**Statement by the Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

**High-level Event Commemorating the Tenth Anniversary of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples**

**Wednesday, 17 April 2024, 3-6 PM, General Assembly Hall, UNHQ, New York**

* **Distinguished President of the General Assembly,**
* **His Excellency, Vice-president of the Plurinational State of Bolivia,**
* **Members of the Permanent Forum, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Special Rapporteur,**
* **Distinguished Representatives of Member States,**
* **Ladies and Gentlemen, Sisters and Brothers,**

First, I would like to acknowledge the ONONDAGA Nation, the original inhabitants of this land, and thank them for hosting us on their territory.

Today, we mark a decade since the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. This commemoration is not just a remembrance, but a call to action to **assess** our progress and address what remains to be achieved.

Over a century ago, Chief DESKAHEH of the HAUDENOSAUNEE Peoples approached the League of Nations, seeking equal recognition among nations. Sadly, he was denied a voice—a struggle that persists for many indigenous communities worldwide. Doors remain closed in international institutions, governments, and corporate discussions concerning our lands.

But, our elders have shown that there is nothing to fear in partnering with us. Yet, even after adopting the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, resistance to full cooperation persists.

It is not all dire. We have seen progress, like the acknowledgment of our collective rights and our right to self-determination in the 2007 Declaration and in many Nations. However, minimum standards are not enough; we aim to be proactive partners in global initiatives like the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, the Kumming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Summit of the Future. Beyond that, we must ensure that in every State where Indigenous Peoples exist, that we are included in the decision making that affects our lives, and the present and future of humanity.

The permanent Forum welcome the appointment of the co-facilitator on enhance participation and request that the process to be open inclusive and continuing.

The UN Permanent Forum, along with the Special Rapporteur and the Expert Mechanism, is ready to amplify the efforts of Indigenous Peoples everywhere. Yet, success depends on all of us here.

Will you join forces with Indigenous Peoples in this commitment?

It is imperative to recognize the invaluable Indigenous-led initiatives, like those from the Alta Conference, which shaped the World Conference. These efforts show the power of Indigenous advocacy and are a testament to the spirits of those who have passed. We honor their legacy today.

Since the World Conference, we have seen partnerships form and commitments made, yet many promises remain unfulfilled. Indigenous lands are exploited for minerals or under the umbrella of a greener economy. True justice in the transition to sustainability cannot come at our expense. We, Indigenous Peoples, cannot continue paying the price with our lives.

As we approach the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals, it is crucial that Indigenous Peoples are included in the Voluntary National Reviews with accurate data reflecting our realities. Special attention is needed for Indigenous women and girls, the custodians of our traditions and insights into sustainable living.

We reiterate the Alta call for establishing mechanisms at the UN for our full participation and advocate for the urgent appointment of an **Under-Secretary-General** for Indigenous Peoples. Action-oriented measures, culturally appropriate laws, and direct financing are founding pillars to our right to self determination, and essential to advance our social and sustainable economic development.

In our communities, every voice is heard—from the wisdom of our elders to those speaking for the first time. Let this inclusivity be mirrored in all forums in the United National and multilateral processes, as well as within Nations, embodying the openness and hospitality that is inherent in Indigenous traditions.

Chief DESKAHEH’S dream of equality remains unfulfilled, but we stand before you, resilient and resolute. We urge Member States to recommit to the Outcome Document and to embrace partnership with Indigenous Peoples, who always welcome you with open doors.

Thank you.