



Mobile Peoples Participation at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues May 15 -26, 2006

Summary

The United Nations Secretariat for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invited the *Standing Committee of the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation (Dana Standing Committee)* in partnership with the *Coordinating Committee of the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP)* to organize a side-event at the Fifth United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), 15-26 May 2006 in New York. This invitation was made in order to raise awareness of the special circumstances and vulnerabilities of mobile peoples within the larger Indigenous Peoples Movement. 20 representatives of mobile peoples from Africa, the Middle East and Asia took part in the UN Permanent Forum meetings. They included 11 representatives funded by the Ford Foundation through the International Institute of Education: Salem Zalabeh [Jordan], Hamad Al Hasaseen [Jordan] Nina Intalou [Mali], Francis Chachu Ganya [Ethiopia], Shanu Chachu [Ethiopia], Adi Godana Soka [Ethiopia], Motjinduika Kapika [Namibia], Lucky Kasaona [Namibia], Bhopal Ram [India], Chakrawati Singh [India], and Vasamalli Kurtaz [India].

The purpose of the UNPFII side event and capacity building side-event was to:

- 1. Raise general awareness of the special vulnerabilities of mobile indigenous peoples as part of the global Indigenous Peoples Movement.**
- 2. Raise awareness of the special concerns of mobile indigenous peoples in the context of global biodiversity conservation (through the introduction of the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation, WAMIP and its Statutes, and international endorsements).**
- 3. Develop the capacity of mobile indigenous peoples to represent themselves and their concerns at national, regional and international fora**

Throughout the ten-day Permanent Forum meetings, lunchtime events were held to address particular interests or concerns. The side event which we organized on the theme of mobility, livelihoods, conservation and environmental impacts on mobile peoples was held at the Permanent Forum on Monday May 22nd. It was chaired by Mr William Langeveldt, the UN Forum representative of the Koi San Peoples and drew a large audience from among UN Forum participants, including the Deputy Chair of the UN Permanent Forum, Ms. Ida Nicolaison. After animated discussion, it was agreed that both UN Forum members and other participants would lobby to have the important issue

of mobility and mobile livelihoods included on the programme of the next Permanent Form in May 2007 (minutes of the side event are attached).

In addition, a one-day workshop for the representatives of mobile indigenous peoples was held on Tuesday May 23rd. This unique event was designed to help develop the capacity of mobile peoples to represent themselves and their concerns at national, regional and international fora. The workshop was attended by 22 representatives of mobile peoples from around the globe and closed with the unanimous decision to recommend to the UNPFII a joint workshop on the theme of *mobility, land, territory and natural resources* at the next UNPFII in 2007 (minutes of the workshop are attached and electronic photographs are available on CD). It was also decided that, should this effort fail, the representatives of mobile indigenous peoples would plan for and register to hold another side-event next year on the same theme at the 6th UNPFII. In addition the representatives from Middle Eastern countries decided to set up a Middle East Caucus to complement the existing Africa, Latin American, and Asian Caucus at the UNPFII.

In conclusion, the attendance of representatives of mobile indigenous peoples at the 5th UNPFII was a successful, capacity building experience on its own. The sharing of common experiences as well the recognition of similarity of livelihood and cultural concerns across the globe was a significant element in the sense of solidarity which the group experienced. The positive response from other members of the Forum to this group of mobile indigenous peoples and the recognition of the significance of mobility to the Forum as a whole was significant. The formal activities, the UNPFII side event and the capacity building workshop were also successful and met all of their aims.

Background

The Refugee Studies Centre, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, has worked with other bodies to address the concerns of both the welfare of mobile peoples and of biodiversity conservation. A key product was the Dana Declaration on Conservation and Mobile Peoples (www.danadeclaration.org), with guidelines for a complementary strategy for both conservation and meeting human needs. The Dana Declaration has been endorsed by the World Parks Congress, Durban 2003 as well as noted at the World Conservation Congress, Bangkok, 2004. The side event and workshop at the Fifth UNPFII is a further step raising awareness of the special vulnerabilities and needs of mobile peoples, as well as developing and building their capacity of self-representation through the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples –WAMIP (www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/WAMIP/WAMIP.htm) and others similar groups.

Narrative of events

The 20 representatives of mobile indigenous peoples and support staff arrived in New York between May 16 and May 20 and departed May 24th. The delays in arrival were due to complications related to procuring visas at the American Embassy in their home countries.

List participants

Munkhjargal	Byambaa	Mongolia
Salem	al-Zalabeh	Jordan
Tarek	Abul Hawa	Jordan
Hamad	Al Hasaseen	Jordan
Joseph	Ole Simel	Kenya
Naeem	Al Harsousi	UAE
Francis Chachu	Ganya	Ethiopia
Shanu	Chachu	Ethiopia
Adi Godana	Soka	Ethiopia
Nina aualet	Intalou	Mali
Saoudata	Aboubacrine	Mali
Enhebatu	Togochog	China
Lucky	Kasaona	Namibia
Motjinduika	Kapika	Namibia
Vasamalli	Kurtaz	India
Altanchimeg	Chachu	Mongolia
Badam	Nyalkh	Mongolia
Bhopal	Ram	Rajasthan, India
Chakrawati Singh	Rathore	Rajasthan, India
Ninbat	Jurmta	Mongolia

Most participants were registered at the United Nations building the day following their arrival, allowing them access to the UN complex as well as the main Conference room where the 16 members of the Permanent Forum resided, both addressing pertinent issues and taking statements from the floor during the open sessions. The 17 representatives of mobile indigenous peoples decided to take the opportunity to address the Forum. Over the next two days country statements as well as a general WAMIP statement were prepared and registered with the Forum (these statements are attached). Due to a shortage of time, only the Middle East representatives were able to deliver their statement before the Forum. The other statements were recorded by the Secretariat.

On Monday May 22nd, our lunchtime side event on mobility, livelihoods, conservation and environmental impacts of mobile peoples was held in the Conference room of Two United Nations Plaza. It was chaired by Mr. William Lengeveldt, one of the 16 members of the Permanent Forum. The session was very well attended with standing room only. After a brief introduction by Dr Dawn Chatty, (the Standing Committee of the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation) and Ole Simmel (the Interim President of WAMIP), country and regional statements were made by representatives from the Middle East, Namibia, East Africa, India, and Mongolia. The Chair then opened the floor to discussion. At the close of the session, it was agreed that that mobility was a crucial issue which needed to be taken up by the main Forum next year and a decision was made to seek out and lobby Forum members to support such a recommendation (minutes attached).

On Tuesday May 23rd, we held a full-day capacity building workshop at the UNDP building. Our premises were provided to us courtesy of Dr Maryam Naimur-Fuller,

Senior Technical Advisor, land Degradation, UNDP-GEF. Dr Naimur-Fuller availed herself of the opportunity to brief the participants in the workshop about her work with the World Initiative Pastoral Systems (WISP). The capacity building workshop was facilitated by Ms Indrani Sigamany, from INTRAC, in the UK. She expertly brought the representative to identifying the issues which needed to be prioritized in their homeland and to find ways of expressing these concerns effectively. At the close of the workshop participants identified a strategy for keeping mobility on the agenda at the UN Forum for the next year's meeting. It was decided to request a joint UN Permanent Forum workshop on the issue of mobility, land, territory and natural resources for the next Forum meetings, and failing that, to hold another side event on this topic in May 2007 (full workshop report is attached). That evening four nominated representatives of the group meet to finalize a draft recommendation (recommendation attached). This was completed on Wednesday and representatives of the mobile indigenous peoples distributed the recommendation to the Permanent Forum members throughout the day. With our work programme complete, most of the participants made plans to leave New York that day and return to their home countries.



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Dawn Chatty
Chair, Standing Committee
Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation
June 8, 2006.