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**Final Report of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Ignores Calls for Fossil Fuel Moratorium and Rejection of Carbon Market**

Contacts: Jihan Gearon, Indigenous Environmental Network, 218-760-1370
Tom Goldtooth, Indigenous Environmental Network, ien@igc.org

New York City, NY – Indigenous Peoples attending the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) are outraged that their rejection of the carbon market and a call for a moratorium on fossil fuel production has been ignored in the final report of the 7th Session of the PFII. The final report of the PFII hailed the World Bank funded carbon trading schemes, like the Clean Development Mechanism, as “good examples” of partnership despite the human rights violations and environmental destruction they have caused.

The Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN), attended the full two weeks of the UN PFII, held April 21st to May 2nd, 2008. The delegation represented over 20 Indigenous people, whose communities had been negatively impacted through the use and development of fossil fuels and climate change in the U.S. and Canada. The issues represented by the delegation included oil and gas development in Ponca, Oklahoma; coal mining and coal-fired power plants on the Navajo reservation; oil and gas development in Alaska, the tar sands operation in Alberta, Canada; a proposed oil refinery in Fort Berthold, North Dakota; a proposed liquefied natural gas terminal in Passamaquoddy, Maine; and uranium mining in New Mexico.

In solidarity with many other Indigenous Peoples from around the world, the IEN delegation demanded a worldwide moratorium on new exploration, extraction, and processing of fossil fuels on Indigenous People’s land and territories, as well as large scale bioenergy development and inclusion of and support for renewable, low-carbon and decentralized systems. In addition to issues faced in North America, the delegation stood in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples from Central and South America – strongly criticizing the international carbon market and rejecting the “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Destruction” (REDD) mechanism. By making statements to the forum, participating in regional caucuses, and hosting various side events, the delegation hoped to include this language in the UN PFII’s final report.

“Unfortunately, some Indigenous communities continue to support fossil fuel development in their territories in order to bring economic opportunities to their people. Support for and funding from the world community in renewable technologies guided by the voice of the people in these communities would help offset the incentives for more damage to our Mother Earth. We can then begin to find solutions,” stated Tom Goldtooth, Executive Director of the Indigenous Environmental Network.

Despite the opening statements made by Secretary-General of the UN Ban Ki-moon that applauded the choice of climate change as the special theme, saying that Indigenous Peoples “can and should play a role in the global response” due to their accumulation of first-hand knowledge of the impacts of environmental degradation related to climate change, the issue was not a central discussion throughout the forum. The specific climate policy positions and recommendations, seemingly supported by the PFII, were, in its final report railroaded through rather than supported by the majority of PFII participants. Many Indigenous Peoples, including the IEN delegation, voiced opposition to the climate change recommendations of the final report.

“Indigenous Peoples attending the 7th session of the Permanent Forum are profoundly concerned that our key recommendations on climate change are not being taken into account by the Permanent Forum. This Permanent Forum was created precisely to recognize, promote, and support the rights of Indigenous Peoples,” said Florina Lopez, Coordinator of the Indigenous Women’s Biodiversity Network of Abya Yala.

Casey Camp-Horinek a member of the Ponca Nation of Oklahoma and representative of the Indigenous Environmental Network in her testimony to the PFII, stated, “We cannot deny that the dangers of climate change violate the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. Climate change threatens our food systems and ability to practice our ceremonies, forces removals from our traditional lands and territories, and creates disproportionate health impacts on Indigenous Peoples. Climate change is more than an environmental issue to Indigenous Peoples. Our cultures are in crisis – the inability of governments to address the issue of climate change is tantamount to cultural genocide for our Peoples. The UN and relevant international

agencies must address these human rights violations immediately. We cannot wait; climate change is a real issue in the communities we are from. We must build upon the discussion of impacts, and take action to create real solutions to climate change and global warming now.”

In total, over 30 organizations at the forum called for the final report to include a section outlining grave problems in a background paper (Document E/C.19/2008/10) that illustrated “clean development mechanism projects being implemented in indigenous people’s territories with good results.” These included the Jeripachi wind power project in Colombia, which did not get the free, prior, and informed consent of the Wayuu people to build this wind farm in a sacred territory of the Wayuu People. Indigenous Peoples’ organizations contend the assassination of over 200 Wayuu People prior to the implementation of the project was to clear the area for this and other projects. Additionally, most of the energy generated from the wind farm is used to power the Cerrajon mine, the biggest open air coal mine in the world, which itself is known for numerous human rights violations and environmental damages. The IEN delegation worked closely with representatives of the Wayuu people who attended the Permanent Forum. They didn’t even know the project was being promoted as a good example.

Throughout the two weeks of the Permanent Forum, representatives consistently testified about the injustices associated with the clean development mechanism projects and pointed out how carbon trading allows fossil fuel production to expand in the homelands of Indigenous Peoples. However, in the final report of the Permanent Forum (document E/C.19/2008/L.2) that was adopted on May 2, 2008 these injustices have been ignored.

In response to the final report, Tom Goldtooth stated, “In promoting the clean development mechanism projects and carbon trading, the Permanent Forum is allowing coal and oil companies who are the biggest emitters for greenhouse gases, to continue to pollute. Promoting the commodification of the air is a corruption of our traditional teachings and violates the original instructions of Indigenous Peoples.”

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