

**2000/22. Establishment of a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

Recalling the provision contained in the final document of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, according to which the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system should be considered,<sup>82</sup>

Recalling also that consideration of the establishment of a permanent forum is recognized as one of the important objectives of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,<sup>83</sup>

Noting the two workshops on the subject held under the auspices of the Commission on Human Rights in Copenhagen from 26 to 28 June 1995 and in Santiago from 30 June to 2 July 1997,

Recalling the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Review of the existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous people",<sup>84</sup> and noting in particular the striking absence of a mechanism to ensure coordination and regular exchange of information among interested parties – Governments, the United Nations and indigenous people – on an ongoing basis,

Taking into account the deliberations of the open-ended inter-sessional ad hoc working group on a permanent forum for indigenous people<sup>85</sup> established pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1998/20 of 9 April 1998<sup>43</sup> and 1999/52 of 27 April 1999<sup>86</sup> to consider the establishment of a permanent forum and to submit concrete proposals to that effect, as well as the consideration given to the subject at the fifty-sixth session of the Commission,

Wishing to finalize this project during the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People as one means of furthering the objectives of the Decade in partnership between Governments and indigenous people,

Stressing that the establishment of the permanent forum should lead to careful consideration of the future of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights,

Bearing in mind the common resolve to promote peace and prosperity in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and recalling the functions and powers of the Council in that respect as contained in the Charter,

1. *Decides* to establish as a subsidiary organ of the Council a permanent forum on indigenous issues, consisting of sixteen members, eight members to be nominated by Governments and elected by the Council, and eight members to be appointed by the President of the Council following formal consultation with the Bureau and the regional groups through their coordinators, on the basis of broad consultations with indigenous organizations, taking into account the diversity and geographical distribution of the indigenous people of the world as well as the principles of transparency, representativity and equal opportunity for all indigenous people, including internal

processes, when appropriate, and local indigenous consultation processes, with all members serving in their personal capacity as independent experts on indigenous issues for a period of three years with the possibility of re-election or reappointment for one further period; States, United Nations bodies and organs, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council may participate as observers; organizations of indigenous people may equally participate as observers in accordance with the procedures which have been applied in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights;

2. *Also decides* that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues shall serve as an advisory body to the Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues within the mandate of the Council relating to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights; in so doing the Permanent Forum shall:

(a) Provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations, through the Council;

(b) Raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues within the United Nations system;

(c) Prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues;

3. *Further decides* that the Permanent Forum shall apply the rules of procedure established for subsidiary organs of the Council as applicable, unless otherwise decided by the Council; the principle of consensus shall govern the work of the Permanent Forum;

4. *Decides* that the Permanent Forum shall hold an annual session of ten working days at the United Nations Office at Geneva or at United Nations Headquarters or at such other place as the Permanent Forum may decide in accordance with existing financial rules and regulations of the United Nations;

5. *Also decides* that the Permanent Forum shall submit an annual report to the Council on its activities, including any recommendations for approval; the report shall be distributed to the relevant United Nations organs, funds, programmes and agencies as a means, inter alia, of furthering the dialogue on indigenous issues within the United Nations system;

6. *Further decides* that the financing of the Permanent Forum shall be provided from within existing resources through the regular budget of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and through such voluntary contributions as may be donated;

7. *Decides* that, five years after its establishment, an evaluation of the functioning of the Permanent Forum,

<sup>82</sup> See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III, sect. II.B, para. 32.

<sup>83</sup> General Assembly resolution 50/157, annex.

<sup>84</sup> A/51/493.

<sup>85</sup> See E/CN.4/1999/83 and E/CN.4/2000/86.

<sup>86</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 3 (E/1999/23)*, chap. II, sect. A.

including the method for selection of its members, shall be carried out by the Council in the light of the experience gained;

8. *Also decides*, once the Permanent Forum has been established and has held its first annual session, to review, without prejudging any outcome, all existing mechanisms, procedures and programmes within the United Nations concerning indigenous issues, including the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, with a view to rationalizing activities, avoiding duplication and overlap and promoting effectiveness.

*45th plenary meeting  
28 July 2000*