

FACT SHEET ON THE PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Indigenous Peoples' Center for
Documentation, Research and Information

doCip

1. What the Permanent Forum does

- ✓ It makes recommendations and prepares reports for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and for the entire United Nations system.
- ✓ It raises awareness and promotes the integration and coordination of indigenous issues within the UN system.
- ✓ It prepares and disseminates information on indigenous issues.
- ✓ It is a **special forum for networking** among indigenous people, and for forming alliances with other indigenous peoples, United Nations agencies, donors, representatives of States, NGOs, etc. The sessions also provide an opportunity to raise awareness, to inform and to share your concerns and causes with other key actors on the issues of indigenous peoples.

2. What the Permanent Forum is not

- ✓ The Permanent Forum is not a body or mechanism for denunciation of violations of indigenous peoples' rights.
- ✓ It is not able to provide quick and immediate answers to your specific questions.

For more information about the Permanent Forum: <http://social.un.org/index/IndigenousPeoples.aspx>

3. How to participate in the Permanent Forum

- ✓ For **practical information** concerning pre-registration, visas, accreditation, accommodations, obtaining badges, and grants to cover travel costs:
<http://social.un.org/index/IndigenousPeoples/UNPFIIISessions.aspx>
<http://www.docip.org/Local-Information-New-York.37.0.html>

4. How to write an oral intervention

- ✓ **Collective interventions with multiple co-signatories are given priority** and strongly recommended to add weight and importance to your intervention. It is therefore imperative to include the recommendations adopted at your meetings (Caucus) with other indigenous representatives.
- ✓ The purpose of the intervention is to make recommendations concerning the agenda item relevant to your intervention.
- ✓ **Contents of the intervention:** name, organization and agenda item relevant to your intervention, and brief greetings. **Then, make your recommendation in a brief and concrete way.** Give the reasons for your recommendation, using data and other information that is accurate and verified, since an intervention from the representatives of the States involved will probably follow during the general debates. You should therefore start by making your recommendation and then explain the situation that motivated it.
- ✓ Practice in advance by reading your intervention aloud to make sure that you are well within the time limit (usually 3 minutes). Plan which parts you could possibly delete in case the time limit must be reduced.
- ✓ Be sure to use diplomatic and non-abusive language, for example, by using the official terminology of any country names cited in your intervention.

5. How to present your speech

First of all, as soon as possible, have your name registered on the list of speakers by presenting your badge (as a representative of your organization) at the desk of the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum, which is located in the meeting room. Don't forget to indicate the agenda item on which you wish to make an intervention.

- ✓ The Chairperson usually sets a registration deadline for interventions on each agenda item. Find out what this deadline is.
- ✓ Once you are registered, when the list of speakers for the chosen agenda item is posted in the meeting room, check that your name appears there and note where on the list it appears in order to be prepared when you are given the floor.
- ✓ Make **several copies** of your intervention and distribute them to the Secretariat, to the interpreters and to other organizations, as well as to the technical secretariat of doCip, which collects all of the interventions for posting on its website www.docip.org.
- ✓ When your name is called by the Chairperson at the session, raise your hand, turn on the microphone, cite the name of your organization and read your intervention, while scrupulously adhering to your time allotment (usually **3 minutes**).

Attention: If you are not in the room when the Chairperson calls on you, you lose your speaking time. Please be at your place well in advance of your allotted time, as prior speakers could forfeit their time, which would move up your turn.

6. doCip technical support throughout the Permanent Forum sessions

doCip provides: computers and internet access; translation of texts and documents **to and from English, Spanish, French and Russian**; interpretation of Caucus sessions, side events and informal conversations; photocopies; sending and receiving of faxes; and collection of your interventions for publication on doCip's website.

7. Indigenous Peoples' Caucus sessions: participation is strongly recommended

The Indigenous Caucuses bring together—and are open to—all indigenous delegations present at an international conference, in this case, the Permanent Forum. There are global, regional and thematic Caucuses (women, youth, biodiversity, etc.). They are chaired by one or several chairperson(s) representing various regions of the Permanent Forum. They represent unique opportunities for indigenous delegates to meet for exchange of information and experiences. During the Caucus sessions **joint statements, positions and recommendations** are put together concerning agenda items of the Permanent Forum session or on other topics.

The Caucus sessions are held the weekend before the Permanent Forum, as well as at various times during the week, usually in the morning from 9 to 10 a.m. or during the Permanent Forum sessions. To schedule meetings during the session, contact the technical secretariat of doCip. The Caucus sessions are interpreted in English, Spanish, French and Russian by doCip, with support from IWGIA for English and Spanish.

The discussions held during the Caucus sessions are confidential.

8. Cultural and side events

- ✓ They take place between 1:15 and 2:30 p.m., and sometimes after 6:00 p.m. They can be organized by indigenous delegations, international organizations, NGOs, etc. A list of side events is distributed at the beginning of the session by the Secretariat of the Forum and may also be found at doCip.
- ✓ It is necessary to register in advance to organize side events and to stay informed about the programme of events through the websites of the Permanent Forum or the technical secretariat of doCip.
Examples: conferences on subjects covered at the Permanent Forum, art exhibitions, dance and music performances, training sessions provided by NGOs, etc.

9. Meetings with other "key" actors on indigenous issues on the sidelines of the Permanent Forum sessions

Opportunity to make an appointment (**submit the request well in advance of the Permanent Forum sessions!**) with Permanent Forum Members and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, whose mandate is to "gather information and communications on violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous populations, to formulate recommendations and to work in close relation with other special reporters, experts, etc. ..." The Special Rapporteur is present for a few days, usually during the first week of the Permanent Forum, but **an appointment with him is arranged in advance**. More information on the Special Rapporteur and how to communicate information to him:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/SRIIndigenousPeoples/Pages/SRIPeoplesIndex.aspx>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IPeoples/SRIIndigenousPeoples/Pages/SubmitInformation.aspx>

Conclusion: a few reminders for effective and efficient participation in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

- ✓ **Allow for several weeks in advance** of the Forum to handle all of the administrative procedures and formalities (visas), registration and logistics required to participate in the Permanent Forum sessions.
- ✓ **Study the agenda, the programme and the documents related to the session, all of which are located on the Permanent Forum's website** for each session.
- ✓ **Prepare your oral intervention well** (in principle, jointly with co-signatories): choose a theme from the agenda, to which your intervention must relate directly; draft the text with recommendations in a clear and diplomatic manner; search for co-signatories; make several copies of the intervention for distribution; and practice reading it before giving the intervention aloud before the Permanent Forum, making sure to stay within the allotted 3 minutes.
- ✓ **Participate actively** in the **Indigenous Peoples' Caucus meetings** at all levels (global, regional and thematic) and also in as many as possible of the **side events, sessions and networking opportunities with other representatives of indigenous peoples, NGOs, key actors in indigenous issues (experts, UN agencies, donors, representatives of States, etc.)**.
- ✓ Finally, **check the content** of the session report to ensure that your point of view has been taken into account. The report is published a few months after the session.

This fact sheet is based on documents produced by Andrea Carmen of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) and Suikhar of Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) for doCip training sessions. We thank them for their commitment and for sharing their expertise.

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