NGO Committee on Rights of Indigenous Peoples

February 17, 2022

Minutes

Indigenous.committee@gmail.com

**Participants**

1. Daniel LeBlanc
2. Elaine Congress
3. CiCi Ogden
4. Alison Van Dyk
5. Sue Jacobs
6. Myrna Coffino
7. Sheila Smith
8. Sandra Sheridan
9. Marilyn Winter
10. Paul Rah mat
11. Deanna Medina
12. Roberto Borrero
13. Judy Alves
14. Gemma Kentish
15. Victoria Edmonds
16. Rohan Dominic
17. Henry Ramirez
18. Joseph Wronka
19. Mathew Giblin
20. Cynthia Chain
21. Lynnaia Main
22. Carolyn DiCarlo
23. Rashmi Jaipal
24. Arturo Requesens
25. Casey Chu
26. Joan Woods

**1.Moment of Silence in Honor of the Land we are on and the Native Peoples of this land.**

**2. Welcome and Introductions**

**3. Review of Agenda** - the decision was made to move the Secretariat presentation to the beginning of the meeting, agenda was approved.

**4. Presentation - Update from the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues from Arturo Requesens and Gemma Kentish**

***Arturo -*** Thanks the committee for the invitation to speak and acknowledges that there are many questions about the upcoming Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The format for the forum has not yet been decided, but they hope that at least some of the Indigenous peoples / groups will be able to attend in person. Last year the forum was a hybrid event, but only the member states were able to attend in person. The forum will be held from April 25 to May 6, although May 2 is a UN holiday. The full agenda for the forum is still being developed, but April 25 will be the opening of the Forum and a discussion of the decline of Indigenous languages. The theme of the Forum is “Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence, including free, prior and informed consent. Some meetings will be with the UN and member states, others will be regional meetings on autonomy and self governance. These regional meetings will be for Indigenous peoples to have their concerns heard and make suggestions. All side events will be held online and registration opened today (February 17). All side events will be virtual and events have the responsibility of preparing translations. Registration for the main event will not open until a final decision on the format has been made.

***Roberto*** - thanks Arturo and opens the floor for questions

***Elaine*** - What is the deadline for side event applications?

***Arturo*** - It has not yet been decided, but will likely be April 14 or 15, as all the forum will need to do is compile a list of events.

***Sheila*** - Can you repeat the dialogue themes?

***Arturo*** - The opening on April 25 will discuss the Decade of Indigenous Languages, the themes of the forum, and the six mandated topics for all Permanent Forums.

***Paul*** - Will NGO’s have position papers?

***Arturo*** - For every agenda item, indigenous peoples will have the choice to make a statement. Registration for speakers on each item will open on the website.

***Roberto*** - If it is a hybrid session, what do you think the time limit for interventions will be? Will it be the same for Indigenous peoples as for states and agencies?

***Arturo*** - This has not been decided, but last year it was 2-3 minutes.

***Roberto*** - To avoid internet issues, could we do what the human rights bodies do and allow recorded statements as videos?

***Arturo -*** This is good proposal that he will raise. It is especially difficult for Indigenous peoples in remote areas to find good connection, but videos don’t always allow for the dialogue they want.

***Elaine*** - Who can submit a statement? An Indigenous person who represents an organization? The IFSW has been focused on Indigenous issues and may want to make a statement.

***Arturo*** - Anyone registered for the session can submit a statement.

***Roberto*** - Is there a cap on the number of side events any one organization can put on? Could the committee register our own event and co-sponsor another?

***Arturo*** - No limit, but at least one organizer must be registered for the forum and the event must be legitimate and relevant.

***Daniel*** - Are written statements accepted? Are there any guidelines?

***Arturo*** - The report of the session is based on discussions and written statements, so they are welcome.

***Roberto*** - Will the system for registration be the same? Will there be a limit on delegates?

***Arturo*** - It will be the same system. He does not think there will be a limit on delegates.

***Sandy*** - will the forum be on UN TV?

***Arturo*** - The open sessions will be yes.

***Roberto*** - Final thanks to the speaker and acknowledgement of the long relationship between the committee and the Secretariat of the PFII.

***Daniel*** - Is there any more information being chosen to lead up the secretariat? Could someone apply for the position?

***Arturo*** - it was posted as an open position, but the deadline closed and they have no information. They are short staffed and the process for choosing a chief is complex and competitive. He will encourage the chief to meet with the committee once chosen.

Arturo can be reached at ***requesens@un.org*** with any questions.

**5. Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2022** - Minutes were approved. It was noted that moving forward the minutes will be made available on the committee website.

**6. Executive Committee Report - Roberto**

The Executive Committee met on February 7th. The agenda and meeting minutes were prepared. Indigenous issues were discussed and speakers were invited for future meetings. There was discussion about parallel and side events for the Forum, both for the committee and other NGOs. The importance of continued correspondence with speakers and elders was discussed, and condolences were sent to a former speaker who recently suffered a personal loss.

**7. Treasurers Report - Sandy**

A reminder was given that dues are $25. Last year 15 NGOs contributed fees and the committee brought in $575. This money is contributed directly to supporting Indigenous issues, groups, and events. The committee has recently switched to a bank account that has no monthly fee, and the current balance is approximately $2,100.

**8. Membership Dues - Sandy**

Another reminder that this is the new year which means that dues are due. The dues form has been sent out and has all of the relevant information. Both the forms and payments must be mailed to Sandy, any checks should be made out to the NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Sandy’s address is

Sandra Sheridan

277 Hudson Terrace

Piedmont, NY 10968

***Lynnaia*** - Is membership institutional or individual? Can institutions send more than one representative?

***Roberto*** - Generally membership is institutional but it can also be individual. As long as we are on zoom multiple representatives can be sent, but that may change once we are in person.

So far dues have been received from the following groups:

1. National Space Society
2. The Grail
3. Physicians for Social Responsibility & International Society of Doctors for the Environment
4. Encompass New Opera Theater
5. Temple of Understanding
6. UFER - United for Equity and Ending Racism

**9. Side Events for Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues - Daniel**

Daniel shared that he also works with the Mining Working Group, which works with 9 countries in the Amazon. They have side-events which are generally co-sponsored by the committee. They will have 3 to 4 events, which will be shared with the committee once the speakers and themes have been finalized.

***Rashmi*** - Why do they hold so many events? What will they cover?

***Daniel*** - They go along with the theme while bringing in issues on extraction of all kinds. They have previously brought in rapporteurs, ambassadors, and individuals from the 9 Amazon countries they work with. One is a conversation among three people from North America and three from South America. The events are selective and are generally limited to the Mining Working Group, this committee, and Indigenous peoples.

**10. Indigenous Committee Parallel Event for CSW - Sandy**

We will be holding an event on March 15 from 12pm to 1:30 pm titled “Indigenous Women, Wise Protectors of Mother Earth Leading the Way for Climate Action.” Three Indigenous women have been confirmed to speak and we are looking for more.

***Rashmi*** - The event subcommittee will meet after the general meeting today, instead of the health subcommittee. We have contacted the Rainforest Action Network; there are a lot of women leading the way to ending extractive processes in Indonesia and we want a speaker from the group. The flyer will be sent out shortly.

Several other members shared about side events their respective organizations are hosting. Alison Van Dyke (Temple of Understanding) spoke of their event on Monday, March 21 from 12:00 – 1:30 PM entitled: **Women's Leadership on Climate Change: Coastal Ecology and Native Wisdom. The committee was asked to be a co-sponsor and committee members agreed to be a cosponsor of this event.**

Roberto shared updates about a new Inclusive Conservation Academy, which will help educate conservation agencies on ways they can collaborate with Indigenous Peoples in their efforts. There was also brief discussion of the restrictive education laws that we are seeing in the US.

**11. Indigenous Committee Website - Roberto**

The website is about to be launched. Some edits were made based on comments from committee members during the last meeting. He wanted to make sure he mentioned the cost of the website, which is $274 a year to Wix and then $14-15 for the domain. This is a regular expense that the committee can afford, but he wanted to make sure everyone was informed. In the future, they can pay for the website for multiple years in advance, which will bring the cost down. In making everyone aware of the cost he stressed the importance of paying dues. The cost of the website was approved by the committee and it should be launched as soon as next week (week of February 21).

After these announcements, the meeting was adjourned.