

UNESCO - WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE
Thirty-fifth Session

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters
19-29 June 2011

Item 7B: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List
(Wednesday, 22 June or Thursday, 23 June)

Intervention by Mr. Paul Kanyinke Sena,
Member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Distinguished Chairperson, Committee members and Observers,

It is my great pleasure to address you today, on behalf of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

At the 34th session of the UNESCO –World Heritage Committee, the then Chairperson of the Permanent Forum addressed the session raising concerns by indigenous peoples over two proposed World Heritage Sites: the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) in Tanzania and the Northwest Hawaiian Islands Marine Monument (NWHIMM) referred to as Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

As you may be aware, at its annual sessions of the Permanent Forum, indigenous peoples often raise concerns about many issues and the matter of the proposed World Heritage Sites is one of such issue.

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established by Resolution 2000/22 which is mandated to play a key role in coordinating indigenous issues within the United Nations system which includes transmitting indigenous concerns, undertaking research, and providing expert advice and substantive input on indigenous peoples' issues to the UN system and other intergovernmental bodies.

In this regard, I would like to briefly inform you that the 10th session of the Permanent Forum focused on three main areas such as economic and social development, environment and free, prior and informed consent. The Forum's report will be submitted to ECOSOC in July.

One of the roles of the Permanent Forum is to implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is perhaps an important area that the Committee may wish to further collaborate with the Permanent Forum.

Mr. Chairperson.

At its tenth session, the Permanent Forum made the following recommendations:

- The Permanent Forum welcomes the initiative of UNESCO-World Heritage Committee and the advisory bodies IUCN, ICOMOS and ICCROM to review current procedures and capacity to ensure free prior and informed consent, and the protection of indigenous peoples' livelihoods, tangible and intangible heritage. During this review process, it would be advisable to review the inconsistency of approaches to natural World Heritage and cultural World Heritage. The Permanent Forum makes itself available to assist in the review and revision of UNESCO Operational Guidelines with regards to nominations and site assessments, as well as recommends UNESCO to invite indigenous peoples' representatives and experts to contribute to deliberations and recommended changes to procedures and Operational Guidelines.
- Finally, the UN Permanent Forum recommends that the UNESCO -World Heritage Committee and the advisory bodies IUCN, ICOMOS and ICCROM, scrutinise current World Heritage nominations to ensure they comply with international norms and standards of Free Prior and Informed Consent.

I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the States Parties of the Committee that the practice of inviting a member of the UNPFII to attend the WHC sessions be sustained and that a time slot is given to raise issues relevant to the various agenda items under discussion. Also, that the initial efforts to establish a World Heritage Indigenous Peoples' Council of Experts (WHIPCOE) be revisited and efforts to set up an appropriate mechanism whereby indigenous experts can provide advice to the World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Center be revived.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the States Parties of the Committee for giving me this brief opportunity to address the Committee and this is the beginning of developing a working relationship between the Committee and the Permanent Forum.

Thank you