

**International Indigenous Peoples
Forum on Climate Change**

**Foro Internacional de los Pueblos Indígenas
sobre Cambio Climático**

**STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FORUM
ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

DELIVERED BY ESTEBANCIO DE CASTRO, COCHAIR

AT THE OPENING PLENARY OF SEVENTH SESSION OF AWG-LCA

BANGKOK, THAILAND

28 September 2009

Thank you Mr Chair for allowing the Indigenous Peoples to deliver a statement at this opening plenary.

However, indigenous peoples concerns and views have not been seriously addressed in the climate negotiation processes, least of all those from indigenous women and youth.

Mr Chair, let me remind all that Climate change governance must recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples which includes full and effective participation in all negotiations by Indigenous Peoples' traditional governments, institutions and organizations. We are right-holders, therefore any outcome of COP15 and beyond must reconfirm the States' and whole UN system's obligations to uphold regional and international human rights commitments and standards, especially the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Respect for the human rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, valuing our traditional knowledge and innovations, and supporting our local mitigation and adaptation strategies are also necessary elements of holistic solutions to climate change.

Our local strategies and priorities must be reflected in National Adaptation and Mitigation Action (NAMAs) and National Adaptation Plans and strategies of Action (NAMAs and NAPAs), in the development and implementation of which we must participate fully and effectively. The distinct roles and responsibilities of indigenous women and youth, will need to be considered; underlining the importance of their inclusion in decision-making and planning processes.

We are fully convinced that no fairness in climate decisions can be ensured without justice. Climate justice involves the responsible acknowledgment of the historical responsibilities of developed countries while promoting social equity between and within nations, maintaining ecological integrity, addressing the climate and ecological

debt, and pursuing an effective transition away from fossil fuel dependency towards a green economy.

You might decide to avoid this path, by resorting to our forests as carbon sinks. Many of our brothers and sisters live in and depend upon forests for their survival and to enjoy their fundamental rights to forests and land tenure. Forests are of cultural, social, economic and spiritual significance for Indigenous peoples and provide benefits for humankind. Let me tell you all that without a full recognition and full protection for Indigenous peoples' rights, as recognized among others in the UNDRIP and ILO 169 including the rights to resources, lands and territories, and the right of free, prior and informed consent we will oppose REDD and REDD+ and carbon offsetting projects, as well as other ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation measures and projects.

We truly believe that Climate change, in the light of the current global financial, economic, environmental and food crises, can represent an unprecedented challenge and opportunity for humanity to transform global economic, political, social, cultural relations to live in balance with Mother Earth.

But in order to do so, you all that convened here in Bangkok must show resolve and determination. Indigenous Peoples from across the world are here too, united with one voice in the conviction that we have a collective role to play towards ecological and social justice.

Thank you