

Statement IIPFWH (International Indigenous Peoples Forum on World Heritage) item 6 (Follow-up to the World Heritage Capacity-Building strategy)

Thank you Madam Chairperson,

Indigenous peoples around the world can be strongly and directly affected, both positively and negatively, by policies and actions undertaken in the name of world heritage sites. At the same time, indigenous peoples can and do make substantial contributions to the conservation of world heritage sites.

We have noticed, however, that the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy does not make any reference to indigenous peoples, and we therefore strongly recommend that the Committee request the Center and the Advisory Bodies, and recommend to Member States, to include specific action on capacity building with indigenous peoples in their capacity-building programmes and activities.

The Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage is in the process of developing a comprehensive capacity strengthening strategy too, and we would greatly welcome the joint development of activities as well as potential joint resource mobilization. A concrete proposal in that regard could be the establishment of a voluntary fund for indigenous peoples to facilitate our effective participation in world heritage processes, be it during sessions of the Committee and/or other processes such as identification, nomination, monitoring and management of sites.

The World Heritage Convention can in this way make meaningful contributions to the objectives to be achieved as referred to in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the UNESCO Policy on Indigenous Peoples, and the World Heritage Policy on Sustainable Development, all of which embrace the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This Declaration, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 under your distinguished Presidency, Madam Chairperson, as well as UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/69/2 of 2014, call on all UN specialized agencies and organizations to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of this Declaration and to establish ways and means of ensuring participation of indigenous peoples on issues affecting them, including through the mobilization of financial cooperation and technical assistance.

Finally Madam Chair, we again invite all Member States and organizations to the launch event of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on World Heritage, tonight at 6.30h p.m. in room Hawar. At this event, we will provide an overview of our provisional strategy for the stronger engagement of indigenous peoples with the World Heritage Convention processes, including in the work of the Advisory Bodies.

Thank you Madam Chair.