newspapers and flashed on the national TV, ABS-CBN.

The Forest and CBD Workshops

The workshops and discussions began on the 19th of April starting off with the workshop on the “Underlying Causes of Forest Degradation” held at the P.E. Building, Saint Louis University (SLU), Baguio City. This was co-hosted by the Institute of Philosophy and Religion and the Supreme Student Council.

It was attended by 145, bigger than the regular conference participants as we opened it to university students as requested by the school administration. Speakers from the Montañosa Relief and Development Center (MRDC) in the Cordillera and the Center for Environmental Concerns (CEC), Philippines were invited to this particular event.



It started with an opening note from SLU's Director for Linkages and Exchange Programs, Mr. Ernie Roy Azarcon congratulating the organizers and participants for a timely discussion-workshop.

It was followed by the inputs of our speakers: Mr. Sandy Gauntlett of Global Forest Coalition (GFC) on forest issues and Ms. Herminia Degawan of Indigenous Peoples Network for Change (IPNC) on Convention on Bio-Diversity as a tool for IPs. A 15 minute open forum took place to entertain questions and recommendations from the audience.

Three case studies were then presented, namely: Case 1) *The Effect of Agricultural Liberalization On the Forests of an Indigenous Community in the Cordillera* by Mr. Mathew Tauli of MRDC, Case 2) *The Plight of the Jungles and the Indigenous Populations* by Ms. Meenakshi Munda of Jharkhand Save the Forest

Movement in India, Case 3) *Struggles & Challenges of Orang Asal Communities: The Dayak* by Ms. Hellan Empaing of Borneo Resource Institute Malaysia or BRIMAS. After the case presentations, there was an active open forum. A synthesis by Ms. Ces Quimpo of the CEC, a Manila based institution, comprehensively summed up the workshop.

The delegates then came up with an action plan and a statement on Forests and CBD after the sharing of situations on the current state of bio-diversity as peoples and what young peoples need to do to take action. This was then included as part of the plan of actions and unity declaration.

The Preparatory Meeting for the UNPFII 2007

April 20 was devoted to the preparatory meeting for the UNPFII 2007. The input-workshop sessions continued to take place at the SLU-P.E. Building. A recap of the previous day's activities preceded the input-workshop.

Panel of speakers for the inputs were Mr. Raymond de Chavez of Tebtebba Foundation, who gave an overview of the UN System and UN Bodies related to indigenous peoples; Ms. Joan Carling, Chairperson of the Cordillera People's Alliance, provided the overview of the UNPFII; Ms. Rhoda Dalang, Executive Directress of Indigenous Law Center (Dinteg), discussed the UN Human Rights Council and the Declaration on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the UNPFII, passionately imparted the Program of the UN Second Decade for Indigenous Peoples.

After the inputs, the panel of speakers listened to reactions of pessimism and optimism from the participants. They also answered queries pertaining to the relevance, impacts and actual relief and contributions of these mechanisms to the lives of IPs.

The workshop part proceeded in the afternoon where the groups were expected to come up with resolutions and recommendations on the following themes: The IP declaration and the Human Rights Council Special Procedures, the indigenous youth Agenda for the UN Second Decade to be presented at the UNPF agenda item on Future Work and statements and concrete preparation on our participation to the 6th session of the UNPFII.

After the workshops, the teams took turns to present to the body their outputs. The day ended with singing and dancing which spontaneously started by the participants as soon as the formal discussions ended.

Film Viewings

Every after dinner until ten o'clock in the night from April 18 to 20, a film showing took place at the conference hall of AKAP dorm where most of the delegates stayed. The films were brought by the participants who also facilitated a short discussion after their films were shown.

Films viewed includes: *Toxic Gold*, *Agno and Lepad Strike from the Philippines* by Tan-aw Multimedia Collective; *Shoot on Site* from Burma; *Voice from the Forest* from Indonesia, *Militarization in India*, *A Cry for Freedom* from Nagaland and many others.

Training Part

The training module was divided into four parts. It started with a "Youth Forum" on the situations of IP in Asia and Pacific. At least 10 delegates presented power points about their country situations each focusing on the theme and sharing of experiences, challenges and undertakings: Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Manipur (India), Philippines, Russia, Taiwan and Thailand. There was also discussion on the "Militarization in Asia" by Jiten Yumnang, one of APIYN coordinators while Mr. Rey Asis of Asian Students Association (ASA) discussed the situation of youth and students in the region and ASA as a platform. (ASA has an observer status in this conference but a significant section of its constituencies are indigenous youth). This was then capped with a synthesis.

The second part was skills sharing on techniques

and Mobilization Workshop part that resulted to APIYN's three year campaign plan was led by Mr. Alvin Peters, Secretary General of National Union of Students in the Philippines. The discussions and workshops continued on to the next day, April 22 with the Women and Gender Orientation Course as a starting point with the context that there is still a big need for indigenous communities and the general society to address the still evident discrimination on women and children in the actual participation in socio-economic and political arena. The men were also part of the discussion with the objective to create an environment of mutual learning and respect and to promote the sensitivity on gender of the network as an organization.

A half-day input and discussion was devoted to this particular course and was facilitated by Ms. Vernie Di-ano, guest speaker from Innabuyog-Gabriela, an indigenous women's organization in the Cordillera. After the course, there was a strong recommendation for the training module to be used to train new sets or second line of leaders of the network.

A half-day on April 22 was devoted to plenary and organizational processes such as approval of the resolutions and statements drafted by the conference, review and finalization of the network's charter, and re-composition of the coordinating committee.

The conference ended with a solidarity night to seal the unities and solidarity of the participants. This was held at the University of the Philippines (UP) Baguio, hosted by the University Student Council. Though

The men were also part of the discussion with the objective to create an environment of mutual learning and respect and to promote the sensitivity on gender of the network as an organization.

and types of leadership and campaigns and mobilization management with a special component on Basic Writing and Speaking, and the Women's and Gender Orientation Course. In all the topics, there was a combination of inputs, workshops and group dynamics. The most enjoyed part was the Leadership Training facilitated by Roxanne Veridiano of the Rural Development Center in the Cordillera (RDC). The Campaign



exhausted, the delegates were readily prepared for their cultural presentations for the evening. Invited guest and visitors from the locality also joined us in the night. The crowd grew to more than 250 people.

Community Immersion

Our community exchange started in the morning of April 23 through an ocular tour around Baguio. The participants were divided into 5 groups, each has 2 local guides. Simultaneously, they were able to tour the city's important locations which also served as an educational tour for them. In the afternoon, the participants proceeded to the venue of the Cordillera Day, a two-day camp-out at the City's Burnham Park. The participants were able to integrate with hundreds of local, national and other international participants coming from various sectors and provinces.

On April 25, around 30 participants, most of whom are foreign delegates opted to stay for the community visit in Mankayan, Benguet. They were accompanied by a secretariat member, 2 student volunteers and members of the local host, APIT-TAKO, a local farmers association in the area. They traveled by bus for four hours in a narrow rugged road from Baguio to reach Mankayan municipality.

The teams were divided into two teams. One team went inside the Lepanto Mining area. The delegates were able to talk with laborers on labor conditions and with the community people who are affected by the mining waste. This visit was made possible through the cooperation of the workers union who helped disguised to allow the team in. The other team integrated among the women. They visited the gardens of poor peasants planted with vegetables. They observed the traditional planting procedures in the community.

An assessment and sharing of insights between the participants, guides and hosts was conducted before they came back to Baguio City on April 27.

Post Conference-Participation to the UNPFII 2007

As part of the program, five of the young leaders traveled to New York on May 15-26 to participate in the annual UNPFII. These were: Jiten Yumnam, coordinating committee member, Jennifer Awingan, the over-all coordinator, Kiritapu Allan of Conscious Collaboration-New Zealand, APIYN member, Yayuc Napay, Taiwan-individual member of APIYN and Yi Chin of International Federation of Indigenous Youth, APIYN

member, based in Taiwan were the representatives of APIYN in the forum. They actively participated in all the sessions of the forum including side events and caucuses organized during break sessions. Intervention statements prepared at the preparatory meeting were presented under each of the agenda item of the Forum. Two statements which addressed militarization were presented under the agenda on Human Rights, one on the Future Work of the Forum, The Pacific Youth Statement, and one was addressed to the special session on Asia to support the lobby of the IPs in Taiwan to change the Chinese term for Indigenous Peoples.

Relatively, compared to the other youth participants, the participation of the APIYN delegates was maximized and organized. Indeed the Prep-workshop during the conference was a great help.



Photo by Anjo Cerdeña.

Workshop on Forest Loss and Degradation



The Effects of Agricultural Liberalization on the Forests of an Indigenous Community in the Cordillera

I. Introduction

Indigenous institutions in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) have preserved and enriched the practice of indigenous knowledge in the maintenance, disposition, and utilization of its natural resources. But the state continues to ignore their crucial role in the conservation of natural resources especially of its forest and still denies the communities their right to autonomous management of their ancestral domain.

Government insists on the state's monopoly of authority over the use of all natural resources within its territory. But indigenous institutions and systems for natural resource management still persists but is slowly disintegrating. The challenge to their continued operation is however mounting because indigenous communities are finding it increasingly difficult to abide by them in the face of state and capitalist aggression.

The economic development of the Filipino people, anchored on agriculture, has from colonial times, been agricultural maldevelopment. Both the Spanish and American colonialists forced the Philippine agriculture to primarily produce for the external market and not for its domestic needs.

In 1995, the country embraced the prescriptions of the World Trade Organization and its Agreements on Agriculture which gradually lifted quotas on imports and reduced tariffs on agricultural products. This causes agricultural products from different countries, much cheaper and more presentably packed than

those locally produced. This led to bankruptcy to many farmers and small traders since 2001. The Bureau of Agricultural Statistics recorded a reduction in the production of different vegetable crops. Agriculture became one of the most vulnerable sectors, plagued with the crisis of overpriced farm inputs and under priced farm products.

As a result of the liberalization of agriculture, CAR is dubbed as the 'salad bowl and vegetable belt' of the Philippines.

CAR plays a very significant role in the overall Philippine agricultural system. Thus, to determine the effect of agricultural liberalization on the forest on a micro level, the research on "The Effect of Agricultural Liberalization on the Forest of An Indigenous Community in the Cordillera" particularly of Barangay Balugan, Sagada, Mountain Province was conducted.

II. The Research Area

Barangay Balugan is one of the 19 barangays of Sagada, Mountain Province, located 160 km. north of Baguio City at the southern end of the Cordillera Ranges, on the eastern slope of the Cordillera Central. The community is located at an elevation approximately 1,000 to 1,200 meters above sea level with slopes ranging from moderate to steep. It has two distinct seasons, dry from January to May and wet from June to December.

The natural resources found within the community are farmlands, forests, streams, creeks and pastureland.

Their secondary-growth forest is dominated by *Pinus insularis* or Benguet pine. The pine forest is the outcome of collective planting among clan members of the community in the 1940's as an answer to the lack of firewood within its territory.

Saguday, the clan ownership of forest in Balugan, a family lays claim to a patch of the communal land by regularly planting annual food crops. The resources within the saguday are shared with the rest of the villagers.

Balugan has approximately a total forest area of 75 hectares wherein it is owned by two major clans. This forest serves also as the watershed of the village. Ethnolinguistic group, the Kankanaeys, lived here

III. The Historical Development of Commercial Vegetable Growing in the Area

A. Subsistence Farming

Balugan is primarily a subsistence/traditional farming community since 1960s. Two major farmlands were cultivated, the irrigated rice paddies or payaw planted mainly with rice and the swidden farms or um-a where a variety of food and fruit crops are planted. The rice paddies are planted twice a year with the traditional rice varieties (TRVs), the ginolot variety for the first crop and the topeng variety for the second crop. But if the rice paddies are not planted with rice during the second crop, these are planted with sweet potato or camote intercropped with legumes, corn and other vegetables.

The um-a is planted to a variety of rootcrop such as camote, gabi, cassava, ginger, cereals such as rice, millet, corn, legumes of different varieties and fruits like oranges, coffee and bananas.

Agricultural production is supported by indigenous socio-political systems like the dap-ay and ubbo. The dap-ay is a structure that plays a major role in the day to day affairs of the village, presided over by respected elders of the village. It is where decision-making are made. The ubbo is the exchange of group labor which alleviates the intensiveness of village work, from building houses, to constructing or repairing irrigation systems, to agricultural works and where cash is scarce, the work is accomplished. It is also a venue where the day to day problems of farmers are discussed while doing the work.

B. The Introduction of Commercial Vegetable Production

The production of temperate climate-vegetables such as cabbage, bell pepper, potatoes and tomatoes were introduced by the American missionaries as early as the 1930's. At this time, it was planted as a source of additional food crops. In 1950s, Bontoc, the capital town of the province, started the commercialization of vegetables. However, very few households were involved and these were cultivated by means of the traditional farming method, which is organic farming.

In the 1960's, intensive cultivation of wider areas with one vegetable crop or monocropping and the use of petro-chemical based fertilizers and pesticides were introduced in the area from the vegetable gardens of nearby Benguet Province. However, there were few practitioners as the traditional farming system of maintaining soil fertility and crop maintenance were still practiced.

However in the 1970's, chemical inputs started to gain popularity in the production of vegetables. But vegetables were grown only in un-irrigated farmlands (um-a) and it was strictly not allowed in the ricefields as the elders have a strong belief that it will destroy the productivity of the rice paddies. This has been maintained for a while but as more and more villagers





became engaged in vegetable production, the topeng as a second crop was replaced by vegetables in some rice paddies.

It was also when the green revolution introduced the so-called high-yielding varieties (HYV) of rice by the government agencies to local farmers. Farmers discovered that HYVs when alternated with vegetables grown with petro-chemical based fertilizers yielded more while traditional varieties just grow robust leaves. This is attributed to the nature of the HVYs, which thrive best under heavy fertilization, that's why it must actually be called "high-response varieties" (HRVs) because it is in response to heavy fertilization that they become high-yielding.

A study in the area in 1981 revealed that while commercial vegetable growing is a high-risk enterprise due to its volatile market prices, it had more of a positive effect among the farmers in Balugan in terms of raising the household income. This was attributed to the innovativeness of farmers like diversifying their crops, maintaining a low-external-input production system, making use of organic fertilizers and pesticides like tobacco and pepper brew. But the more significant factor is the fact that unlike the rest of the Filipino peasantry, people of Balugan have not been dispossessed of their means of production, the land.

C. Liberalization of Agriculture

By the middle of the 1980's HYV rice and the chemical-

based systems of commercial vegetable production started to gain dominance over organic farming systems in Balugan. Planting rice paddies to vegetables as second crop now became a rule rather than an exception and others are becoming permanent vegetable production plots and more and more villagers became engaged into commercial vegetable growing as it was becoming profitable to do so.

In 1994, the Philippine government became a member of the World Trade Organization and in 1995, signed the Agreements on Agriculture which lowered the tariffs and the quota allowed on imported vegetable. For the farmers' respondents in Balugan, they can recall that they experienced in the year 1996 and in the succeeding years an all-time low in market price for their vegetable produce. But they continue to produce hoping to recoup losses. As a result, the following effects were noted.

IV. The Effect of Agricultural Liberalization on the Area

A. Effect on Income

Table 1 shows changes in market prices of vegetables in the years 1981, 1994 and 2004; with the 1994-2004 representing the time of agricultural liberalization.

The research revealed a significant increase of 660.8% of vegetable prices from 1981 to 1994 while there was a marked decrease a (negative) -31.40% in vegetable prices from 1994 to 2004.

On the other hand, Table 2 shows a consistent increase in the cost of farm inputs from 1981 to 1994 and from 1994 to 2004 which are 177% and 293.4% respectively.

The marked decrease in the market prices of vegetables as shown in Table 1 forced farmers to expand their vegetable production areas. And because they now have to plant larger areas, farmers opted for the easier way, i.e. of using the ready-made and readily-available petro-based chemical fertilizers and pesticides and abandoning the age-old system of organic farming. As a result, farmers incurred more expenses in chemical inputs as shown in Table 2.

For the production of tomatoes alone, farmers spent P1,412,000.00 for petro-chemical based fertilizers and pesticides in 2004.

This shows that increased chemical input did not result to increased production; instead there is an observation that the productivity of vegetables in 1981 is more than twice the productivity in 2004. Group discussion revealed that one tomato plant in the 80's up to the mid 90's can easily yield 5 kilograms of good quality tomatoes while presently, the yield of a tomato plant ranges from 1.5 to 2 kilograms.

All of the above resulted to a very much decreased returns from vegetable production after 1994. Voss [1983] recorded a PhP680.00/month income which was then equivalent to a teacher's salary at that time and it enabled some families to invest in other businesses and others to build their homes in other provinces. Whereas in 2004, the computed average gross income of key interviewers amounted to PhP5,669.50 for one cropping or PhP1,889.83/mo.

A very new phenomenon in the area as a result of this, is that majority of the farmers have become indebted to usurious money lenders. These are small to middle businessmen/women who supply farmers with overpriced farm inputs on the condition they will be the buyers of their products at prices dictated by them. Discussion revealed that farmers pay about 3% to 6% interest on farm inputs and can easily be victimized by under pricing in this kind of system.

B. Effect on Natural Resources: Land and Water

The intensification of commercial vegetable production brought about changes in the landscape of the natural resources of village. Faced with very low returns from

the unproductivity of the land and from the low market prices of produce vis-à-vis the high cost of farm inputs as dictated by comprador monopoly control, farmers trying to recoup expenses and repay debts are forced to expand their operations.

For the rice paddies, from the prohibition of planting vegetables on it in the 1970s and latter to planting it only during the second crop, some rice paddies have become permanent vegetable gardens. Aside from the loss of most of the traditional rice varieties, gone also are its aquatic flora and fauna due to the use of poisonous chemical fertilizers and pesticides and the prolonged dryness of the paddy.

For the swidden farms, almost all have become permanent vegetable growing areas thus decreasing the production of supplementary crops such as corn, camote and other foodcrops. Some kinds of legumes and other foodcrops are gradually becoming extinct like arrow root, yam, millet and oats.

But the most significant effect from the expansion of vegetable production is on the forest. The forest, where agricultural activity has been prohibited in the past is now being slowly encroached into. Age-old dap-ay rules and regulations are being undermined.

To date, a 6 hectare vegetable garden Mount Ampacao, a communal forest and watershed of the village have been opened-up for vegetable production while others are threatened. Contiguous villages have voiced out their opposition as they claim it as a communal

They can recall that they experienced in the year 1996 and in the succeeding years an all-time low in market price for their vegetable produce but they continue to produce hoping to recoup losses.

Table 1: Percentage changes in the market prices of vegetables

Type of Vegetable	Average Price for the Period (Phil Peso/kg)			% Increase in Price	
	*1981	**1994	2004	1981-1994	1994-2004
Cabbage	1.50	9.80	5.00	553%	-49%
Tomato	3.00	11.30	14.00	276%	24%
Green Pepper	1.75	22.15	17.00	1,166%	-24%
Potato	2.50	23.00	20.00	420%	-23%
Green Beans	2.00	9.80	12.00	350%	-22%
Carrot	1.00	13.00	7.00	1,200%	-46%
Average % Increase				660.8%	-31.4%

*Voss (1983); **unpublished MRDC file (1994)

The forest, where agricultural activity has been prohibited in the past is now being slowly encroached into.

watershed for all villages and not only for Balugan.

The flow of water which has always been determined by nature and latter on by the construction of communal irrigation system from the collective labor of villagers', have provided water to rice paddies and vegetable gardens. And even with the introduction of commercial vegetable production, this did not change for some time. But now, water that originates from this communal forest, considered a natural resource for all, is being privatized.

With the dilemma the farmer has found himself into at present, and water being very crucial in the production process, he has resorted to the use of rubber hose to tap irrigation water for his ricefields and vegetable gardens. And with the ability to buy rubber hose, it means the ability to dictate the flow of water. Through these, they tap directly from the source of irrigation canals directly to their vegetable gardens and ricefields without consideration to the dap-ay's age-old practice of equal distribution of irrigation water. The capacity of the farmer to buy longer hose determines his capacity to tap irrigation from the main source of the irrigation water thereby depriving others which use the water in lower parts of the irrigation system and as such, in a way, he is privatizing water rights. Conflicts among the villagers are becoming frequent because of unequal distribution of water.

The above-mentioned development greatly weakened the role of the dap-ay in resource management

and the practice of ubbo and a culture of indifference are starting to set-in as manifested in case of water distribution. Individualism is dominating over collective concerns.

V. Summary and Conclusions

Due to the effect of agricultural liberalization, vegetable production has become unprofitable. From the observation in 1981 that vegetable growing has been more beneficial to the villagers, this no longer holds true with agricultural liberalization. Returns can just barely pay for farm inputs and only part of the labor cost. The average net return of vegetable production computed at about PhP1,889.83 per month is way below the computed cost of living allowance of PhP16,000.00 per month for a family of six. And to be able to recoup expenses and to “take a chance of luck for higher priced” vegetables in the market, the villagers have no choice but to convert rice paddies, swidden farms and pine forests into vegetable gardens and exerted greater pressure on other natural resources like water.

It also hastened the erosion and disintegration of indigenous knowledge and practices in agriculture as manifested in the increased dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides vis-à-vis organic farming and the weakening of indigenous socio-political systems, i.e., the dap-ay's role in the imposition of regulations on natural resource management and the weakening of the ubbo system in alleviating laborious work in the village.

Table 2: Cost of Farm Inputs

Type of Farm Input	Cost of Input for the Period (Phil Peso)			% Increase in Price	
	*1981	**1994	2004	1981-1994	1994-2004
Fertilizer [14]	120/BAG	300/BAG	700/BAG	133%	150%
Insecticides	65/LI	120/LI	400/LI	233%	50%
Fungicide	60/LI	160/LI	445/LI	278%	267%
Freight	0.30/KG	0.90/KG	2.00/KG	122%	200%
Labor	10/DAY	90/DAY	200/DAY	122%	800%
Average				177%	293.4%

Table 3: Comparison of chemical pesticide and fertilizer expenses
8 kinds of vegetables in 1981 and for tomatoes in 2004.

Year	Volume	Expense (PhP)	Ratio [v/ex]
1981 (8 Kinds)	56,900KG	53,200.00	1:1.06
2004 (tomatoes)	394,000KG	1,412,000.00	1:3.56



VI. Recommendations

In its grassroots development work, the Montañosa Research and Development Center has formulated the following recommendations to policy makers and development agencies who are working for the conservation and utilization of the natural resources of the Cordillera.

Recognize the Cordillera indigenous peoples (IPs) rights on their ancestral lands, indigenous lifeways and livelihood.

Recognize the role of the IPs in utilizing, developing and managing their natural resources. Their long experiences in trying to manage their ancestral domain have taught them appropriate mechanisms on resource management.

Must adhere to the development principles where it must be for, by and with the people and ensure social justice and balance ecosystems.

And appropriate technologies for the distinctive and fragile ecosystem of the Cordillera must be adopted.

Sources of Information

From the Community:

- 1. Survey of 70 Household Heads.
- 2. Key Informant Interviews: 3 women and 3 elders.
- 3. Focused Group Discussions.
- 4. Case analysis of 12 vegetable gardeners.

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Age-old
dap-ay
rules and
regulations
are being
under-
mined.



Table 4. Changes in farmlands’ biodiversity

Land Category	Flora and fauna (up to 80’s)	2004
Rice Padies	17 Traditional Rice Varieties	7 Traditional Rice Varieties and 5 High-Yielding Varieties
	2 kinds edible weeds	0 edible weeds (extinct)
	7 species of snails	1 specie of snail survived + the pest golden kohol
Swidden Farms	7 kinds rootcrops	yam, arrow root extinct
	3 kinds cereals	millet, oats no longer planted
	legumes	all are still being planted
	several varieties of vegetable	tomato as the favored crop of almost all gardeners

Photo by Johndale Santelices



The Plight of the Jungles

and Indigenous Populations

The term Jharkhand literally means land of forests. It is the ancient name given to the upland of Chotanagpur plateau. The region has been a cradle to the earliest Paleolithic era and Neolithic evolution. It is the home for five major indigenous stalks, namely The Santhals, The Oraons, The Mundas, The Hos and The Kharias. Altogether there are 32 tribes in the region. Jharkhand is one of the richest areas of the country India. It is rich in minerals with huge reserves of coal, iron ore, mica, bauxite, limestone etc. Recently gold reserves have also been found in parts of Singhbhum districts and diamond reserves in Simdega districts of Jharkhand.

The main characteristics of the area have degraded drastically. The people of the region are in great turmoil, not only in economic terms but also in social, cultural and religious spheres. This has found its manifestation in various forms of aandolan or people's struggle or agitation, such as the forest aandolan in the Singhbhum District against the planting of teak trees because it is for the commercialization of the forest, or the dhan kato aandolan. The forcibly harvesting of paddy in Dhanbad, Giridih and Lohardaga areas illegally took away the lands of the Indigenous Populations. Aandolan or agitation against the construction of big dams like Koel Karo, Subernarekha and Kutku were attained. Recently, the separation of Jharkhand's aandolan was achieved.

These all types of aandolans very much tell the

situation of the region. For ages the Indigenous Populations were exploited in their own land and it was not until recently that the people have started understanding their rights and privileges provided to them. But unfortunately this is in its infant stage. So these all types of agitations paint a very gloomy picture of the area as well as that of the Indigenous Populations.

The basic factor behind all this turmoil is the phenomenon of continued and systematic dispossession of the indigenous people of the area, displacement due to development projects and among all these the major dispossession concerns with the forest. Many times these aandolans have precipitated state violence against the Indigenous Peoples of the region. The 18 police firings in the Singhbhum districts alone during the period of 1978-1985 against Indigenous Population tell about the large atrocities done to the Indigenous Populations. The most recent one is the massive civil right that occurred in the region in the year 2002 concerning the issue of Domicile and the privileges associated with it.

The tract of the Jharkhand once was densely populated with different kinds of rich flora and fauna. Chronologically, the degradation of the forest, the early documentation of the region tells that there was no encroachments of the area and the exploitation of the rulers were unknown. The region, due to its inaccessible tract, was safe from outsiders and the Indigenous Populations were in harmony. There was demographic pressure exerting in the region. Many new ethnic groups



Photo taken from the presentation.

started coming to the region in waves. The Mundas were reported to be the earliest settlers of the region. After them, came the Oraons and started living together. The Oraons brought along with them the new technology in the form of plough and they, along with others, were labeled as agriculturists in true sense.

The Mundas were the earliest settlers of the region. They came to the tract in groups and cleared the forests. These first cleared lands were called as *Khunt Katti*. The Indigenous Populations believed that the spirits resided in the forest trees. By cutting the trees or clearing the space they thought it to be a phenomenon that disturbed the spirits and hence from the very beginning the Indigenous Populations had close association with the forests, in economic and spiritual spheres. A sacred space was located in the forest and this was called as *Sarna Sthal*.

After this came the feudal lords. Even the Mughals

used these areas as their hunting grounds, which slowly turned into annual taxation. This taxation started after the Indigenous Population out of love and respect offered periodical gifting to the ruler, which later on was institutionalized by the ruler. Even until now there were less discontented with these revenues. The original *Khunt Katti* was not taxed and respected.

The major challenges came up with the coming of the colonial rulers. There was a large scale exploitation of the forest resources. The British were irrational in their approach and the major deforestation was carried on blindly. The coming up of railway lines and other forest produce were harnessed in such a way that it was never done in the past. The company was brutal to the nature. The forests were destroyed and taxes were imposed to laymen. The Indigenous Populations were uprooted and deprived of their traditional rights over their lands and forests. The bewildered and agonized

tribals resulted in agitation and revolt. Their movement was crushed down again brutally and new means were implemented. There were dispossession policies all around and the British declared themselves to be the head of the state and all the forest property were captured in the name of state. The concept of reserved and protected forest came up. The Indigenous Populations were now having restricted access to their own created land and the nature in which they used to dwell. There was a complete breakage of the traditional possession of the Indigenous Populations. The Indigenous Population for whom the forest was everything were deprived of it and rendered homeless.

These kind of policies continued even after the Independent India. The acts and policies were far from restoring the rights and benefits of the Indigenous Populations. Various acts and policies were implemented from time to time, but none favored the interest of the Indigenous Population. Meanwhile the planners tried to view Indigenous Populations of India in context of three approaches: Isolation, Assimilation and Integration. All the three had its own banes and boons but none resolved the problem of the traditional people. Recently a very important act has come into existence. "The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Bill, 2006" was passed on December 18, 2006. This was marked as a red letter day for the Indigenous Populations of the country as they regain economic strength from the forest.

The British were irrational in their approach and the major deforestation was carried on blindly ... The forests were destroyed and taxes were imposed on laymen.

Photo by Karen Calderon.



Salient features of the forest bill. The bill recognizes the right of the people. The traditional access to the forest has been restored, apart from few restrictions on protected parks and sanctuaries. Earlier the date declared for the recognition of the forest dwellers was 25th October, 1980. The people who were staying in the forest benefited from the bill. This was highly unethical. Due to grave poverty, many had left the forest in search of livelihood due to the earlier forest policy. The new act of 2006, after the recommendation from the Joint Parliamentary Committee amended the date to 13th December, 2005 the day when the bill was tabled in the Indian Parliament. This hence included many forest dwellers who were termed as encroachers in the forest. There was also the inclusion of non scheduled tribes who somehow were also dependent on the forest since ages for their livelihood. The condition was that the families should at least show that they have been living in the forest for at least three generations.

The act also empowered the local self government, the *Gram Sabha* with the revenue rights. The *Gram Sabha* has been allocated powers regarding the finance and social rights. They are the final authority in the settlement of local rights. The Joint Parliamentary Committee has also introduced the provisions of recognizing the rights of displaced and rehabilitated people. Jharkhand has been a seat of continuous dispossession. The forest was lost from the hand of the people in the past unjust recognition to the tribal people. The fact that Joint Parliamentary Committee included the rights of Indigenous Peoples causes them to migrate or displaced.

Now the government recognizes the *Khunt Kutti* land and allows the usage of land. The Government of Jharkhand has declares *Khunt Kutti* in 156 villages only. This is highly ridiculed. On close survey, it was later increased up to 250. This is not the end. If the other illegally confiscated land by the states has included this number, it will reach more than 500. But then there is lack of awareness among the people and it will take time for one to understand and realize it. This *Khunt Kutti* land is very closely associated with the traditional culture and nature of the land. In this regard we all need to save the forest and each should endeavor towards it.

Development in Sarawak Struggles & Challenges of Orang Asal Communities: The Dayak

Orang Asal of Malaysia

The Orang Asal of Semenanjung (Peninsular) Malaysia has more than 120,000. The Dayaks of Sarawak comprises the Iban, Bidayauh, Kenyah, Kayan, Kelabit, Lun Bawang, Penan etc or approximately 1 million. On the other hand, Orang Asal (Kadazandusun, Bajau, etc.) of Sabah is 1 million.

Sarawak (Facts & Figures)

Sarawak has 124,449 sq.km (12.4 million ha). It is located at the northwest sector of Borneo. It is the largest of the 13 states in Malaysia. It has population of 2.2 million where 49% are Dayaks. Eighty percent (80%) are rural dwellers, practicing self subsistent agriculture, hunters and gatherers. Dayaks holds customary rights over land.

The Dayak is an umbrella term for at least 32 ethnic and sub-ethnic indigenous groups in Sarawak. Ibans make 30% of population; other main ethnic groups are Bidayauh, Kayan & Kenyah. Penans make for about 0.5% of population. Each IP groups are governed by their own distinctive customary laws called “adat”. Adat is recognized by the state government however controlled by the State Attorney General’s office.

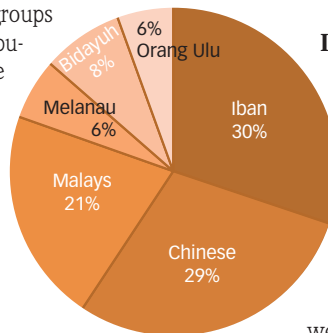
Present development threatened Dayak’s native customary rights (NCR)

1. Logging – Widespread deforestation
2. Plantation (Oil Palm & Acacia)
3. Massive infrastructural development (e.g. Bakun Dam)
4. Alienation of customary land by private companies
5. Extinguishments of native customary rights by the State Government in the name of development and conservation
6. State Government’s view that natives are only licensees on State Land

In the name of “development,” the survivals of the Dayaks are continuously threatened as a result of various development programs implemented by the Government & the private sector, i.e. logging, plantation & infrastructure development.

Impacts to the Dayaks

Due to these “developments”, Dayaks have loss their native customary rights to land and resources. They suffer displacement/dispossession of their land, e.g. Bakun. Their environment was destructed, and their forest was cleared massively. Their biodiversity had undergone a total loss. The health & livelihood of the communities were threatened. Due to these, they also



experienced human rights abuses i.e. the rights to their customary land, maintaining their traditional way of life, arbitrary arrests and detentions.

“Our lands are taken away from us without our consent. The government simply gave away our land to plantation developers. When we protested, we were sued.” – Longhouse Chief, Tuai Rumah Ketip

Issues of concern for the Dayaks

Dayaks’ native customary land are encroached upon by private companies without Dayak’s free prior informed consent. Sarawak Land Code was interpreted differently by different stakeholders. Their NCR lands are not well documented well or demarcated even though the Dayaks have proof that they have NCR.

Conflicts between Dayaks, private companies & State Government occur when timber licenses & leases are issued over customary lands. After the companies got

their needs from the customary lands, there were minimal or no compensation for damaged crops, land and forest. They left environmental damage due to extensive land clearing.

There is a poor or no consultation from native communities on land development schemes implemented on their native customary land. There is also poor or no participation in the decision-making process involving development of native customary land. Community leaders are appointed rather than elected by the Government. Large-scale commercial plantation is the result of the influx of illegal immigrants.

The Dayaks are forced to defend & protect their rights by taking direct actions, instituting legal action in Courts.

Human Rights Violations

The Dayaks that defended their rights have been brutally harassed, assaulted, intimidated, suppressed and arrested by the authorities.



Photo taken from the presentation.



Photo by Anjo Rey Cerdeña.

Nor Ak Nyawai’s case

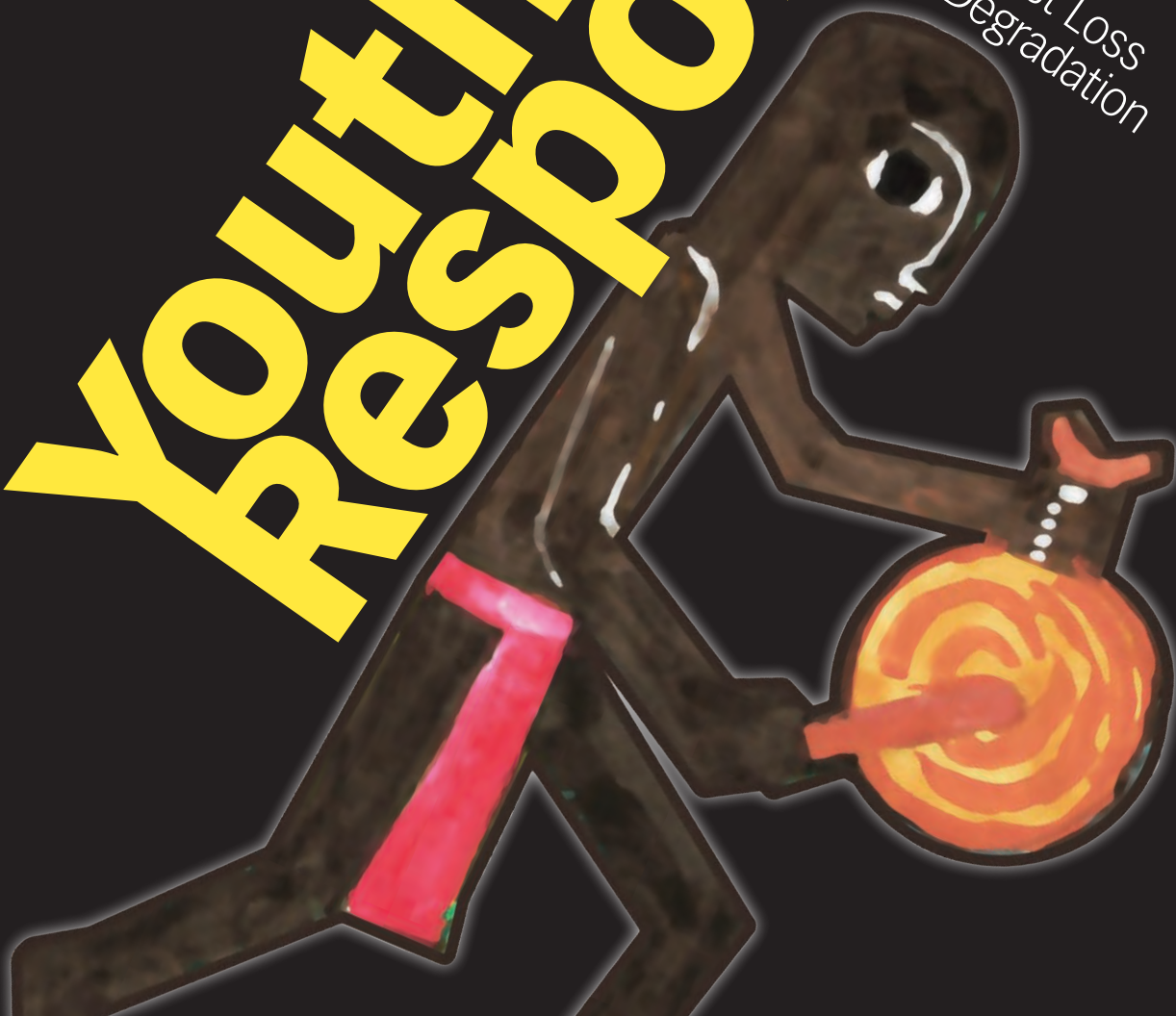
- Landmark case for Dayaks in Sarawak
- High Court ruled in favor of Ibans from Rumah Nor’s longhouse
 - NCR was never extinguished
 - “Pulau” is part of the customary land
 - NCR was upheld as prior rights
- Community map was accepted by the High Court
- NOTE: July 2005 – Court of Appeals ruled against High Court’s decision » Appeal to FEDERAL COURT

IPs Demands to the Government

The IPs of Sarawak called for the protection of their Rights to NCR to land, forest and the environment; officially delineate and record native customary lands. Also, urgently halt the encroachment of private companies in their native customary lands. Dayaks wanted to demand the government to take action on illegal logging; halt issuances of leases or licenses over NCR land; and pay adequate and just compensation. The IPs insist to uphold the principle of prior informed consent of the IPs.

Youth response

on Forest Loss
and Degradation





Some of the pressing concerns of young people on environmental protection that came out of the workshop were:

1. The rapid degradation of forests and other forest resources.
2. The lack of political will by governments to enforce forest laws and other national laws concerning the protection of our environment.
3. The continued destruction of our forests and resources due to bulk and open pit mining, logging, oil palm plantation, dam and tourism's concept of "eco-parks."
4. The dislocation of indigenous communities to give way to government projects. This phenomenon further facilitates the fast disintegration of culture among IP communities and contributing to the problem of identity crises among indigenous young people.
5. The concept of "protected areas" in the guise of forest protection further violates the right of IP communities to their forest resources. These government-declared land protection areas prohibit indigenous peoples to roam and exercise their livelihood in said areas.
6. Defacement and bastardization of sacred sites usually located in forest areas.
7. Indigenous forest areas are considered by governments as public lands or government properties, as in the Philippines' Presidential Declaration 705 which

says that "all lands 18 degrees slope above sea level are public land". Such laws robbed the IPs of their inherent rights and therefore depriving them of their responsibility to nurture, develop and protect these natural abodes. Such laws legalized land grabbing.

8. Development aggression results to forced migration and trafficking.

In conclusion, the destruction of natural abode results into the dislocation of communities and bastardization and disintegration of ways of life. The immediate aftermath of this is the devastation of young indigenous people who are starting to lose their identities and culture. Pushed to the difficulties of heavily urban life, the indigenous young, either strive to maintain IP morals and beliefs or subsumed to the prevalent bourgeoisie-decadent culture. Many of the indigenous young brothers and sisters are already trapped in these very difficult situations.

As a result, there is a continued rise in the cases of drug addictions, suicide, prostitution and early pregnancies, drunkenness, petty crimes and other anti-social practices. Many also try to find their luck abroad but end up in the hands of illegal recruiters and traffickers. These further contribute to a high poverty incidence among IP communities.



Photos by Anjo Cerdeña.



In response to the above conditions, the young participants adopted the following resolutions which attend to the indigenous youth's role, the elders, governments, UN agencies and NGOs:

1. Take an active role in the campaign to protect our environment through education, lobbying, and direct actions.

a. Awareness-building such as teach-ins, theater plays and the like.

b. Deepening our understanding on the root causes of environmental destruction.

c. Conduct training-workshop to deepen our understanding on international instruments to protect the forest and other bio-diversity.

d. Reproduce copies of Article 13 of the CBD and Article 8J, a must for everybody to read and know.

e. Strengthen advocacy to international institutions like the UN.

f. Help engage the youth on instruments like the CBD.

g. Engage governments to take affirmative actions.

h. Involve young and children to simple activities such as tree planting.

i. Create a web space for this campaign, to exchange information, data and the like.



2. Strengthening our local organizations and regional networks and developing stronger ties with other environmental organizations, church, environment desks of governments and other related agencies, and other NGOs.

3. Exposure and Exchange programs with and/or to affected communities.

4. The youth participants also agreed to demand from local/national and regional concerned agencies, UNEP, Convention on Biodiversity, governments, and NGOs:

a. To recognize and increase youth participation in CBD and other related processes.

b. To provide the necessary space and assistance to participate.

c. To support youth in this field. Make available information accessible to youth.

d. To listen to the IP communities and reconsider their knowledge of protecting the environment.

e. To put a timeline to stop forest destruction and enjoin governments to uphold it.

f. Rally the youth to get involved into reforestation and other worthwhile activities to save the environment instead of compulsory military trainings and military services in schools.

g. To incorporate an indigenous specific group within the CBD with participation of young people.

workshop on forest



After the input on Underlying Causes of Forest Loss and Degradation and CBD, the participants of the conference were divided into seven (7) workshop groups to formulate resolutions on how to resolve concerns about it.

The workshop groups first identified the problems encountered by the Indigenous people regarding the forest. Afterwards, the groups devised resolutions to address these concerns.

loss and degradation

Declaration on the Convention on Biodiversity and the Conservation of our Forests



We, the 145 Indigenous youth participants from Asia Pacific region express our concern that the degradation of World's biodiversity and threat to livelihood of Indigenous Peoples, women, youths and children continues despite the existence of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Indigenous Peoples are guardians of our Indigenous Knowledge and we, indigenous youth have responsibility to protect our rights over our traditional knowledge and biological resources for future generations and to perpetuate our traditional knowledge.

We, as indigenous youth affirm our indigenous worldview of life and the world cultures, histories crucial for the perpetuation, promotion and development of the world's biodiversity.

We, indigenous youth affirm our right to self-determination, crucial to carry out our responsibilities in accordance with our way of life, tradition, our cultural values and our customary practices.

We express our concern over States' continued lack of recognition of the intrinsic relationship of Indigenous Peoples with their land and resources, including biodiversity and the continued displacement of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands through arbitrary development and militarization.

We express our concern over lack of compliance of State Parties with the terms and conditions of the

Convention on Biological Diversity and other related international instruments.

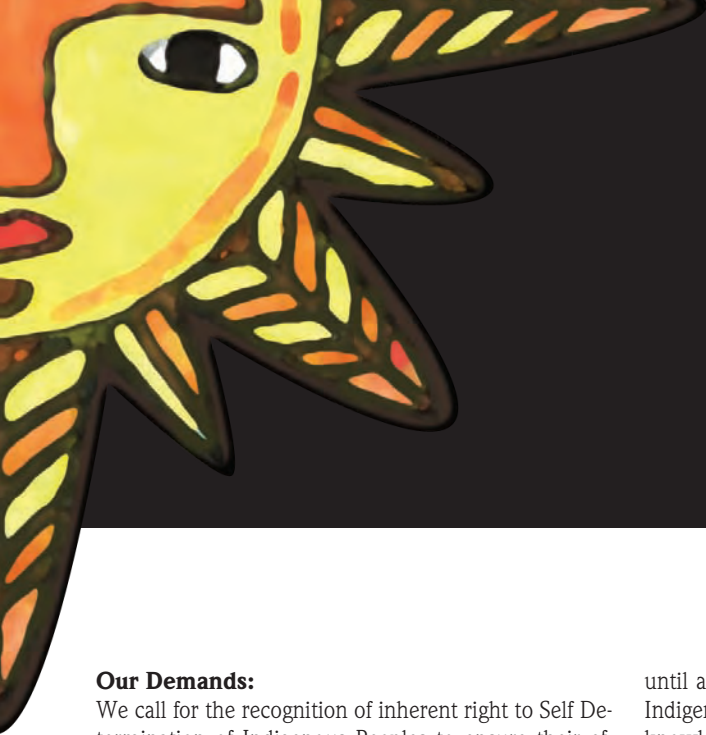
We oppose large-scale Mega developmental projects, constructions of Dams, introduction of plantations for bio-fuels or CDM projects for carbon sequestration, which lead to expropriation of indigenous lands, displacement of Indigenous youths, women, children and loss of biological diversity.

We oppose all outside attempts to commercialize and profit from our traditional knowledge, resources, rituals, ceremonies, medicines etc, including policies such intellectual property rights regime that infringe Indigenous Peoples' rights to maintain our traditional knowledge, practices, seeds and other food related genetic resources.

We are opposed to the introduction of genetically modified organisms and genetic use restriction technologies, which might have very serious impacts on food security, health, environment, and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and youths.

We express our concern that the advancement of policies of free trade policies through international and regional free trade agreements, state laws, and policies is allowing an increase in the exploitation of Indigenous Peoples knowledge and resources.

We express our concern over limited participation of Indigenous Peoples and Youth in processes related to the Convention on Biodiversity and other related decision making process impacting Indigenous Peoples including the UNFCCC (Climate Change), UNFF (Forest) etc.



Our Demands:

We call for the recognition of inherent right to Self Determination of Indigenous Peoples to ensure their effective control and sustainable management of their natural resources and to recognize the inherent and inalienable relationship of Indigenous Peoples to their biological diversity and land.

That all decisions of the parties to CBD to recognize and protect the fundamental principle that Indigenous Peoples and Youths are rights holders with inherent and inalienable rights over our traditional knowledge and biological resources.

We call for a moratorium on large-scale energy and extractive projects, scientific research and all activity of bio-prospecting, that threatens Indigenous Peoples and Youths survival and any acquisition, use or commercial application of their intellectual, cultural and property must be done with their free, prior and informed consent and respect and recognition of their customary laws.

That all parties to CBD not to impose intellectual property regimes on indigenous knowledge, biodiversity and customary management systems and to eliminate all intellectual property rights over genes and other natural properties over any form of life derived from indigenous knowledge.

Calls for moratorium of all bio-prospecting and collection of biological materials in the territories of Indigenous Peoples and patenting based on these collections

until acceptable sui generis systems are established by Indigenous Peoples and moratorium on registering of knowledge.

Calls upon parties to recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples to access and repatriate genetic materials held in all ex-situ collections, such as gene banks, herbariums and botanical gardens.

Ensure that any benefit sharing regime protects the rights of Indigenous Peoples to free prior and informed consent as principle parties when their knowledge or resources are impacted, and further protect our right to deny access and/or refuse to participate.

Ensure that the sharing of the benefits derived from the use of indigenous knowledge includes other rights, obligations and responsibilities such as land rights and the maintenance of indigenous cultures to facilitate the transmission of knowledge, innovations, practices and values to future generations.

Governments must set high standards for corporate accountability through strong regulatory frameworks and mechanisms, in order to safeguard communities from the negative impacts of corporate investments and projects.

The CBD process must ensure effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and youth and as such, the Conference of the Parties (CoP), in its activities of public information and capacity building, must pay specific attention to secure full and effective participation of indigenous youth.

Prepa- ratory Meeting for the UNPFII 2007



Photo by Eric Kiser.



The UN Bodies \ Raymond de Chavez \ Tebtebba Foundation
(IP's International Center for Policy Research and Education)

The United Nations systems and bodies related to indigenous peoples



Photo taken from the presentation.

The United Nations is an international organization composed of a number of separate bodies that are responsible for addressing economic, social, cultural or humanitarian issues. The United Nations Charter describes the purposes of the UN, which include the preservation of peace and the promotion of human rights, justice, respect for treaties and international law, social progress and better standards of life for all.

“We the peoples of the United Nations determined ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small ... and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom ...”

Established in 1945 after WWII, the UN aims to pursue three primary goals: to ensure peace and security; to promote social and economic development; and to ensure that human rights are respected around the world. The UN set up a large and complex network of organizations that cover virtually every area of human activity.

The UN is *not* a world government, meaning it has no powers to compel members to take a particular action; it is effective only as far as governments want it to be. It also does not allow NGOs or members of the public to have any decision-making role in its deliberations,

therefore, influence are limited, final decision is done by governments.

The structure of the UN Relevant to Indigenous Peoples includes the General Assembly (GA). It is the highest body and one (1) nation could be equivalent to one vote. The GA meets yearly from September to December in New York. The Human Rights Council as subsidiary organ (A/RES/60/251, 03 April 2006) of the GA. The Security Council (SC) is the most powerful body; its decisions are binding (e.g., trade sanctions). It also covers decisions on peace and security.

The UN Secretariat acts as the UN civil service, its Secretary-General, Ban ki-Moon is the 8th Secretary General. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) composed of subsidiary bodies including the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). The ECOSOC is the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the United Nations system. The ECOSOC advocates the promotion of higher standards of living, full employment and economic and social progress; identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems; facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Specialized Agencies includes health, food, education

and international communications. There are considerable degree of independence among UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO), etc. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has limited role in considering human rights violations, it considers only disputes between governments.

The UN Human Rights Structures is a charter-based system, meaning the bodies/mechanism set up via resolutions and decisions of the UN system, e.g., UNPFII. A Treaty-based system is set up by legally-binding human rights treaties, e.g., Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of CERD. The former UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations (UNWGIP) (1982) under the then-Commission on Human Rights & the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples (UNVFIP) (1985) are UN Charter-Based Bodies. Its last session was held in July 2006. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, passed by the HRC in June 2006 was deferred for consideration and action before end of 61st session. The 2nd International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2015) calls for partnership for Action and Dignity.

The United Nations' treaty-based human rights system includes legal procedures through which indigenous peoples can seek protection for their human rights. There are 6 major international human rights treaties, which include, civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, racial discrimination, torture, gender discrimination and children's rights.

tribal peoples. They create binding obligations on the Member States that have ratified them.

The UN Development Programme is a UN organization that promotes and supports programmes for sustainable human development. Its thrust is to integrate indigenous perspectives and concepts of development in future programmes, and to make indigenous peoples' concerns a cross-cutting issue within UNDP' priority areas of work. The UNDP RIPP (Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development in the Asia Pacific) acts to strengthen policy dialogues on IP rights and sustainable development, also capacity development, etc.

The UNICEF and UN Youth Unit deals specifically with the problems faced by children and youth. In 1991, UNICEF's Executive Board adopted a resolution committing UNICEF to improving the way in which its projects help indigenous children to enjoy their traditional culture, religion and language (Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child). The Youth Unit is the UN's focal point on youth activities, responsible for promoting cooperation among UN organizations, specialized agencies, Member States and NGOs on issues of concern to youth.

During the 1992 UNCED, legal instruments were adopted (Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Convention on Biological Diversity) to establish international legal standards to protect indigenous peoples' rights to their traditional knowledge and practices in the area of environmental management and conservation. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (UNFF)

In 1991, UNICEF's Executive Board adopted a resolution committing UNICEF to improving the way in which its projects help indigenous children to enjoy their traditional culture, religion and language. The Youth Unit is the UN's focal point on youth activities.

Other Specialized Agencies, like the International Labour Organization (ILO), includes developing and establishing international labour standards to improve the living and working conditions of people around the world in its mandates. The ILO is the first international body to address indigenous issues in a comprehensive manner via ILO Convention No. 169, which, aimed to establish minimum standards with respect to the civil, political, social and economic rights of indigenous and

are some bodies for the Indigenous Peoples and the environment.

The UN system has become an important venue for lobby/advocacy towards recognition and promotion of indigenous peoples' rights, networking among IP groups and advocates/NGOs, global-local-global linkage of indigenous issues. Given the nature of UN, it solely, does not provide the solutions to problems confronting indigenous peoples.



The UNHRC \ Rhoda Dalang \ Dinteg (Cordillera
Indigenous Peoples Law Center)

The United Nations Human Rights Council and indigenous peoples



Photo taken from the presentation of Raymond de Chavez.

The Commission on Human rights, created in 1946, is the main human rights body within the United Nations. Until 1967, its main function is a standard setting, but after 1967, the Commission was authorized to monitor human rights violations. The Commission set up procedures and mechanisms to examine, monitor and report on human rights violations (the Special Procedures). The Commission came under criticism for its double standards and selectivity in the treatment of country situations. Its failure to address severe violations occurring in many countries and the institutional culture of regional alliances and block voting, excessive politization, and States using the Commission to avoid criticism and to criticize others led to a reforming of the Commission.

In December 2004, the High Level Panel reports of the UN Secretary General recommended its replacement. On March 15 2006, the General Assembly passed a resolution to replace the Commission with a Council. June 19 2006 marks the first session of the new Council.

The Human Rights Council is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, its status is to be reviewed within five years. It is composed of 47 member States. Positions are elected by absolute majority of the General Assembly in individual secret ballots and are eligible for two consecutive terms (six years) only. Gross

violators can be removed by two thirds majority vote of the General Assembly.

The Human Rights Council functions as a broad mandate to discuss human rights issues and to address situations of violations of human rights, including “gross and systematic violations.” The mandates, mechanisms, functions and responsibilities of the Commission transferred to the Council for review, rationalization and improvement within one year are:

- A system of **special procedures** to be retained;
- A system of **expert advice** to be maintained (Sub-Commission); and
- A **complaints procedure** to be maintained (1503 procedure)

The special procedures are made up of individual experts or working groups mandated to address specific country situations or thematic issues. There are currently 41 special procedures mechanisms: 15 dealing with country situations and 26 dealing with thematic issues. These special procedures carry out country visits, receive individual complaints from victims, and report to the Council and the General Assembly about their findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Standard-setting working groups were responsible for negotiating new legal standards in the area of human rights such as declarations or treaties. Standard-setting

working groups of the former Commission provided a *Draft Convention on Enforced Disappearances*, a *Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and a *Consideration of a possible Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*.

A substantive result of their first year was the Adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (consensus). It also adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (two against, 12 abstentions, 30 in favor).

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a product of 21 years of dialogue: 10 years among indigenous peoples and 11 years with governments. From 1985 to 1994, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations drafted the draft declaration and from 1995 to 2005, the Working Group on the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was participated by IPs and governments.

Salient Features of the Declaration:

- recognizes and affirms that the right to self-determination is applicable to indigenous peoples, and that indigenous peoples have individual and collective rights over their land and resources;
- articulates new concepts such as “free, prior and informed consent” which is an instrument in fostering

constructive partnerships between indigenous peoples and states;

- respect for indigenous sociopolitical institutions, including indigenous justice systems and indigenous identities while upholding the principle of equality before and adherence to the law;
- right of redress over historical injustices and oppression against indigenous peoples;
- details safeguards against militarization of indigenous territories; and
- outlines instruments for indigenous youth to become productive partners; such as right to culturally appropriate educational system.

The amount of self-determination that would be granted to indigenous peoples over their territories and resources and defining the “peoples” entitled to such right is a contentious issue on the Declaration. It is a question of how much ownership, control, management and use of land and resources by IPs will be recognized by States.

The right to self-determination can be construed as secession, free prior and informed consent can be construed as right to vote. These are repeated statements from States. But among Asian countries, the definition and scope of indigenous peoples are not consistent with national laws and has no common understanding on collective rights.

Photo by Elton Jun Veloria.



UNPFII Chairperson Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (left) reiterates the importance of country-level campaigns that must be ahead of lobbying in the UN. With her are resource speakers Joan Carling of Cordillera Peoples Alliance (center) and Rhoda Dalang of *Dinteg* (Cordillera Indigenous Legal Center).



The UNPFII \ **Victoria Tauli-Corpuz** \ Chairperson,
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues



Photo taken from the presentation of Raymond de Chavez.

The UNPFII is an advisory body established by ECOSOC decision (2000/22), reports to Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and holds its annual sessions since 2002, it is attended by over thousand participants from governments, indigenous organizations, other inter-governmental organizations, UN agencies, non governmental organizations and academia.

According to its mandate, the Permanent Forum is there to: discuss indigenous issues within the ECOSOC's mandate, including economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights; to provide expert advice and recommendations to the Council and to programmes, funds and agencies of the UN; to raise awareness about indigenous issues; to integrate and coordinate activities in the UN system; and, to produce materials on indigenous issues.

The mandated areas of the Permanent Forum include culture, economic and social development, education, environment, human rights and health. Its mandate also covers all the other matters relating to or affecting indigenous peoples such as women's issues, gender, poverty, children, Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples, data collection, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and indigenous peoples.

The membership of the UNPFII consists of eight nominated by governments and eight nominated by

indigenous peoples. The term of membership is three years and this is renewable. Current membership (2005-2007), is made up of seven females and nine males. They serve in their personal capacity as indigenous experts/experts on indigenous issues.

The Permanent Forum Works with special themes of the sessions: In 2003, Indigenous children and youth, in 2004, Indigenous women, and in 2005 and the next two sessions, MDGs and indigenous peoples.

It also works with High Level Panel; major international conferences (Beijing+10, UNDG, WSIS, MDGs); experts technical workshops (data collection and free, prior and informed consent and IPs); and, interactive sessions between IPs, States, UN agencies, development funds/programmes and Special Rapporteur on IP's human rights issues.

More than 20 agencies participate in the Inter-agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues (IASG), plus Council of Europe and Inter-American Development Bank. It integrates indigenous issues in policy-development, programmes and budgets and supports to the Permanent Forum on substance.

The Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2015), concentrates on mainstream indigenous issues in the UN Country Teams, MDGs processes and Poverty Reduction Strategies. It centers on increasing indigenous participation in

development processes, local and national legislative and governmental bodies, decision-making processes and capacity-building for indigenous communities.

The Forum meets 10 days each year in May in New York, or a location to be chosen by the Forum. The recommendations are adopted by consensus and submitted to ECOSOC. Ideas of recommendations may come from various indigenous caucuses during the debates. These recommendations are policy-making oriented in the form of advice and they are action-oriented for the implementation and follow up of the intergovernmental system, governments, indigenous and other organizations and the private sector. Recommendations cover the mandated areas of the Permanent Forum and can be addressed exclusively to a particular UN agency or to the whole UN system.

The PF promote its mandate through PF members who address various national, regional and international meetings in relation to indigenous issues (IFAD and FAO, UNESCO, WIPO, OAS and so forth). They promote the Forum's recommendations and raise the concerns of indigenous peoples in the international agenda (global issues, biodiversity, traditional knowledge, land, territories and resources, educations, human rights). They also undertake activities of awareness-raising on indigenous issues among the public through media, publications.

The States, the UN and other intergovernmental entities and non governmental organizations with ECOSOC consultative status are the participating members in the Permanent Forum's sessions. For indigenous peoples and their organizations, the same rules for participation as in the Sub-Commission's Working Group

areas, prepare reports/contribution to the UNPFII, Governments adopt or review legislation with a view to recognizing indigenous peoples' rights, adopt other measures, prepare reports for the UNPFI. The Secretariat of the PF advocates implementation of the PFI recommendations, networks, promotes awareness, prepares documentation for the Forum.

The Member States contributes in support to the Permanent Forum to fulfill its mandate by participating in the deliberations of the Forum, reviewing/adopting national legislation in conformity with international human rights and other standards with regard to indigenous peoples, adopting other relevant legislation, measures and programmes on indigenous issues, and Pursuing implementation of the recommendations at national level of the UNPFI.

The Government can take measures by developing their country with: indigenous-related policy or special measures to remedy the marginalization and to end the poverty of indigenous peoples; establish mechanisms to implement free, prior and informed consent principles regarding indigenous peoples on any matters concerning/affecting them; assist in data collection and disaggregation so as to better address the problems faced by indigenous peoples; support/facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples in national, regional and international meetings to make their voice heard; share information on good practices relating to indigenous issues; and, contribute to the two Trust Funds: Trust Fund in Support to the Permanent Forum, and Trust Fund of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous people.

In 1991, UNICEF's Executive Board adopted a resolution committing UNICEF to improving the way in which its projects help indigenous children to enjoy their traditional culture, religion and language. The Youth Unit is the UN's focal point on youth activities.

on Indigenous Populations.

Before the session, various consultations take place, often informally, among indigenous network and caucuses on particular themes or issues or to prepare documentation based on contribution of agencies and governments on the implementation of the Forum's recommendations. The UN agencies and governments pursue the implementation of the recommendations of the Forum on indigenous issues in various

"I encourage all relevant parts of the UN system to assist PF in implementing its mandate. Indigenous peoples continue to suffer disproportionately. As part of our global effort to overcome these problems we must develop schemes that specifically target IP. The UN will play its part in helping member states to try to transform those MDG's into indigenous realities."

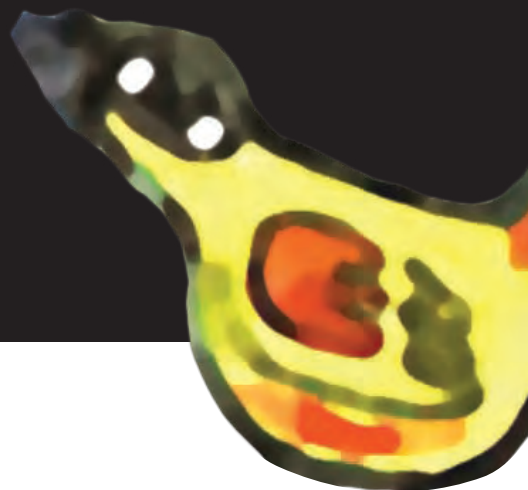
-Kofi Annan/Secretary-General, UN



Youth Agenda

for the
UNPFII

Intervention to the 6th Session of the UNPFII: on Human Rights



Dear Madame Chairperson,
I am Jiten Yumnam, a Meitei from Manipur in India's North East, representing the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network, based in Baguio City, Philippines, formed in the first International Indigenous Youth Network, 2002. I am pleased to present today discussions and recommendations of the recently concluded founding conference of Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network in April, 2007 at Baguio City, Philippines on "Militarization and Impact on Indigenous Youths"

Militarization and Indigenous Youths in Asia

As Indigenous Peoples call and struggle for recognition of their Right to Self Determination and to live with dignity, while resisting continued colonialism, discrimination and hegemony by States, the States and its imperialist allies continues rejection of their call, responding with brute force and repressions with their military might.

This trend of state negativism and resort to militarism has taken serious toll on Indigenous youths as they join their elders, assuming responsibilities in their resistance and fight for justice, including through armed movements and for Right to Self Determination. Youths are targeted by militaries most both with suspicion, directing attacking their physical, mental and spiritual integrity.

Some Heavily Militarized Areas in Asia

I would like to draw your attention to some specific situations afflicted with heavy militarization and prevailing impunity in Asia and Pacific Region. Indigenous Peoples and youths struggling for rights and survival in Chittagong Hill Tract (Bangladesh), Cordillera (Philippines) Karen, Chin, Mon areas of Burma, West Papua

(Indonesia), Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland, Assam (North East India), Guam Island in Pacific etc experienced some of the most brutal form of state militarism and state terrorism.

By declaring states of emergency, laws on "disturbed areas" and other draconian measures, many Asian countries had legitimized acts of violence by the military on Indigenous Peoples.

In Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) in Bangladesh, the Bangladesh military forces and Bengali settlers has been committing a horrible legacy of violence, rape, loot, murder, sacrilege of religion and forcible occupation of Jumma peoples' land and property.

In West Papua, since transfer of colony to Indonesian administration the Indonesian military has taken control over natural resources in West Papua, and this has resulted in many illegal activities like illegal logging, illegal fishing. Even illegal prostitution is a project with full backing by Indonesia military.

Indigenous peoples in the Philippines, especially Indigenous Youths are targeted to extra judicial execution, torture, rape and other forms of violations. Youth organizers are being harassed by the military and their offices are being put under surveillance.

In Karen and Chin States in Burma, the Indigenous Peoples are used as forced labor for state sponsored development activities that often confiscate Indigenous Peoples land and Violence against Indigenous Women is escalating. Rape of Indigenous Women is a weapon used by the Burmese Military to intimidate, challenge and suppress Indigenous Peoples.

The military response to the National Liberation Movements by Indigenous Peoples in Manipur,

Nagaland, Tripura, Assam in India's NE resulted in the imposition of Emergency Legislations, including the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, suspending their fundamental rights, including the "right to life" and permitting full scale deployment of federal armies to counter existing insurgency. The Act permits the Indian Armed Forces to kill on mere suspicion without due legal process and these had lead to unwarranted use of excess force victimizing indigenous youths to extrajudicial executions, killings in fake encounters, arbitrary arrest and torture, unleashing a reign of terror in these regions and enforcing a climate of impunity, where Indian Armies involved in these violations remained scot free. Recently in Manipur, an Indigenous Rights activist attending the UNPFII 2006 meeting was arbitrarily detained and severely tortured.

Indigenous Peoples of Okinawa in Southern Japan continues to suffer massive militarization by United States forces, loss of land and subjection of their women to sexual harassment by US military personnel.

The Pacific Islands also confronts massive militarization from foreign military bases, primarily the United States. Recent renegotiation of United States defense agreements in Asia will send more than 8,000 military personnel and 10,000 dependents from Okinawa and South Korea to Guam Islands in Pacific, that already suffered enormously due to US military presence in their midst. The Chamoru people of Guam today stand at the crosshairs of the U.S. military siege in the Pacific.

The Chamoru people continue to be subjected to the existence of toxic elements left by the U.S. military as a result of the storage of chemical agents, PCB-contamination in the waters, and down-winder's radiation, as well as, radiation from the washing-down of airplanes and ships used in monitoring nuclear testing in the Pacific. Their telecommunications network is fully privatized, their power distributor partly privatized, and their water agency is under attack. The Port Authority of Guam, on an island that imports 85-90% of its food, is also being threatened by privatization.

Militarization and Impacts

This militarization is clearly an assault on the Indigenous Peoples territories and peaceful existence and weakened community cohesion and unity, because of (psywar), red-baiting and other "divide and rule" tactics employed by the military.

Extrajudicial Execution, Arbitrary detention, Involuntary disappearances, Sexual harassment of Indigenous

Peoples, women, imposition of food blockades and setting up of massive checkpoints, using Indigenous Peoples as human shields in Army occupations, forced recruitment of paramilitary forces are much worrisome concerns.

Excessive military presence in Indigenous Peoples areas spreads human misery, murder, rape, unlawful persecution, arrests, abductions, disappearances and the loss of parents and other family members by many children who then can not continue their culture or schooling.

Militarization has led to massive occupation of Prime agricultural land, sacred cultural sites, educational areas and even residential areas and has destroyed the cultural, historic. Recruitment of Indigenous Youths in the Paramilitary force has led to much division and confusion among Indigenous Peoples, as it lead Indigenous Peoples to kill each other, their own brothers and sisters and also led to subversion of the Indigenous Peoples own system of security, cooperation and brotherhood and divided opinions. The Military Civic Action Programme in indigenous areas, including road construction, pacification programmes and socio economic development programmes further divided the community, causing unwarranted intrusion into their social and cultural fabric.

Impunity

Impunity, consistent pattern of denying justice, has become a regular feature not only in India's North East, but also in other highly militarized areas. The Burmese military, Nepali Armed Forces, Philippine Military, Bangladesh and Indonesian military involved in blatant violations of Indigenous Peoples rights continues to escape prosecution and justice as their respective continues to insist on anti people and suppressive governances. Peoples call for justice is further met with brute force, extending and consolidating acts of injustice.

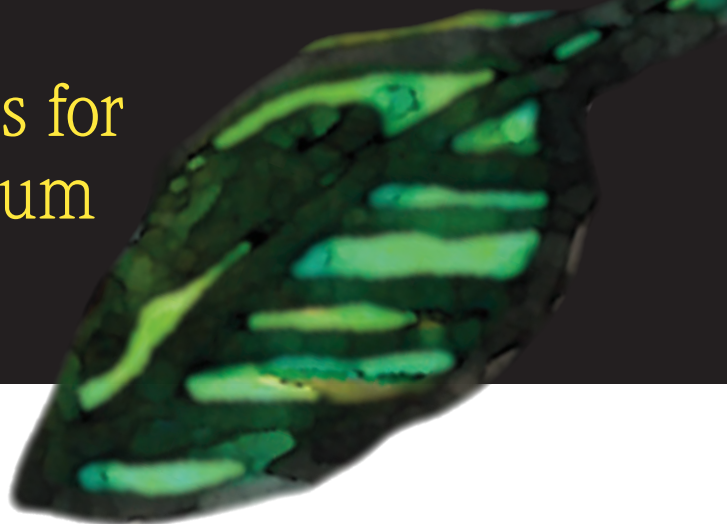
Demands:

APIYN would like urge upon all Nation States to recognize the inherent right to Self Determination and recognize the political rights of Indigenous peoples in Armed Conflict situations.

Urge Upon UNPFII to call upon all States to end impunity by prosecuting all military personnel involved in blatant human rights violations in Nepal , Burma , West Pupua in Indonesia , India's NE States of Manipur, Tripura, Assam, Nagaland etc, Chittagong Hill Tract

continued on page 51

Recommendation Issues for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues



Some areas of concern are deeply affecting the indigenous youth at the midst of government's pursuit for development and modernity. The IP's situation and experience among "developing" countries are almost the same. We have struggled to assert our right for self-determination and control over our land. Now, we continue our struggle with more reasons and will.

These are our main concerns and recommendation issues for the United Nations Permanent Forum; that the United Nations agencies must respect "free prior and informed consent" before introducing any developmental projects. Respect the IP's rights over the land and promote rehabilitation and resettlement programs for IPs to prevent environmental impacts. Repeal emergency legislations applied in IP areas and also, demilitarize these areas. Adopt the draft declaration on rights of indigenous peoples—our lands, our political rights and right to self-determination.

We call upon the states to investigate and prosecute all military and civil police and military intelligence involved in crimes against humanity. Promote accessible health care for indigenous peoples and create funds for indigenous children. We can divert military spending to health initiatives for indigenous peoples. Also, seek help from the World Health Organization to provide funding for clinics and medicines. Provide IP specific funding for the research on the potential effects of AIDS and HIV in Indigenous communities and address issues

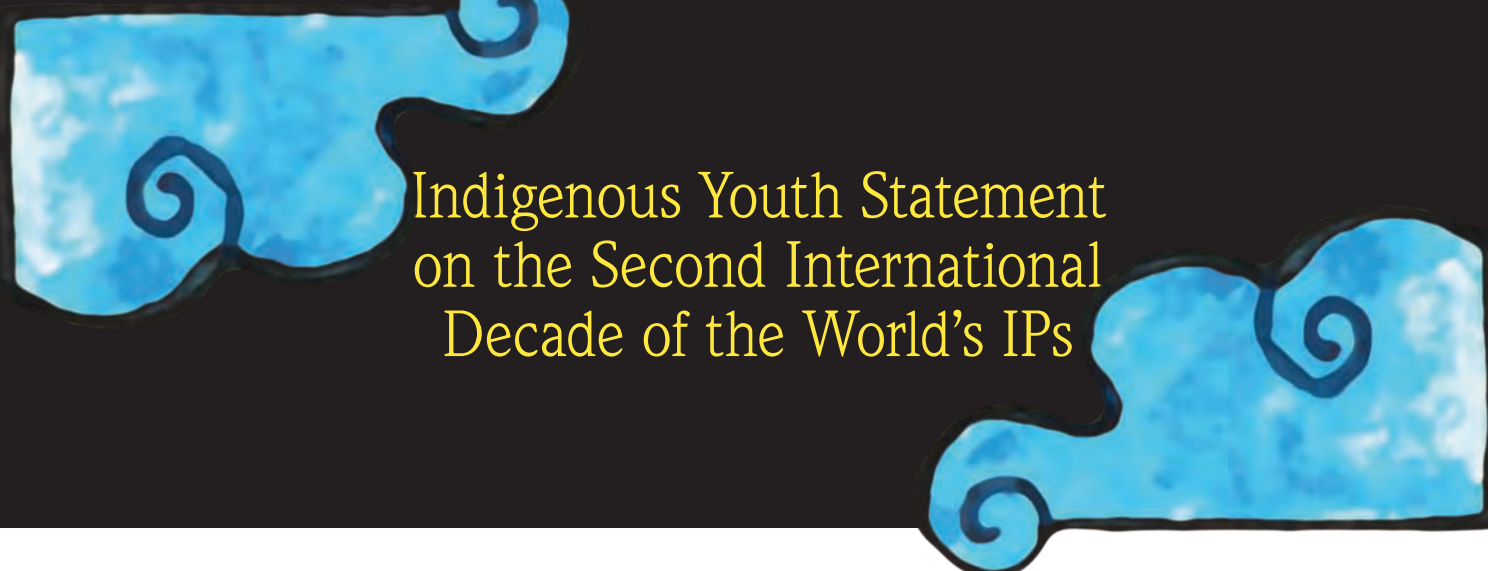
of prostitution and drug trafficking for indigenous children. We also go against bio prospecting and patenting indigenous peoples' medicinal practices.

Our recommendations on education include promotion of indigenous methodologies for education which uses our land as our own university or school. Promote and preserve Indigenous literature, promote educational program on IP's history, culture and tradition. Promote adult education for IP's. Promote bilingual and multilingual education. Promote use of Indigenous Scripts. To protect the IP's culture from globalization and commercialization, we ask for the recognition of traditional cultures, protection of our intellectual property rights on traditional knowledge, and stop discrimination of IPs due to colonial propaganda.

We would also like to share power with the government in terms of economic and social development over our areas. We call for the government to provide assistance in the form of program in promoting subsistence farming and other traditional economic activities and to put an end to commercialization and exploitation of IPs natural resources.

With these recommendations, we can intervene on some actions/activities to support our concerns. On the issues regarding the environment, we can study the effects of mining, plantation and logging in IP areas in Asia-Pacific and urge upon international funding institutions, World Bank, ADB, JBIC (governments)

continued on page 49



Indigenous Youth Statement on the Second International Decade of the World's IPs

**Delivered
by APIYN
Coordinator
Jennifer
Awingan to
the UNPFII
14-25 May
2007 \ UN
Headquarters,
New York**

Madame Chairperson, this is a joint statement of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) and of the Indigenous Youth Caucus of the Permanent Forum on the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. We wish to inform you that this statement was an output of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Conference that took place in April 18-22, 2007 in Baguio City, Philippines which was actively attended by 118 indigenous youths from 15 countries of Asia Pacific. This conference would not have been successful without the support of the UN Voluntary Fund for the Second Decade and other donors to whom we wish to extend our sincere gratitude.

The first decade of the world's indigenous peoples was historical in raising the profile of indigenous peoples at the regional and international levels. Likewise, the establishment of the Permanent Forum is another milestone for indigenous peoples' engagement at the United Nations level. However, indigenous peoples still continue to be marginalized at varying levels, especially women and youth.

As we welcome the Second Decade of Indigenous Peoples, we hope that there will be more concrete programmes, projects and activities addressing the issues and concerns of indigenous youth, including sustained capacity-building to enhance our greater and wider participation in various activities and tasks in strengthening indigenous peoples movements. We also expect

more services and assistance to address the particular needs and welfare of indigenous children and youth. In this regard, we commit ourselves in forging greater unity and cooperation amongst the indigenous youth, to our elders, to other indigenous organizations and communities, to support groups and institutions, to UN agencies, funds and programmes, to governments and others.

We express our concern on the continuing limited participation of indigenous youth in decision-making processes in local, regional and international levels, and the limited integration of our perspectives and experiences in decision making processes that have great impact on our survival as peoples. We wish to be given more space and avenues for participation while we endeavor to build our capacity in order to deliver our greatest contribution and participation to indigenous struggles and movements for the recognition of our collective rights and to promote the welfare of the youth.

Madame Chairperson, we wish to put forward our recommendations and we hope that the Permanent Forum will give it due consideration for the advancement of the concerns of indigenous youth.

1. We call on the UNPFII, UN agencies and governments to support forums and regional networks of indigenous youth and to support their capacity-building activities and programmes. In particular, we request for concrete support and assistance for the holding of a

global indigenous youth conference as part of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. This activity shall serve to highlight and generate greater attention and support to the needs, concerns, welfare and aspirations of indigenous youth. We strongly propose that this historical gathering of the world's indigenous youth take place the soonest possible time in the first half of the decade.

2. We call on UN agencies, funds and programs to support and assist in the conduct of national and regional indigenous youth training workshops for capacity-building. These training workshops are expected to result to greater participation of indigenous youth in national, regional and international processes relating to indigenous peoples and the youth sector.

3. We call on UN Agencies, funds and programmes and governments to give special attention to the needs and welfare of indigenous children and youth in all their programmes and activities relating to indigenous peoples. This shall include cultural exchange activities among indigenous youth, skills-sharing and others. In this regard, resources and budget shall be allocated to ensure the implementation of programmes and projects relating to indigenous children and youth.

4. We call for the establishment of local and national institutions for the promotion of indigenous culture. These shall be managed and directed by indigenous peoples with direct participation of indigenous youth.

5. We call on the UNPF to actively support initiatives

and projects of indigenous youth on the protection and promotion of environmentally sound practices relating to arts like poetry, film and music among others, which are designed to promote awareness.

6. We recommend for the inclusion of indigenous youth representatives in IP related bodies such as the Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund for the Second Decade and other similar bodies. Likewise, we wanted to ensure the inclusion and direct participation of representatives on indigenous youth in the monitoring of the implementation of the UN IP Decade.

7. We recommend the development of specific indicators on the well-being of indigenous youth which shall then be used in designing particular programmes of action for indigenous youth by UN agencies, funds and programmes.

Finally, we call upon the UN agencies, funds and programmes, governments and organizations to work together and actively implement the more than 900 recommendations on youth and children on education, health, other basic social services and culture that has been made by the Permanent Forum since its first meeting. The implementation of these recommendations are very critical in the well being of indigenous children and youth and we believe these will also make invaluable change in the work of the Permanent Forum to indigenous communities around the world.

Thank you.

Recommendation Issues...

From page 47

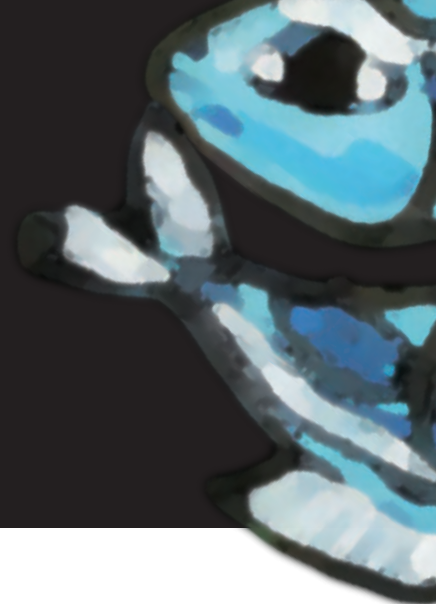
to respect indigenous customary laws on the environment. We can support community advancement projects for specific IP communities through cooperation of governments and UN agencies.

Provide IP women with information on health effects of reproductive rights. We can research on the potential effects of AIDS and HIV in indigenous communities. We could help in the implementation of education program of indigenous peoples of Asia. Explore the underlying factors of poverty within indigenous youths, forced migration both internally and internationally. Ensure workplaces or employment for indigenous youths in accordance with programs of social adaptation and rights.

Youth Statement for Asia Caucus

Organize a UN supported and organized global indigenous youth conference to look at problems/issues of indigenous youths. To support regional youth networks and forums around the world, UN Agencies must recognize indigenous youths and children in all of its programs and conventions. Mandate each government to send report on IP development, protect indigenous youths defending and upholding their rights, and promote return of IP land. Lobby for UN supported venue to cultivate preservation of IP knowledge for indigenous youths, to change reference of indigenous peoples by Chinese in UN and China (use indigenous peoples and not aboriginals). We aim for the UN to believe in IP principles so that indigenous youths be accorded the same respect as the other people utilizing UN processes.

Recommendations to the UNPFII in behalf of the Indigenous Youths of Australia and New Zealand



Delivered by
Kiritapu Allan
to the UNPFII
14-25 May
2007 \ United
Nations
Headquarters,
New York

We, the Indigenous youth of our nations and the future elders of our lands, ask the UNPFII to support governments and states to work with Indigenous Youths in the following issues we face today, specifically to:

- a. Acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances and wrong doings of our peoples, and action reports supported by our peoples as proof that the actions and acts of our peoples' genocide is affecting our peoples;
- b. Support and encourage grassroots initiatives of our peoples and provide the children of our nation an education with the true history of our peoples from our elders tongues;
- c. To urge the return of all sacred sites and lands stolen from Indigenous peoples; and
- d. To urge governments and states to stop their support of the corporatization of Indigenous peoples tribal structures.

Specifically to the issues of health, education, environment, human rights, culture, social and economic development we the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific region represented at the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network Conference held in Baguio City, Philippines April, 2007 ask the UNPFII to support the following recommendations:

Health: We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people, to acknowledge that colonization had been the underpinning factor of

the inter-generational genocide committed in our lands and that due to the imposition of colonial infrastructure and lack of basic health care systems, our peoples are still dying at the hands of the white man.

Education: We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people, that these histories of Indigenous peoples be taught at all levels of mainstream governmental education.

We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people, that colonization has been instrumental to the loss of our traditional languages and that governments support Indigenous control over Indigenous language preservation and revitalization programs.

Culture: We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people, to support Indigenous peoples control over protection and monitoring initiatives over the exploitation and commercialization of Indigenous peoples traditional art forms and cultural practice, to support Indigenous peoples control over initiatives that encourage and promote traditional Indigenous knowledges.



Human Rights: We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people of the Pacific through militarization policies and other such atrocities, that they urge governments to support an end to the militarization in the Asia Pacific Region now.

Environment: We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people, to acknowledge that the exploitation of Mother Earth is intrinsically linked to the Indigenous peoples survival and that due to the rape and pillage of her resources, the Indigenous peoples are dying at the hands of the white man's policies and commodification attitudes towards Earth Mother.

Social and Economic Development: We the Indigenous youths of Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) urge the UNPFII to recommend that governments acknowledge the past and ongoing grievances done to Indigenous people, that these grievances have led to the degradation of Indigenous peoples communities social, spiritual, economic and all other types of development and that governments support Indigenous control over Indigenous social and economic developments and initiatives.

on Human Rights...

From page 46

(Bangladesh), Philippines (Cordillera, Mindanao).

That the Permanent Forum conduct a study on impact of Militarization on Indigenous Peoples and especially on youths and children with due identification and impacts of emergency or special laws, decrees and orders that facilitate full scale and free militarization and utilization of Indigenous Peoples lands, territories, and resources, and its multidimensional impacts on Indigenous Peoples.

Calls upon States to repeal all Emergency, extra legal, draconian laws, decrees and orders imposed on Indigenous Peoples Land.

APIYN calls upon UN Special Rapporteur and experts, primarily on SR on Indigenous Issues, Extra Judicial Execution, Torture, Violence Against Women to visit and assess some of these highly militarized areas.

Request the Permanent Forum to urgently take up "Militarization in Indigenous Peoples Land" as a theme of its session at the earliest to fully address the impending threats to the survival and dignity of Indigenous Peoples.

Delivered by APIYN Coordinator Jiten Yumnam to the UNPFII \ 14-25 May 2007 \ United Nations Headquarters, New York



Leadership Training & Indigenous Women Concerns

Photo by Khadya Lozano.



Summary of the Youth Forum

The Youth Forum has given us the opportunity to discuss wide-ranging issues directly and indirectly affecting the young people in the Asia Pacific region. The presentations of young leaders from nine countries and discussions that ensued during this forum offer us fresh perspectives, vibrant ideas and forceful actions to deal with these issues.

Decades of colonial rule of the region by various foreign powers and the continuing impositions of colonial policies by respective states have resulted mostly to conditions disadvantageous to local indigenous communities. Their communities have been denied of their own decision-making processes and their lands forcibly taken from them. Indigenous youth are clearly at a dilemma, confused, culturally and physically abused and discriminated upon in so many ways. It is encouraging however to see young leaders becoming aware of their conditions and pursuing progressive ideas thereby acting towards a hopeful recovery and growth of

their destroyed communities and resources. Today, a number of indigenous young people are re-learning to recognize the reality from the histories of their communities; the rich cultural traditions and sustainable economies that they still have today. This recognition reinforces the need to protect their indigenous traditions and pursue sustainable economic policies that should make the earth heal itself and its resources be used for social good and with clear intent to preserve it for the future generations.

However, this promising outlook is incessantly threatened by several unhelpful conditions such as commercialization of culture, continued mis-education, loss of language, sustained militarism of their localities, and unrelenting impositions of oppressive and deceptive state laws. In different degrees, Indigenous Peoples in the region are endangered with these ethnocide practices. For instance, the Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) of the Jumma in Indonesia is still under state-sponsored Ethnic Cleansing Policy and the non-Bengali indigenous communities have been suffering from gross violation of human rights in the CHT including a long series of massacres and genocide, violence, rape, loot, murder, arson, abduction and forcible conversion, sacrilege of religion and forcible occupation of Jummas' land and property. While there is a standing CHT Peace Accord in the area, it has not resulted to better conditions for the Jumma indigenous population of CHT.

While the UN Millennium Development Goals point



to education as necessary for human development, indigenous communities continue to suffer from lack of school buildings, materials and teachers effectively denying young people of quality and accessible education. State policies have not really been adopted towards the resolution of these problems even as greater budget allocation has been provided to military undertakings.

More troubling however is the loss of local indigenous language and traditional culture as young people seems to be more impressed with outside, bourgeoisie-decadent culture. The introduction of cable television and the ingress of unrestricted internet access due to globalization have been more harmful than helpful to indigenous communities with the local beliefs and customary traditions being undermined by advertisements and corrupt, sexist movies.

Aside from the abovementioned concerns, the Indigenous Peoples continue to be excluded from genuine political decision-making as they are forced by threats and intimidations, deceitful processes and political misrepresentation. Their communal resources are subjected to a renewed corporate assault by mining corporations and state-sponsored entities obviously wanting to profit from indigenous lands which has been taken care of and sheltered by indigenous sustainable economic practices.

Youth Responses

The worsening conditions of Indigenous Peoples in the region have not been met with silence. While some



people have opted to adopt a non-engaging stance, a greater number of the youth have come out in the public space to raise their concerns. They have formed organizations and continue to actively organize themselves as they continue to demand for the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights and greater access to political process and decision-making practices.

With persistent and decisive actions, the indigenous young people have learned to engage government officials and structures and made possible for governments to affirmatively support and fund the campaign for youth and children to learn their mother languages. State structures are now at least open to the possibility of introducing indigenous languages and socio-cultural concepts in their respective educational curriculum.

Youth organizations continue to actively pursue practices in order to educate themselves about those issues that affect them. They continue to come together through solidarity gatherings, educational workshops, skills training, and cultural exchange programs intending to strengthen their organizations and ranks.

Youth Condition

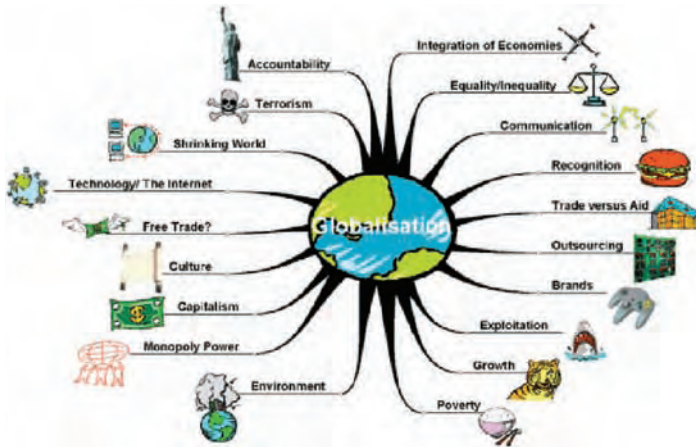
As Indigenous Peoples resist colonialist, unsustainable and discriminatory policies of states abetted by imperialist globalization, the State and its imperialist allies continue to reject calls for respect and recognition of their rights. Indigenous peoples call for recognition of their right to Self-determination, for respect for their culture and for life with dignity and sustainable development are rejected with brute force and repression in the pretext of "defending national sovereignty" and "national security". States and its allies continue to introduce inconsistent policies – including large scale development projects – which are opposed by the Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous peoples struggling for right to self determination in CHT of Bangladesh; Cordilleran of the Philippines; Shan, Karen, Chin and Mon areas of Burma; West Papua in Indonesia; North Eastern states of India; and Nepal has experienced some of the most brutal



Photos by Elton Jun Veloria.

From the presentation of AMAN (Indonesia).



form of state militarism, state terrorism and suppression and has become some of the most militarized areas in the entire world. In the Philippines, the Lumad people find themselves victims of delayed peace negotiations between the government and Moro forces.

Indigenous youth are fighting for the right to an accessible education because public education service for the indigenous communities is insufficient. There are not enough schools, materials and teachers. And due to lack of government support, indigenous youth and children need to work and help their families for their families' necessities. And they face massive poverty.

Given these circumstances, the indigenous youth themselves become more conscious and aware of what is happening around them. This gives them the idea of doing actions which they think will help them change their present situations.

Youth Voice

In Asia Pacific, different organizations with common aims were already been formed by the indigenous youth.

The Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association's (CIYA) purpose is to gather indigenous students to share ideas/information, to develop solidarity and also to raise awareness of the situation of Indigenous Peoples to the public.

CIYA promotes and preserves culture, language, identity of Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia; protects the natural resources rights of Indigenous Peoples; supports young Indigenous People in finding their way in mainstream society and fight discrimination; and builds capacity among Indigenous People to participate in policy processes on the local and national level.

In Indonesia, the Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara's (AMAN) Special Directorate works with the empowerment and strengthening of indigenous youth. It unifies existing Indigenous Youth Groups in communities and enables to sound youth initiatives in all levels.

The Special Directorate identifies the existing IP groups to be organize in more massive movement; revitalizes and empowers indigenous youth roles in the community; launches capacity building through Cadre Education; and reforms youth's creative institutions/organizations.



Photos by Khadya Lozano.

Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network Plan of Action



As children of our indigenous mothers and fathers, the heirs of traditional knowledge, language and culture, that we commit to uphold, promote and defend.

As the new bearers of a glorious and steadfast struggle for our inherent rights to land, self-determination, patrimony and food sovereignty, conservation of a free, healthy ecosystem, and a society cognizant and respectful of our indigenous ways of life.

As the founding leaders and members of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network aiming to foster unity and solidarity among indigenous youths and their advocates across the region and the world.

We shall commit to build the capacity of the youth in our respective tribes and communities by arousing, organizing and mobilizing them to the causes that we continue to carry as peoples.

We shall facilitate exchange of ideas, analysis and experiences to further enrich the struggles and campaigns that we shall raise to the regional and international levels.

We shall maximize various fronts and arenas such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and other UN agencies, international conventions and covenants to further advance the causes of the indigenous youths and peoples in our region.

We shall establish and fortify relations with other organizations, institutions and actors from the local, national to the regional and international levels that have objectives and goals similar to ours.

Today, we come together for our fellow youths and peoples, our cultures and our lands.

Fight for our lands, our lives and our people! Uphold and advance our rights to self-determination and indigenous ways of life! Long live international solidarity of indigenous youths and peoples!

Women and Gender Orientation Course

As part of the young leaders training, the “Women and Gender Orientation Course” was included in the module within the context that there is still a big need for indigenous communities and the general society to address the still evident discrimination on women and children in the actual participation in socio-economic and political arena. It was basically an orientation course to set the correct attitude of indigenous young leaders towards women’s liberation and empowerment.

The men participants of the conference were also part of the discussion with the objective to create an environment of mutual learning and respect and to promote the sensitivity on gender of the network as an organization. They are actually the main target of our education work on women and gender issues including Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgenders (LGBT) because we cannot deny the fact that in most IP communities, there is a prevailing culture of young and women discrimination in terms of participation in processes.

Internally, in APIYN as an organization, this course is designed to set the direction of APIYN as a gender conscious organization to take on some leadership actions on women issues. This is an initial attempt to really address this concern. We look forward to a vibrant women organizing among young women in Asia and Pacific in the next three years.



Indigenous Women in Asia



The mere fact
that they are women
is an aggravating factor
that increases the degree of
oppression and exploitation
they experience as
indigenous peoples.

Understanding the particular oppression of women

Women compose half of the population. They cut across sectors and classes. The lower their class, the higher is the degree of their oppression and exploitation. They share the oppression and exploitation that their male counterpart suffers, but theirs is aggravated by the culture of feudal-patriarchy and western-decadent culture. A true liberative women's movement is not anti-male. It is against oppressive power structures and their institutions which perpetuate patriarchal and decadent values against women.

A large number of indigenous women are engaged in agriculture. In Asia, indigenous women compose approximately 50% of the total indigenous population or 75 million. They play a primary role in Agricultural production; and they are considered the main food producers in communities.

60-70% of indigenous women are small owner tillers in subsistence food production. They continue to observe sustainable agricultural practices and play roles to conserve their resources. For example, Cordillera women play an important role in the first stage of production cycle by selecting the best seeds for the next planting crop to ensure that traditional crop varieties will not die.

Women also apply traditional cooperative practices and exchange of labor as a system of mutual support. They also give signals for holding rituals that regulate agricultural cycle. Women are most often relied upon to feed her family. When the family's harvest is not enough, women find ways and means to feed the whole family. Thus, farming by indigenous women is augmented by other productive activities such as foraging, fishing and handicrafts like weaving, knitting, basketry and embroidery.

Indigenous women are drawn to engage in daily wage, odd jobs and even manual labor to augment the family's income as a means to make ends meet.

Disadvantaged status of indigenous women

As indigenous people, women often experience discrimination and racism from the dominant culture or nation state. As farmers or laborers, they often experience exploitation at the hands of landlords or employers.

The mere fact that they are women is an aggravating factor that increases the degree of oppression and

exploitation they experience as indigenous people. Indigenous women live within traditional and largely patriarchal societies which dictate that women are subordinate to men. From birth, women are considered inferior to males. A woman is usually viewed as being there to bear children, to serve her father, her brothers and later her husband and her family, including her in-laws in many cases.

Indigenous women do not have property rights, or if they do, they cannot inherit these rights. They are often excluded from roles of political leadership, both in traditional and state structures; much less they are involved in actual decision-making which is usually done in structures or institutions dominated by men such as the traditional village council. Women are usually not allowed to hold positions of leadership at the village level. Even in matters of marriage and divorce, tribal customary laws are usually unfavorable to women.

Indigenous women and globalization

The onset of globalization has had the effect of further marginalizing indigenous people and worsening the disadvantaged position of indigenous women. Impacts of globalization on indigenous women are profound and far-reaching, disrupting the important roles they play as productive forces in society, as child-bearers, as nurturers of the family, and as vital members of indigenous communities.

Among the impacts of globalization on indigenous women in Asia are the following:

1. Land dispossession and development aggression which cause land conversion, displacement, loss of control and ownership of land, and non-recognition of land rights of indigenous women.
2. Marginalization of indigenous women from subsistence food production. Globalization has had the effect of breaking down subsistence economies and rural agriculture through their integration into the cash economy and the global market.
3. Outmigration of indigenous women to urban centers or across borders; unemployment, underemployment and discrimination and exploitation in the labor sector.
4. Poverty and loss of food security which is a prime concern of indigenous women.
5. Sex-trafficking of indigenous women and forced prostitution leading to high incidence of HIV/AIDS and sexually-transmitted diseases.
6. Violence against indigenous women and human rights violations. The common response of governments and corporations to opposition of indigenous peoples is the use of military might.
7. Environmental destruction and degradation leading to loss of livelihood sources of indigenous women.
8. Health problems brought on by destructive industries and poor health and medical services.
9. Children's problems such as child labor,

Photo taken from the presentation.



malnutrition, lack of education and neglect are other areas of particular concern to indigenous women as mothers.

10. Heavier burden for women in family and home care. Loss of land, water, forests due to mining, logging, plantations or the declaration of parks and forest reserves make it more difficult for women to maintain the needed water and fuel supply for domestic use.

11. Loss of traditional indigenous culture and knowledge, and weakening of family cohesion and community solidarity and commercialization of indigenous culture.

The role of indigenous women in struggles to defend land, life and self-determination

As individuals, as organizations, as communities or as people, the indigenous women have proven their strength in the face of threat and adversity. Their responses show that they are not passive victims of oppression but militant actors in the indigenous peoples' struggles for survival. Indigenous women have formed organizations and networks; they have initiated community-based projects to respond to their basic needs; they have developed education programs to combat illiteracy; they have initiated capability-building activities and awareness-raising activities; and they have been in the forefront of numerous actions of indigenous peoples to defend their land, lives and livelihood.



Formation of regional and national networks

Regionally, indigenous women in Asia have come together in a network called the Asian Indigenous Women's Network after the first Asian Indigenous Women's Conference. This network could be a focal point for solidarity links and mutual support among the different indigenous women in Asia. There is also an Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (Task Force on Rural Indigenous Women). BAI in the Philippines; AMAN in Indonesia; Northeast India, Thailand and Nepal are some established national networks.

Among our recommendations for which we solicit the support of one and all are:

- Community-based education and training programs of indigenous women to build up their social awareness and capabilities;
- Organizational support for indigenous women's organizations, alliances and networks;
- Material, financial and political support for indigenous women's struggles to defend their land, lives and livelihood from destruction;
- Education program and information campaign to promote gender equality for indigenous women;
- Strengthening of participation of indigenous women in community and political affairs and local governance;
- Community-based projects to ease the burden of women in production as well as in their nurturing role in the family, household and community;
- Solidarity links, information exchange, exchange visits and networking among indigenous women's organizations;
- Setting-up of assistance and resource centers on indigenous women's concerns; and
- Campaigns and advocacy to defend and assert indigenous women's rights in the face of the damaging impacts of globalization.

A common day of action could be an opportunity to highlight the situation and struggles of indigenous women in Asia by holding simultaneous activities around the region.

A woman's place is in the struggle. Her wider family is the movement.



Key Issues on Women's Rights and Our Plan of Action

In the open forum, the following came out as key issues:

- Development aggression is always coupled with militarization. This in turn has high impact on the violations of women's rights. More often, they are subjected to rape, physical abuse, prostitution, abandoned young wives with children
- During military operations, communities are driven into evacuation centers, women and their children are often left there to suffer inadequate and/or poor services like lack of food, lack of sanitary amenities like toilets, medical attention and the like.
- Development aggression results to forced migration and trafficking. The destruction of our natural abode means the dislocation of our communities resulting to the bastardization and dis-integration of our ways of life. The immediate aftermath of this is the devastation of young indigenous people especially young women who will lose their identities and culture. They are pushed to the difficulties of heavily urban life. The indigenous young people, either strive to maintain IP morals and beliefs or be subsumed to the prevalent bourgeoisie-decadent culture. Many of our indigenous young sisters are already trapped in these very difficult situations. As a result, there are recorded cases of drug addictions, suicide, prostitution and early pregnancies, drunkenness, petty crimes and

other anti-social practices. Many also tried to find their lack abroad but end up in the hands of illegal recruiters and traffickers. The ultimate result of this further poverty incidence among IP communities.

Particularly, the participants forwarded the following actions for APIYN and its memberships to take on as our program of action in this field.

1. Actively increase the number of young individual women and organizational members in 3 years.
2. Consciously promote the active participation of young women in the activities of the network.
3. Engage the network in an internal education and awareness campaign on the issues of young women
4. To come up with a leadership training program for young women leaders
5. To improve the training module on women and gender orientation course to become part of the comprehensive training material for the youth.
6. To come up with a research plan on the impact of militarization on young women and children in IP communities
7. To organize a workshop on Militarization and its impact on young women and children
8. To conduct a workshop on Migration/Trafficking and young women.

Unity Declaration

of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network
Founding Conference cum Preparatory
Meeting for UNPFII07—Leadership Training



Having met in Baguio City, Cordillera, Philippines, on April 18- 22, we 145 indigenous youth participants of the Founding Conference of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network Founding Conference cum Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) 2007—Leadership Training, with representations from Burma, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Russia, Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Manipur, Nagaland, India, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan, Pakistan, Nepal, Chittagong Hill Tract (Bangladesh), collectively express our deep appreciation to the Cordillera People and the Cordillera Youth Center for hosting this Founding Conference of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network cum Preparatory Meeting for the UNPFII 2007—Leadership Training.

We affirm the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2006 that lays emphasis on the recognition of inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples, the fundamental being—the right to Self-Determination;

We reaffirm the declarations and the commitments of Indigenous Youth in the First International Indigenous Youth Conference (IYC) in 2002 at Baguio City, Philippines and in the Second IYC in 2005 at Coast Salish Territory, B.C, Canada as we join all struggles to stop the destructive impacts of imperialist globalization

and militarism on our land and way of life;

We affirm that Globalization reinforces colonization, the commodification of our ways of life and Mother Earth, weakens our societies, undermines cultural identity and autonomy as nation-states with colonial-imposed laws and military might that consolidates with imperialist agendas, worsens state-instigated wars and violence against Indigenous Peoples and Youths;

While expressing our appreciation to UN for coming up with the UN Second Decade on Indigenous Peoples, UNPFII and other initiatives for advancing Indigenous Peoples rights, we express our concern that the existence of Working Group on Indigenous Populations had been terminated;

While asserting our role as present and future leaders, to defend our mother earth that gives life to us, to participate in decision making as youths, we express our concern on the continued limited participation of Indigenous youth, limited integration of our perspectives and experiences in decision making processes that shall have impact on our survival;

We affirm that establishing solidarity and unity among Indigenous Youth is tantamount to strengthening Indigenous Peoples' movements concerned with regaining our rights, land and life as well as the pioneering venue for resisting imperialist globalization, destructive and, unsustainable developmental aggression and increased militarization.

Resolutions

We unitedly adopt and declare the following resolutions to all States and members of the UNPFII for due consideration and action:

That the Permanent Forum calls upon member states to recognize the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples, the fundamental right to Self Determination, as provisioned by Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and by other UN Human Rights standards;

To call upon the UN General Assembly to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in its upcoming session in 2007, in its original text as adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2006;

To call upon the UN Human Rights Council to establish an appropriate subsidiary body of the Council on Indigenous Peoples in fulfillment of all areas of its mandate in consultation with Indigenous Peoples and to ensure effective Indigenous peoples and youth participation in decision making processes;

To call upon other UN agencies to support and ensure the full and active participation of Indigenous youth at the Permanent Forum and all United Nations activities and to recommend to UN inter-agencies and foundations for greater equitable access to financial and other aids in enhancing our rights as Indigenous youth;

To urge upon states of UN to recognize the “Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples before introducing any developmental policies and projects with their imperialist allies, including International Financial Institutions (World Bank, Asian Development Bank etc.) and to conduct social, cultural, environmental, human rights and other impact assessments along with FPIC before introducing any projects;

To call upon Permanent Forum to call upon member states of the United Nations to act on the recommendations of the UN Human Rights Council to the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations 2006 that discussed Militarization in Indigenous Peoples Areas and to initiate a UN study on the underlying causes and impact of militarization on Indigenous Peoples Areas, and to initiate a UN study on underlying causes and impact of militarization on Indigenous Peoples, to end all emergency legislations and to call for complete and immediate

withdrawal of all military forces occupying Indigenous Peoples territories;

We recommend that the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues prioritize, among others, the situations and challenges of Indigenous Youths around the world; and

We call upon Indigenous organizations and leaders to support meaningful youth activities and participation in all decision-making processes affecting our Indigenous ways of life.

Plan of Action

As children of our indigenous mothers and fathers, we commit to uphold, promote and defend our traditional knowledge, language and cultural heritage.

As the new bearers of a glorious and steadfast struggle for our inherent rights to land, self-determination, patrimony and food sovereignty, conservation of a free, healthy ecosystem, and a society cognizant and respectful of our indigenous ways of life.

As the founding leaders and members of the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network aiming to foster unity and solidarity among indigenous youths and their advocates across the region and the world.

We shall commit to build the capacity of the youth in our respective tribes and communities by arousing, organizing and mobilizing them to the causes that we continue to carry as peoples.

We shall facilitate exchange of ideas, analysis and experiences to further enrich the struggles and campaigns that we shall raise to the regional and international levels.

We shall maximize various fronts and arenas such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and other UN agencies, international conventions and covenants to further advance the causes of the indigenous youths and peoples in our region.

We shall establish and fortify relations with other organizations, institutions and actors from the local, national to the regional and international levels that have objectives and goals similar to ours.

Today, we come together for our fellow youths and peoples, our cultures and our lands.

Fight for our lands, our lives and our people! Uphold and advance our rights to self-determination and indigenous ways of life! Long live international solidarity of indigenous youths and peoples!



Integration with Cordillera IPs

Cordillera Day 2007: Assert people's rights! Advance the politics of change!

The last phase of the Conference is a Youth Camp-out and participation in Cordillera Day 07. Along with the other activities envisioned to result in the capability building and empowerment of Indigenous Youth, the Cordillera Day celebration would allow cultural exchange among host indigenous youth and participating indigenous youth from other parts of the Asia and the Pacific. This camp-out would also allow mutual sharing, learning and solidarity.

After the five-day conference, the delegates attended the two-day camp out during the Cordillera Day that was held from April 23-24 at the grounds of Melvin Jones in Baguio City. Though tired from the previous days' discussions, workshops, planning and cultural exchanges, the young participants still exuded energy as they energetically danced and sang during the opening concert. Both delegates and volunteers stayed all through the night as they danced with the music ranging from indigenous, alternative, reggae to rock performed by the invited national and local bands in the country.

Even if most of the delegates were still sleepy and with hang-over on the last night's event, they promptly prepared for the second day's event which began with a march down to the major streets of Baguio City. Dressed in their traditional clothes, the delegates together with the other hundreds of participants of the Cordillera Day coming from the various sectors, provinces and other international visitors, vigorously



expressed their sentiments on Indigenous Peoples concerns through chants even using their native dialects.

The march proceeded to the Melvin Jones grandstand to carry on the day's activities. Guest speakers were invited for the event such as the infamous Hon. Satur Ocampo, Hon. Lisa Masa and many more from the different sectors that include the youth, women, peasants and elders. The speakers from the sectors also gave a brief but comprehensive picture on



This photo from May.

their situations. And this was even more highlighted through the provincial cultural presentations.

Generally, Cordillera Day served as another learning and new experience for the delegates as they attentively listened to inspiring messages, witnessed some Indigenous rituals performed by the elders and tirelessly participated in the community dances. For sure, Cordillera Day will be long remembered by the delegates and the celebration would be a valuable

learning experience and cultural enrichment from direct exposure and integration with host indigenous communities. Experiences learned from this event will surely be shared when participants returned to their respective countries.

Bonding Moments!

Community Integration in Mankayan, Benguet



A very tiresome five-day APIYN Conference has gone. Plus, the two-day Cordillera Day celebration has passed. One event to go—the worthwhile community integration!

Since the preparation of the APIYN conference, I, and the whole secretariat, have been so busy on the needs of the conference. Personally, this is my first time to be involved in a very big event. Being part of the secretariat of this conference is very hard. But when I saw the result of my work, it is so heart-warming.

I, together with foreign and local delegates who stayed after the conference, went to Mankayan in Benguet for the much-awaited community integration. Before, I was not sure if I am going with the delegates to the community because I thought I will be sick. Imagine a very tight schedule for the conference has gone and I'm still alive!

Mankayan is a third-class municipality of Benguet Province in the Cordillera Region. This place is the home of indigenous peasants. Mine workers live here where the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company (LCMC) is located. LCMC is one of the biggest mining companies that operate in the Philippines. This mining firm caused the destruction of natural resources in Mankayan. It wreaked havoc on the lives and lands of communities living along the river banks of Benguet, Abra and Ilocos Sur provinces.

I have witnessed the strike of the workers in Lepanto

during my previous visits here. Now that I came back with new friends and comrades, new sharing and international solidarity has happened.

The APIYN delegates who visited the community were divided into two groups. The first group visited the mining site where they saw the environment destroyed by the mining operations. Delegates were able to hear experiences of the indigenous people affected by the large-scale mining. Exchange of thoughts and education of one other were accomplished.

On the other hand, I, with the other group, went to the vegetable and fruit plantations of the women in the community. I, together with delegates, was able to see how women in this community work for their family's needs. During the visit to the plantations, some of the delegates themselves tried to tilt the land as how the women do it. Some also helped in harvesting some of the vegetables.

During the nights, we had the informal discussions with the community people. We even had cultural presentations prepared for them.

I and the delegates were able to know each other. Well, of course I and the delegates already know each other in the past days, but this community integration bonded us more.

Hooray for the delegates who were able to stay for another couple of days for the community integration! Long live international solidarity!

Photos from May.



Articles by Jirra Lulla Harvey \ Reprinted from Koori Mail, Edition 403, June 20, 2007

Passion, dedication born out of extreme need

I recently arrived home from Baguio City, a progressive university town in the Philippines. I keep telling everyone I had a great trip because I did have great experiences; I climbed mango trees, drank home-made rice wine and glimpsed terrace gardens atop breathtaking mountains.

I met great people, and I learned to see beyond our cultural differences. But the truth is, my trip to Asia-Pacific Indigenous Youth Network Forum wasn't great – it was overwhelming.

As a Koori, I grew up knowing the stories hidden from mainstream Australia, of our ancestors who died fighting for the rights we enjoy now.

And while I knew indigenous people across the globe had suffered similar injustices, I didn't realise such violence was continuing today in our neighboring nations.

I was sitting amongst a sea of candles when the reality of the Filipino struggle hit me. The faces of dead political activists were flashing onto a large screen.

Face after face after face. Three-hundred-and-eighty-five progressive leaders have been killed in the Philippines in the past six years—and 385 of the killings remain unresolved.

It was Cordillera Day, a local version of NAIDOC. We had marched, chanting through the

streets of Baguio, enjoyed local performances and listened to impassioned speeches.

It was now time to honour the men and women who lost their lives fighting for the most basic of human rights, rights to traditional lands, running water and cultural integrity. We each lit a candle in their memory and watched quietly as their faces continued to flash across the screen.

A couple of hours earlier, our Government had issued a warning for Australian tourists to avoid the Philippines due to political unrest.

Hearing that news, I briefly felt the kind of fear the Cordillera must now be accustomed to.

I briefly felt the kind of fear the Cordillera must now be accustomed to.

The APIYN Forum brought together more than 100 representatives to network, build skills and raise awareness. It was a forum I feel privilege to have been involved with, particularly as we approached the 40th anniversary of the 1987 Referendum.

In the Philippines, I witnessed the kind of passion and dedication born out of extreme need, the kind that our civil rights leaders must have possessed.

The conference took a group of volunteers three years to organise.

When I asked Keidy Magtoto Transfiguracion, head of the APIYN Secretariat, how many hours a week she volunteered, she replied: "When you really want what you are fighting for, you don't consider it work. It's a pleasure, a pleasure to serve and be part of serving the people in general."

I imagine it was a similar attitude that brought about overwhelming outcome in the historic 1987 Referendum 40 years ago.

In Baguio I met indigenous people from many nations – some are still not considered citizens of their own country, some have seen their leaders publicly murdered, some have seen family members forced into child prostitution due to extreme economic disadvantage.

But not many have access to the kind of resources I do. Not many could walk into a Koori health service, gain scholarship, or dream of a government job. It was not so long ago that my aunties and uncles were fighting the very same war that they are today.

Because of the Cordillera spirit and the inspirational young people I met, I will honour the Referendum anniversary with a different perspective. Because I was not listening to tortured stories that could be forgotten once I returned home. I was listening, first-hand, to the stories of my ancestors. And that was overwhelming.

Asia Pacific IP youth forge unity

BAGUIO CITY (Apr. 26) — It is the first time for young natives of the Asia Pacific Region to be united for a common cause in strengthening and advancing their struggles.

Indigenous youth of the region are now united in calling for the right to land and self-determination with the founding conference of Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN).

Held last April 18-22, the conference gathered around 100 youths from 15 different countries to prepare for their participation in different United Nations bodies and to enhance their leadership skills for struggles within their countries.

They said they would strengthen relations between organizations and institutions to make their voices heard despite their young age. The youth has long been ignored in decision-making in many countries.

Youth representatives from Burma, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Russia, Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Manipur, Nagaland, India, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Japan, Pakistan and Nepal all



approved the APIYN declaration stating their position on issues of Indigenous Peoples (IP).

“Today, we come together for our fellow youths and peoples, our cultures and our lands,” the declaration reads. “We come together not only as victims, but as warriors; not only as witnesses, but as actors.”

Partly sponsored by Global Forest Coalition (GFC), the conference included discussions on the underlying causes of forest degradation and on the Convention on Bio-Diversity. Sandy Gauntlett of GFC stressed that protection of the environment goes hand in hand with the conservation of indigenous knowledge and the protection of human rights.

In most of the indigenous communities in Asia Pacific, development aggression is a continuing problem. Large-scale mining, construction of dams, logging, oil plantations, tourism, militarization and urban development are just some of the forms of exploitation of IPs. As a result, they lose their lands to big corporations, lose their cultural heritage and sometimes, their lives, all in the name of profit. These forms of aggression persist even in countries which signed the Convention on Bio-Diversity.

In response, APIYN promises to resist abuse. “We shall commit to build the capacity of the youth in

our respective tribes and communities by arousing, organizing and mobilizing them to the causes that we continue to carry as peoples,” the youth group said.

They were also determined to maximize the UN to further advance the causes of indigenous youth. “We unitedly declare that the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues call upon member states to recognize the inherent rights of IPs and the right to self-determination.”

APIYN is a product of the International Indigenous Youth Conference which started in 2002. The IYCN was an initiative of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance-Youth Commission, now Cordillera Youth Center.

In the solidarity night which showcased their cultural rituals and presentations, partners and delegates received a token which bears a quote from Rafael Markus “Makoy” Bangit, among the IP victims of political killings in the Philippines under the Gloria Arroyo Regime: “Until our right to self-determination is recognized, the struggle will not end. If it means the sacrifice of our lives to achieve freedom, then so be it!”

Delegates of the conference also participated the celebration of Cordillera Day. #



Fighting in Solidarity

THE ASIA PACIFIC Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) Forum held in the Philippines brought together delegates from diverse nations to discuss the challenges of globalisation and its impact on indigenous peoples around the world.

The APIYN evolved from an International Indigenous Youth Conference in 2002. Delegates established that networks should be formed in global regions and the impassioned grassroots Filipino movement has since led the way for the Asia-Pacific.

The APIYN is run by full-time youth activists, with the Cordillera

Youth Centre as its basic backbone. Cordillera, the local name for indigenous people, translates to people of the mountain; it was given to the locals by the Spanish occupants in an attempt to divide indigenous communities into warring regions.

While many members, including APIYN Secretariat head Keidy Transfiguracion, are non-indigenous, they share one view.

"I want to be involved in the Cordillera people's fight for their rights because it is not just their fight, but the fight of all the people all over the world," said Ms. Transfiguracion

"I know that the Filipino peoples' struggle is in solidarity with the struggle of the whole world against globalisation and foreign domination," said Secretariat member Anjo Rey Cerdeña.

"As a full-time youth activist, I work all day, all week, away from my family. It is a worthwhile sacrifice."

The APIYN has escaped police harassment because it is newly established and not yet considered as "anti-government". For the individual youth organisations, this is a different story.

"We are encountering harassment, not only from police but also from soldiers. But we don't see it as hindrance to what we are doing. Instead, it gives us more strength to fight and be involved for the achievement of our goals," said Ms. Transfiguracion.

For more information on future forums or to become a member organisation, visit: www.apiyn.org.



APIYN Founding Conference

My precious achievements from the APIYN Conference



For the first time in my life, I got the opportunity to meet a number of considerable sole indigenous youth who are from diverse cultural background of the region and actively involved with the struggle of defending and upholding the rights of our own communities as well as of the world's IP in the APIYN Conference 2007. Eventually it has offered me a very significant and wide ranged opportunity to enhance and strengthen my networking which has become very useful and important for my work and commitment.

During the conference, through bilateral discussions and different presentations on diverse issues and country situation by the participants, I learned many precious concerns pertaining to IPs. These helped me to have a better in-depth understanding of IP issues in local, national and global levels. I was then able to formulate, in particular and general sense, the awareness I learned about global IP common and diverse problems.

I have learned a rough idea about how to convene an international program and how to make successful program by solely the youth themselves and without direct presence or monitoring of the elders.

The most exciting and significant event was to be selected as one of the coordinators of APIYN. In fact, it has been one of the most important and remarkable events of my life. It is the first time that I have shouldered responsibilities at the

international level. I felt a mixed feeling of wondering, excitement, responsibility and determination to confront new and wide challenges.

In general, the entire management of the conference deserves to be extolled. From receiving at the airport to guiding, timely noticing and instructing the activities, even waking us in the morning and so on were quite excellent. Accommodation was satisfactory. The only difficulty I found was that the power supply plug in my room was out of order which hampered my work because I can't use my laptop; and I feel that there could be better toilets than those in AKAP Centre because it is directly related with the question of health. The food was marvelous. The conference appeared to be doubtlessly well planned.

Women Power

In every event, I found every person concerned to be very friendly, cooperative, sincere and dedicated. I was very impressed of the efficiency and activeness of the secretariat and volunteers. Notably, the most impressive aspect I saw was the majority and bright presence of the female activists and volunteers compared with my country. Another curious observation was that there was no elder in such an international conference! It proved that youth are capable of convening even an international conference independently and successfully.

New Experiences

The concert for the children of victims of political killings in Philippines was a complete new experience. Usually people are accustomed to any music concert to be a means of mere entertainment or recreation. Therefore the concert was exceptional. It manifested that concert can be used as a weapon of struggle.

Joining the Cordillera Day was also a quite new experience. I felt very thrilled to join for the first time in an international procession; Live and animate procession, slogans like "the people united, will never be defeated, long live international solidarity"; and the presentations were very magnetic.

The community integration became very useful to me. I was really eager to see and learn the practical condition of the workers and peasants. It is the first time in my life that I visited a mining site. Beside the visit, I have had first hand lesson on local IPs and their problem like pesticide, cash crop production, environmental degradation-especially watercourse contamination, food insecurity, lack of sufficient health care and educational facilities, threat of land grabbing etc and their firm determination to confront the challenges and strategy of struggle.

Virtually, after joining the conference, I have discovered that I was more inspired, active and confident; I found that I am striving to find out my weaknesses with regards to my duties and responsibilities and to overcome it; I have accelerated networking and I am learning with full enthusiasm. Therefore, the conference has truly become a significant turning point in my work and commitment.

Message to the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network



The Cordillera Peoples Alliance extends its warmest greetings of solidarity and congratulations to the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (APIYN) on the occasion of its Founding Conference on April 18-22, 2007, in the City of Baguio, Philippines.

From the First International Indigenous Youth Conference (IIYC) in 2002, convened by the Cordillera Peoples Alliance Youth Commission—now the Cordillera Youth Center, the APIYN has contributed in advancing the international indigenous peoples' movement, and the indigenous youth in particular. It has participated in the advocacy and campaigns for the defense of land, life and resources, and for our right to self determination. It has participated in international events and the United Nations in putting forth the concerns not only of the indigenous youth but the indigenous peoples of the world. In its network in Asia and the Pacific, it has managed to elevate the role of the indigenous youth in terms of responding to the issues in their communities as they consolidate their ranks in facing greater challenges ahead.

The APIYN's Founding Conference takes place at a time where the struggles of indigenous peoples intensify globally. The onslaught of imperialist globalization continues to take its toll especially in our ancestral territories, which are the very base of profit extraction and plunder of big corporations at the expense of our existence and life. Ethnocide besets us more than ever with the continued entry and operation of destructive projects such as large-scale mining and megadams in our ancestral lands. Development aggression is further worsened with the intensity of militarization and military terrorism of our communities, leading to massive

human rights violations.

In the Philippines, our indigenous leaders who have done no harm but fight for substantial change in government and assert our right to self determination, were felled by bullets of the State in a national policy of political killings. In the Cordillera, we have lost our most dedicated leaders and advocates of indigenous peoples' rights like Rafael Markus Bangit and Alyce Omengan Claver. One hundred 130 indigenous persons were slain in the last six and a half months under the Arroyo government, where 45 Cordillera indigenous persons. Under this government the assertion of indigenous peoples' rights and basic human rights is deemed as acts of terrorism. Our indigenous socio-political institutions and processes are not recognized, as our culture is bastardized and commercialized, and our basic rights neglected.

We know and believe that similarly, the same issues persist in other indigenous communities worldwide, albeit in varying degrees, and levels of response from those affected. While we expect the situation to worsen, we must also brace ourselves for greater struggles for our inherent, collective rights.

We join you in pursuing the APIYN's resolutions addressed to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, other concerned bodies and avenues, as noted in your Declaration of Unity during the Founding Conference, as you continue to raise awareness and participation of the indigenous youth in the issues that confront us.

Assert indigenous peoples' right to self determination! Long live international solidarity! Long live the indigenous youth and APIYN!

CORDILLERA PEOPLES ALLIANCE
Baguio City, Philippines

sponsors

Primates World Relief and Development Fund an agency for sustainable development, relief, refugees, and global justice was established by General Synod. The name of the organization was officially changed to PWRDF as it came to see that deeper long-term development were strongly connected to most of the suffering caused by natural or human provoked disasters.

UN Voluntary Fund was established in 1985 with the purpose of assisting indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the deliberations concerning Indigenous Peoples' issues during UN meetings.

Founded in the late 19th century, the **United Church of Canada** and its global partners are called to work together in God's mission for wholeness of life. It is committed to living out the goals of ecumenical decade of the churches solidarity with women in church and society and is engaged in a process of looking at gender and justice and its relationship to partnership.

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development works as an independent, non-government, non-profit organization, committed to enabling women to use law as an instrument of social changes for equality, justice and development.

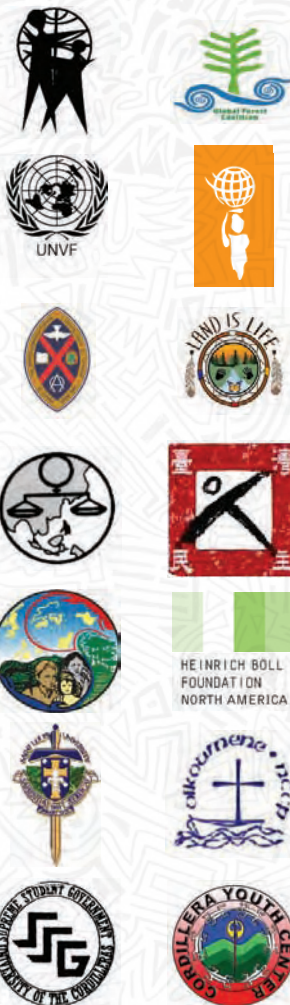
The **Indigenous Peoples Network for Change** is a three-year project aimed at responding to the need for Indigenous Peoples to effectively participate in international processes that have direct impact on their daily lives, with particular attention to the Global Environment Facility and Convention on Biological Diversity meetings and related events.

Tebtebba Foundation is the Indigenous Peoples' International Center for Policy Research and Education. It is a non-government organization in special consultative status with the economic and social council of the UN.

Saint Louis University's **Supreme Student Council**

University of the Cordilleras' **Supreme Student Government**

Cordillera Youth Center



Global Forest Coalition was established at the last session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests in 2000. Its mission is to reduce poverty amongst, and avoid impoverishment of IPs and other forest-dependent peoples by advocating the rights of these peoples as a basis for forest policy and addressing the direct and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

The **Global Fund for Women** is an international network committed to a world of equality and social justice. It works with organizations around the world that address human rights issues such as gender-based violence, economic and environmental justice, health and sexual reproductive rights, civic and political participation and education. It fosters a social change philanthropy.

Land is Life envisions self-determination for Indigenous Peoples. Its mission is to support indigenous communities in efforts to secure rights at the local and national levels, and move forward a process of dialogue and strategic action that would bring about international legal recognition of IP's rights to self-determination and collective ownership of lands, resources and knowledge.

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy is a newly established, non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of democracy and human rights in Taiwan and abroad. TFD aims to establish solid relationships with like-minded democracy assistance foundations elsewhere through exchanges and cooperation between Taiwan and other countries.

Heinrich Böll Foundation was named after Heinrich Böll, one of Germany's most important authors. He was awarded a Nobel Prize for Literature due to his passionate advocacy for persecuted writers, civil rights activists and political prisoners. The foundation is a non-profit organization striving to promote democracy, civil society, human rights, international understanding and healthy environment internationally.

National Council of Churches in the Philippines is a fellowship of churches and organizations that desire the fostering of unity among Christians to honor God more worthily and to witness to Him more effectively among all persons.

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Good Taste Restaurant

Sizzling Plate

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About APIYN

The Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network is an alliance of indigenous youth organizations and individuals in the Asia Pacific Region. It aims to promote and defend the rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the Indigenous Youth. It intends to provide a system of exchange of knowledge that will contribute to the development of indigenous communities and their struggles.

APIYN traces its roots to the first International Indigenous Youth Conference (IIYC). Increasing globalization challenges on indigenous peoples at home and around the world pushed the Cordillera youth to take greater responsibility and action.

In response, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance-Youth Commission (CPA-YC) convened the first IIYC in 2002. It gathered 83 delegates from 19 countries in Asia, Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America who forged a common voice to address the challenges of globalization. The international gathering developed and strengthened solidarity relations among indigenous youth representatives from around the world. It recognized the need to empower the indigenous youth so that they can play a bigger positive role in addressing the problems faced by indigenous peoples worldwide.

It was resolved that the delegates should work towards the establishment of an indigenous youth network in their respective global regions, while strengthening their local organizations. The Asia Pacific delegates to the IIYC held a caucus-workshop where they agreed to build the Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network. Since then, the Cordillera Youth Center (formerly CPA-YC) has worked as secretariat.

