



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Statement for MGoS Press Briefing, Tuesday, 18 July 2017

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE LARGELY INVISIBLE IN THE VNRs

Of the 44 VNR countries, 24 countries have indigenous peoples who are the furthest left behind. However, most of the VNR reports from these countries did not make explicit reference to indigenous peoples in achieving the SDGs at the local and national levels.

Likewise, while some states did consultations with civil society organizations such as in Botswana, they only included big umbrella organizations, which do not represent indigenous peoples according to Mr. Keikabile Mogodu of the indigenous San community. Tahal Thami expressed his frustration that while indigenous leaders participated in consultation process, there is no recognition of indigenous peoples as distinct group who represent approximately 37% of the total population in Nepal. Additionally, the views and recommendations of Nepal's indigenous peoples were not reflected in the national development plan or the report of the government of Nepal. Inter-connected to the situation concerning consultations and active engagement. Ms. Tarcila Rivera, an indigenous expert and leader stressed the continuing discrimination of indigenous peoples in the development process in Peru.

While indigenous peoples are only 5 % of the global population, they comprise 15% of the world's poorest. According to Ms. Joan Carling of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG), what we are hearing from regional representatives of Indigenous Peoples and leaders coming from VNR countries is that critical structural changes and concrete actions to address the multi-dimensions of poverty experienced by indigenous peoples are not sufficiently addressed in national implementation plans. In particular, the need to secure the customary and collective land rights of indigenous peoples is necessary to achieve the SDGs for all as emphasized by Daniel Sapit of Africa and Mr. Gam Shimray of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact.

Around the world, Indigenous peoples' continue to assert that States need to recognize their existence as a distinct group along with their collective rights and contributions to sustainable development as key steps forward in implementation of the SDGs. This is critical in ensuring an enabling environment for the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples as rights holders and development actors in achieving the SDGs. Further, data disaggregation by ethnicity among others, and participatory monitoring mechanisms are important for indigenous peoples to be counted and be visible in the SDG implementation.

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Our key messages remain:

- Basic human right of peoples to self-determination includes the right not to be denied the means of subsistence. This is a core human rights obligation of states as duty bearers, which underpins the SDGs.
- Lack of legal identity as indigenous peoples and the recognition of our collective rights are the major barriers to our effective participation. It also limits our full contribution to sustainable development. Unless this is addressed, we will continue to be marginalized and excluded.
- Claims for multi-stakeholders' platforms for participation in the SDGs favor the more powerful actors and only pay lip service to meaningful participation of marginalized groups including indigenous peoples.