



**FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Secretariat**

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## **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

**Statement by Joke Waller-Hunter**

**Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

**August 2004**

On this special day marking the end of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, I would like to congratulate the world's indigenous peoples on the substantial progress, which they have made to create a policy space in the complex forums of multi-lateral processes. These feats owe their success to the never tiring efforts and resolve of their representatives and supporters.

During this decade, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established as an advisory body to the United Nations Economic and Social Council on a range of issues critical to indigenous peoples. It has held three annual sessions, which have significantly contributed to raising awareness within the UN system for matters of chief concern to indigenous peoples. Out of this, a consciousness has grown for the relationship between indigenous peoples' issues and various UN processes. The increased consciousness for topics of importance to indigenous peoples has led to the UN system embracing such issues in various appropriate ways. An important development indeed!

The UNFCCC process, like many others, has been enriched and informed through the participation of indigenous peoples organizations over the last decade. The Parties to the UNFCCC recently considered the participation by indigenous peoples in the Convention process, and ways to use the opportunities under the Convention to foster a full and effective participation on matters of paramount concern to indigenous peoples. Parties acknowledged the importance of on-going participation by indigenous peoples organisations in the Convention process, especially through discussions on relevant agenda items, participation in workshops and informal contacts. Parties also invited the Convention bodies and the UNFCCC secretariat to facilitate an informed and interactive engagement by indigenous peoples' representatives, within the current process structures, in the years ahead.

As the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples draws to a close, on this the tenth anniversary year of the UNFCCC, we would like to look forward to the next era, during which both processes may build on past experiences and interact to counter the global climate change problem.