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### **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

#### **Seventh session**

New York, 21 April-2 May 2008

Items 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Special theme: “Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges”**

**Implementation of the recommendations on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum and on the Millennium Development Goals**

**Half-day discussion on the Pacific**

**Half-day discussion on indigenous languages**

**Ongoing priorities and themes and follow-up**

### **Information received from the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations**

#### **United Nations Children’s Fund**

##### *Summary*

The present contribution by the United Nations Children’s Fund contains its responses to recommendations made by the Permanent Forum at its sixth session in 2007, as well as an overview of UNICEF activities related to indigenous peoples.



## **I. Response to recommendations from the sixth session addressed exclusively to the United Nations Children's Fund**

### **Promoting, disseminating and implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples<sup>1</sup>**

1. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, organized a regional meeting between the Advisory Group of Indigenous Leaders and the United Nations system in Latin America and the Caribbean. The meeting was held in Quito, to discuss a joint plan of action for the dissemination and strengthening of collaboration regarding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Programme of Action of the Second International Decade of Indigenous Peoples. The meeting was attended by 11 representatives of United Nations regional agencies.

2. As a result of the meeting, a member of the Advisory Group of Indigenous Leaders, with UNICEF support, participated in a consultation of United Nations Regional Directors in Chile and gave a presentation on the Declaration, and on the conclusions and recommendations of the Quito meeting.

3. The UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean is supporting the translation of the Declaration into 15 indigenous languages; child-friendly translated versions in Ecuador and Costa Rica (to be used as a basis for versions in other countries); and a publication with the International Labour Organization (ILO) (with ILO Convention No. 169). These various translations are being coordinated with Fondo Indígena.

4. UNICEF is also supporting national plans of action for the empowerment of indigenous peoples and building capacities of State institutions regarding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### **Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact<sup>2</sup>**

5. In Paraguay, UNICEF has supported the Ayoreo organization Organización Payipie Ichadie Totobiegosode and an non-governmental organizations (NGO) to supply a rainwater system and sanitation to Totobiegosode communities whose inhabitants were in voluntary isolation until 2004. It has also supported the health system in order to expand health care services to those communities.

### **Sharing experience in health programming for indigenous peoples with other relevant United Nations agencies working in the field<sup>3</sup>**

6. A national consultation for the improvement of the quality of life of indigenous peoples of Congo Brazzaville took place in November 2007 at the initiative of the Government of Congo, and with the support of UNICEF. More than 80 participants (indigenous leaders, NGOs, the French embassy, the World Bank, the

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<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2007, Supplement No. 23 (E/2007/43)*, para. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 62.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), European Union, etc.), including key stakeholders, participated in that meeting. During the consultation, the main priorities of a national plan of action to address the situation of indigenous peoples and the institutional coordination mechanisms for the plan of action were adopted. The national plan of action includes three strategic areas: (a) development of basic social services culturally adapted to indigenous populations; (b) increase in resources (financial and human) and capacity-building of indigenous community organizations, particularly the national network of indigenous peoples of Congo; (c) and the establishment and adoption of a legislative framework protecting the rights of indigenous peoples. In addition, the national plan of action includes a strategy aimed at reinforcing regional cooperation in order to obtain an efficient and unified response in the West and Central African region.

7. Other countries, including Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Malaysia, have supported the training of traditional birth attendants and health service agents. In Malaysia, UNICEF supported training of primary health-care workers, traditional birth attendants and traditional healers working at the district level.

#### **Support for free and universal civil registration on the basis of free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples<sup>4</sup>**

8. UNICEF, with support from the Government of Spain, encouraged the active participation of many indigenous leaders from 12 Latin America and the Caribbean countries in the regional conference on birth registration organized by UNICEF, the Organization of American States and Plan International in August 2007 in Asunción. It was an important event to make civil registrar institutions aware of the problems and obstacles affecting indigenous children and adolescents on this matter. It was also a great opportunity to empower indigenous representatives with information on the importance of birth registration. The final documents encompassed most of the recommendations made by indigenous leaders.

9. UNICEF is also developing a study with Plan International on good practices and lessons learned on birth registration of indigenous peoples in four countries of Latin America and the Caribbean: Guatemala, Panama, Ecuador and Bolivia.

10. In Congo Brazzaville, UNICEF organized a registration campaign on indigenous children. Some of the activities carried out have included advocacy, the provision of a registry, the establishment of community networks, sensitization of parents and the facilitation of birth registration (2,000 birth certificates have been delivered since the beginning of these activities).

#### **Half-day discussion on urban indigenous peoples and migration<sup>5</sup>**

11. UNICEF and Facultad Latino-americana de Ciencias Sociales organized a panel on international migration and indigenous peoples in October 2007 in Quito, in the context of a regional congress on social sciences. As a result of the meeting, more in-depth studies will be developed on the consequences of migration on children and women.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., para. 66.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., para. 113.

12. In Peru, UNICEF is supporting a study on the impact of urban migration of indigenous people to Lima.

**Including urban and migrant indigenous women and children in relevant studies on violence against women<sup>6</sup>**

13. In Congo Brazzaville, UNICEF developed, with the participation of indigenous women, a situation analysis. Indigenous women participated also in the survey assessing their knowledge, behaviour, customs and practices regarding the prevention of HIV and AIDS and access to basic social services (February 2007). They were also fully involved in the preparation of a study on indigenous women and children in Congo (conducted in June 2007).

## **II. Response to recommendations addressed to one or more agencies or to the United Nations system in general**

**Expert group meeting on indigenous languages<sup>7</sup>**

14. UNICEF has supported the participation of indigenous experts in the meeting organized by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Languages on the occasion of the International Year of Languages. Many UNICEF country offices support intercultural bilingual education programmes. It is important to highlight the work of the EIBAMAZ programme in the Amazonian areas of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia in several languages with the support of the Finnish Government. UNICEF, with funding from the Government of Spain, is also supporting the development of an ethno-linguistic atlas for the Latin America and the Caribbean countries, with a special focus on indigenous peoples living across borders in two or more countries.

**Implementation of the human rights-based approach to development<sup>8</sup>**

15. The reference to the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in UNICEF work was enriched and completed by the adoption of the 1998 Executive Directive on human rights-based approach, underlying the UNICEF commitment to help shape a human development agenda built on human rights principles. According to this approach, all UNICEF country offices should help articulate the claims of the vulnerable or excluded population and/or groups, and draw attention to their rights through advocacy with decision makers or through social mobilization. When supporting national and local planning efforts, UNICEF offices should ensure attention to the rights of vulnerable and excluded children, and the identification of accountabilities and necessary actions. Any activity undertaken by UNICEF should be designed, implemented and evaluated with the participation of rights holders.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., para. 114.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., para. 72.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., para. 78.

**Using and further refining existing indicators to measure the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples<sup>9</sup>**

16. Several UNICEF country offices in the Latin America and the Caribbean countries are advocating for disaggregated data. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in five countries in the Caribbean included ethnic and/or racial variables and are now being used for disparity analysis.

**Recommendations to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean through its Centre for Latin American Demography — Population Division<sup>10</sup>**

17. In Latin America, UNICEF and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean are planning to organize a meeting to improve the identification of indigenous peoples in the upcoming 2010 round of censuses. Indigenous experts will share lessons learned with representatives from national statistics institutions and advocate for better questions; other United Nations agencies have expressed interest in collaborating on this initiative.

### **III. Addressing issues of special interest to the Permanent Forum**

#### **A. Indigenous children and youth**

18. The mandate of UNICEF is to ensure that the rights of every child are respected and fulfilled everywhere, without any form of discrimination. As the first human rights treaty expressly making reference to indigenous issues, the Convention on the Rights of the Child provides the norm that guides UNICEF activities in this area. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women also provides guidance for UNICEF activities.

19. The UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean supported a review by indigenous leaders of the draft General Comment on article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, on indigenous children, with the participation of the Convention Committee member from Latin America.

20. In Brazil, UNICEF supported the national meeting of adolescents and indigenous youth, as part of the second meeting on the theme “People of the Forests”, where 45 adolescents gathered in Brasília to present their claims to their rights.

#### **Early childhood**

21. Early childhood development programmes are a part of UNICEF programming for indigenous people in Brazil, Suriname (Caribbean Area Office), Namibia, Paraguay, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. UNICEF supports basic services for indigenous people in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and immunization activities in a number of countries, including Guyana and Peru.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., para. 124.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., para. 127.

### **Child protection**

22. In Honduras, UNICEF is developing an integral project on the theme “Development of a model of protection for the children of communities with different cultural characteristics of Honduras”. The first phase is being developed in two indigenous areas with Pech and Tolupa populations. The aim of the project is to fight against the vulnerability and invisibility of indigenous children in the public policies and the community activities.

23. In Peru, UNICEF has organized a children’s defence council in several municipalities in the Amazon basin. The UNICEF office in Peru is also implementing a human rights-based approach programme on birth registration, to guarantee that members of indigenous communities are recognized by the public system as registrars. This guarantees that indigenous names and cultural practices are preserved, while civil and political rights are also respected.

24. This office is also carrying out an ongoing study entitled “Coping behaviours for child protection of indigenous communities”, which is expected to be completed early this year. The study hopes to document the local concept of well-being of the selected indigenous peoples and determine how the indigenous peoples, particularly the women, children and younger members of the community, are coping with the current threats of their realities. The study adopts the stress and coping framework that recognizes the importance of indigenous knowledge systems and practices, customary laws, indigenous education, personality and environment as critical elements and the rights-based framework, which places indigenous peoples communities as rights holders.

25. UNICEF in Guatemala has helped to sensitize key players and public opinion regarding ratification of the Hague Convention and enactment of the Law on Adoptions, which will help guarantee the rights of indigenous children involved in irregular international adoption cases. This office was also involved in giving visibility to indigenous girls in public opinion and public policies after the elaboration of a study on their situation.

26. UNICEF and ILO have agreed to work jointly on indigenous child labour by developing a concept paper focused on notions about childhood, poverty and child labour for indigenous peoples and the reality of child labour in and outside of the indigenous community environment. Both issues require defining guidelines and a strategy for establishing research terms of reference involving indigenous organizations. Once the research has been completed, a consultation process with indigenous organizations at the national level is foreseen to develop an action plan, which can be transferred to national commissions of child labour.

### **Advocacy for indigenous children**

27. Advocacy for child rights is central to UNICEF support to indigenous peoples. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, UNICEF supports the annual meeting of indigenous boys and girls, which has child rights as a main theme. The visit of the then UNICEF Executive Director to Namibia five years ago, which was widely covered by the media, helped give credibility and authority to the Omaheke San Trust, the first indigenous self-help organization of the marginalized San. In Thailand, in 2000, UNICEF supported the production of child rights audio tapes in the language of highland communities in the north of the country.

28. In other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, studies are being supported by a number of country offices in order to obtain the information needed to determine the specific situation of indigenous people and their relationship to non-indigenous populations. These include a study of Mayan traditions and perceptions about work and education in Guatemala and a community survey of 11 Amazon villages in Guyana. Some country offices indicate that indigenous people are mentioned specifically in the common country assessment or United Nations Development Assistance Framework of several countries, including Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Panama and Peru.

### **Education**

29. Education is an important area of UNICEF programming for indigenous peoples in many countries in West and Central Africa. In Cameroon, for example, UNICEF has provided basic education and water and sanitation in schools for school-going Baka Pygmy children. This office has constructed school latrines, renovated classrooms, provided school materials to some 1,200 Baka Pygmy children, provided enrolment support to about 500 girl children in schools in the East, trained teachers working in Baka communities on the New Pedagogic Approach and provided birth certificates to several children.

30. UNICEF also supports education programmes for indigenous populations in Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; the San in Namibia; and remote area dwellers in Botswana. Bilingual intercultural education programmes in Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela continue to receive UNICEF support. UNICEF supports intercultural bilingual education initiatives, not only for indigenous peoples. All these initiatives have a rights-based approach that includes allowing for participation of right holders (preparing materials, being part of the decision-making of the school model, etc.) and building the capacity of duty bearers.

31. In Bolivia, UNICEF continues to support indigenous girl education by providing free transportation in remote areas. This project became the reference for the design of national strategies improving access to education for indigenous girls.

32. In Bolivia, in a large number of indigenous communities, empowerment of the indigenous population has been attained through the support to non-formal adult education programmes. These programmes have been seen to improve access to the exercise of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. One of the most visible examples of inequality between the indigenous and non-indigenous populations, are the illiteracy rates, especially of women. Against this background, the experience of UNICEF demonstrates that the population that has benefited from literacy and permanent education processes has made important changes in its access and participation in decision levels, because of increased empowerment. Also, the education processes substantially contribute to the reduction of the maternal and infant mortality rates. Furthermore, cultural and linguistic recovery strategies contribute positively to the fortification of the cultural identity of indigenous peoples.

33. UNICEF has for the past six years also provided essential basic social services to the indigenous population (the "Pygmies") in Congo Brazzaville, more specifically in the provinces of Likouala and Sangha. UNICEF, for example, has

built and restored schools, provided academic material and teacher training, and sent more than a thousand indigenous children to school.

## **B. Indigenous women**

34. UNICEF believes that gender equality benefits women and children, and has a tremendous positive impact on the development of the society as a whole. The particular exclusion of indigenous women and girls is a focus of UNICEF support in several countries, including Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru, the Philippines and the Sudan. The Office of the Ombudsperson for Indigenous Women in Guatemala, for example, helps respond to the triple discrimination (gender, ethnicity and social condition) that affects Mayan women. Most of the programmes for indigenous girls and women are focused on access to education.

## **C. Data collection and disaggregation**

35. During the preparation of a situation analysis or common country assessment, UNICEF country offices and United Nations country teams are requested to review data disaggregated by gender, age, location, or language group, and conduct in-depth assessments and analyses of the situation of highly disadvantaged groups that often include indigenous peoples, minority groups and populations living in remote areas, squatter areas and/or in extreme poverty. Where necessary, offices are to assist countries to improve national data collection systems so that disaggregated data are captured and analysed.

## **IV. Obstacles to implementation of recommendations of the Permanent Forum, or to other policies relevant to indigenous peoples**

36. UNICEF welcomes the recommendations issued by the Permanent Forum and is committed to working towards their implementation in line with its mission statement. Since recommendations are often numerous, it is the understanding of UNICEF that they will be realized in a progressive manner.

37. In the context of the UNICEF 2006-2009 medium-term strategic plan, country offices are requested to encourage indigenous organizations with which they operate to work together through alliances. This allows for a better use of resources in a larger scale of projects that benefit more people than a number of small projects, unless there is a specific reason to act on a small-scale level, such as fighting an epidemic threatening a small group or the disappearance of an indigenous language.

38. UNICEF work on indigenous issues remains a challenge because of ongoing political sensitivities around these issues. For instance, in some countries, the publication of data on the situation of indigenous peoples continues to be highly sensitive. However, UNICEF has taken action to try to overcome these constraints; for example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, UNICEF has undertaken several studies to raise awareness of culturally appropriate interventions, with the participation of indigenous communities. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela a study has been conducted on child-rearing practices of six ethnic groups, on the

basis of free, prior and informed consent. In Costa Rica, UNICEF has also undertaken surveys on the perceptions that non-indigenous people have of indigenous peoples, and in Chile, a survey on discrimination against indigenous adolescents was carried out.

## **V. Facilitating factors for the implementation of recommendations of the Permanent Forum**

39. At headquarters level, UNICEF is planning to increase its support to country offices by adopting a comprehensive approach to addressing issues related to excluded and marginalized groups, including indigenous peoples.

40. At the regional level, over the past three years, the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has also dedicated a team of two professionals, which then expanded to four, to assist country offices and intergovernmental bodies in addressing disparities as one of the main threats to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the region, affecting particularly indigenous peoples. More recently, and following the recommendation that the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues made in the context of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, UNICEF has started a dialogue with indigenous leaders from the Caribbean to identify the key challenges on indigenous issues and strategic actions to address these.

## **VI. Policies or similar tools on the issues of indigenous peoples**

41. In the context of its medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2009, UNICEF is using the human rights-based approach, which is based on the adoption of a comprehensive and holistic approach that focuses on tackling the root causes of discrimination and exclusion against indigenous children through public policies. The medium-term strategic plan document clearly recognizes that: "In some countries, the children of indigenous populations tend to be disproportionately deprived of basic services. UNICEF's cooperation will seek to benefit these children as a matter of priority, where needed".<sup>11</sup>

42. In addition, the UNICEF global programme policy and procedure manual emphasizes attention to the human rights and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at all phases of the programme process, as well as a focus on the most vulnerable and poor population group.

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<sup>11</sup> E/ICEF/2005/11.

## **VII. Other significant information regarding recent programmes, budgetary allocations or projects/activities regarding the issues of indigenous peoples**

### **General developments**

43. UNICEF has further strengthened its Advisory Group of Indigenous Leaders in the Latin American region. In Ecuador and Bolivia, UNICEF has supported the constitution and functioning of an Advisory Group of Indigenous Leaders for the United Nations country team.

44. Following the Second Decade Programme of Action Recommendation, UNICEF held the first meeting on the rights of indigenous children of the Caribbean region with indigenous leaders and focal points of that subregion. **The main recommendation is to strengthen information-sharing and networking; empowerment and capacity-building; and intercultural bilingual education.**

45. As part of the Durban evaluation process, the UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean is planning to convene a joint meeting of the Indigenous and Afro-descendent Advisory Groups to strategize on their role and contribution to this evaluation process.

46. In Cameroon, UNICEF was invited by the Ministry of Social Affairs, in March 2007, to join in preparatory activities for the International Forum for Indigenous People of Central Africa. The Forum, initiated by the Republic of Congo, took place from 10 to 15 April in Impfondo, Congo. UNICEF was represented at three working sessions and offered to support financially the participation of one representative of the Pygmy to the Forum; however, that offer was not taken up.

## **VIII. Areas not covered by recommendations addressed in UNICEF programmes**

### **Participation**

47. In the Philippines, UNICEF completed a participatory community appraisal of eight indigenous “Kabihug” communities in Camarines Norte, with extensive participation of indigenous youth as part of the research team (Indigenous Peoples Community Appraisal (Kabihug Study)). The appraisal focused on children, youth and women, and involved the participation of 968 members of the Kabihug community, which represents over 36 per cent of the entire population of this group in Camarines Norte. Among other findings, the study found that Kabihug children are almost completely uneducated, Kabihug births are almost universally unregistered and Kabihug families are routinely forced to abandon their homes and move off of plantations where they work.

### **Legislative reform**

48. UNICEF is providing support to legal and institutional reform in aid of indigenous peoples in several countries, including Ecuador and Peru. In Peru, for

example, UNICEF helped review national laws in terms of discrimination against children of indigenous people, providing legal and technical advice to the Senate and the House of Representatives. With respect to legislative reform, UNICEF has been currently asked to support the inclusion of child issues in constitutional processes in Bolivia and Ecuador, and is providing support to Costa Rica on a bill related to the autonomous development of indigenous people.

## **Health and nutrition**

49. Health and nutrition programmes for indigenous people are supported in Bolivia, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. In Peru, overcoming the cultural and geographic barriers that limit women's access to maternal health care in rural areas is an important step to accelerate progress towards Millennium Development Goal 5 — to improve maternal health. The programme, Cultural Adaptation of Maternity Services, developed by UNICEF Peru, has shown during the last five years that taking an intercultural approach to obstetric care increases the coverage of institutional obstetric services, reduces maternal and prenatal mortality and establishes a more gratifying relationship between the service provider and the user.

50. In rural and indigenous communities in Peru, many women cannot exercise their right to healthy and safe motherhood, owing to cultural, geographic and economic barriers. According to the Ministry of Health, women in rural areas are twice as likely as women in urban areas to die from pregnancy-related causes. Skilled attendance at delivery — one of the main determinants of maternal morbidity and mortality — was available to only 20 per cent of women in rural communities, compared to 69 per cent in urban areas, in 2000. Most rural women give birth at home, attended only by unskilled traditional midwives or relatives, often because of long-established beliefs and practices. Their babies are also less likely to survive. According to the latest official statistics, infant mortality in rural areas is twice as high as in urban areas. In Cuzco, one of the country's poorest departments, as many as 84 out of every 1,000 infants die before their first birthday, compared to an infant mortality rate of 17 per 1,000 live births in the capital, Lima.

51. The UNICEF Peru maternal health project included four strategies: (a) the establishment of maternal waiting houses to resolve the difficulty posed by geographic distance; (b) family and community support to make maternity and the mother's condition a priority; (c) comprehensive health insurance to cover the costs, and cultural adaptation of maternity services to eliminate cultural barriers that exist between the staff at health facilities and mothers who have deeply rooted cultural traditions with respect to childbirth; and (d) health staff trained to provide care while respecting the local culture, combining traditional practices — such as vertical birth — with their work.

52. This experience has transformed everyday health services by promoting cultural changes in the approach to care and in its routine elements. In the regions served by the UNICEF Peru programme of cooperation, three out of every four pregnant women now avail themselves of health-care services, particularly for childbirth, while prior to the intervention the ratio was only one in four. The experience has become local and regional policy, and was adopted in 2004 by the Ministry of Health as a national standard to be implemented as public policy

throughout the country. In 2005, the Ministry of Health approved national technical guidelines by which the traditional birth was assumed as public policy.

53. Another example of the human rights-based approach to development has been the support that UNICEF Peru has provided to the Kandozi people in the Amazon jungle. This group was about to disappear, owing to a Hepatitis B virus. In four years, the immunization coverage to prevent vertical transmission increased from 58 per cent to 92 per cent.

## **IX. Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People**

54. UNICEF is committed to achieving the objectives of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and welcomes the useful guidance of the Permanent Forum on priorities in this regard.

## **X. Information and suggestions regarding the special theme of the seventh session**

55. UNICEF is increasingly concerned about the vulnerability of children to the impact of climate change, e.g. increased disasters, threat to scarce water resources, food security and increased disease burden. **It is vital to address the issues of children and environmental issues, both in terms of the impact of the environment on the survival of children, growth and development of the important roles children can play as agents for change.**

56. UNICEF Innocenti Research Center, in cooperation with the UNICEF Programme Division at headquarters level, is currently developing a policy paper on the theme "Climate change and children from a human security perspective", with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece as Chair of the Human Security Network. The policy paper will develop a multi-generational, multidisciplinary vision of climate change and its implications for children, pointing the way to address it. Ideas for the exact scope, focus and organization of the paper are currently emerging, and will be further crystallized in the context of an expert consultation to be held in Florence, Italy, on 17 and 18 January 2008. However, a human security perspective on the issues regarding children might include the impact on indigenous children, and conversely, indigenous traditional knowledge as part of the solution.

57. UNICEF Cameroon hopes to grant financial support to ensure the participation of one representative of the Baka Pygmies in the session.

## **XI. Conferences and other meetings regarding indigenous issues in 2008-2009**

58. The UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are co-coordinators and sponsors of the second international conference on language development, language revitalization, and multilingual education in ethno-linguistic communities, being

held in Bangkok from 1 to 3 July 2008, jointly with an array of United Nations, NGO and university partners.

59. Furthermore, UNICEF Thailand is organizing in close coordination with the language development conference an international conference on the theme “National language policy: language diversity for national unity”, from 4 to 5 July 2008, in Bangkok.

60. In Congo Brazzaville, UNICEF is planning a workshop to discuss the implementation of the national action plan on indigenous peoples adopted in 2007, as well as a lender round table, in order to mobilize the necessary funds needed to achieve the objectives of the action plan.

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