

United Nations Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
5th Conference of the Parties, April 25th - 29th, 2011
Global Indigenous Peoples Caucus Closing Statement
Presented by Monique Sonoquie, International Indian Treaty Council

Aiy yu qwee Mr. President and all esteemed delegations,

The Indigenous Peoples Global Caucus at COP 5 appreciates the significant achievements made at this and other sessions of the Stockholm Convention towards the elimination of persistent toxic chemicals from the global environment. However, we are concerned when exemptions, extensions and exceptions are made based on political and business considerations rather than the urgent obligations to protect human rights and the natural ecosystems on which all life, including human life, depends.

Health and subsistence are human rights. In his 1997 Report to the UN General Assembly on reforming and renewing the United Nations, the UN Secretary General affirmed the need to fully integrate the UN's human rights programme "*into the broad range of the Organization's activities*". Unfortunately, this integration has not yet achieved its full potential in the work of the Stockholm Convention.

For Indigenous Peoples the impacts of the production, export and use of dangerous toxics violate and threaten human rights protected under International Laws, norms and Conventions, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Reproductive health and justice, which includes our right to bear and raise healthy children, also continue to be undermined for Indigenous Peoples living at the source of application as well as in Arctic communities, far from the original point of exposure.

Indigenous Peoples reiterate our call for formal participation in this process so that we are able to work more effectively with the State parties for the realization of the Stockholm Convention's goals. In this regard, Mr. President, we appreciate the interest expressed during this session in our proposal for the establishment of an Indigenous Peoples Working Group for the Stockholm Convention. We look forward to working with you, the secretariat and State parties to put this in place in order to formalize the role, contributions and participation of Indigenous Peoples in this process.

In closing, the Global Indigenous Peoples caucus at COP 5 thanks you for the opportunity to make this closing statement and expresses its commitment to continue working with all participants for a clean, healthy and sustainable world for our future generations.

Wohklow Mr. President