

7th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
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STATEMENT BY THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAJOR GROUP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT-
IPMG

Review of regional progress on SDGs five years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
“Accelerating action and delivery of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific”

I am Rhoda Dalang, from Center for Development Program in the Cordillera, delivering the statement on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group.

The ESCAP Review Report reveals that aside from the fact that no country is on track to achieve all the SDGs, some key SDGs are even regressing. These are worsening inequality and loss of forest and biodiversity which are at the core of indigenous peoples' survival, wellbeing and development. The alarming trend of regression illustrates that actions of States are pushing behind the more than 300 million indigenous peoples in the Asia Pacific region who are dependent on their traditional lands and resources. States are giving focus to economic growth driven by profit and exacerbated by corruption leading to wider inequality, massive environment destruction and widespread violations of the rights of indigenous peoples. This prevailing condition is further aggravated by the inadequate States' response measures to the present Covid-19 pandemic and discrimination in the provision of relief and other needed support and services. While dealing with the pandemic, indigenous peoples continue to confront more land-grabbing, criminalization of indigenous activists, loss or denial of their traditional livelihood, among others.

Achieving the 2030 Agenda will require good governance, coherent policies, clear measures and decisive actions by States to address systemic issues causing the regression of key SDGs. These actions must include the legal recognition of indigenous peoples as rights-holders and stewards of the environment and establishment of effective measures to ensure access to justice. The SDGs will not be achieved if States continue to deny our rights and make indigenous peoples invisible. WE EXIST as distinct groups bearing invaluable contributions to sustainable development. Therefore, data dis-aggregation by ethnicity is urgently needed in monitoring and reporting on the SDGs - to make progress on indigenous peoples be visible and areas of regression be identified and addressed.

Further, urgent transformational actions by States and other development actors need to include genuine partnerships with indigenous peoples in good faith; based on the protection of their rights and their meaningful participation in decision-making and processes related to SDGs at all levels.

These must take into account indigenous peoples' self-determined development and their roles and contributions to environmental protection, food security and sustainable resource management, among others.

We only have 10 years left to achieve the SDGs. If States and other key development actors continue to ignore the voices of rights-holders and marginalized groups and sectors including indigenous peoples; and if transformation actions are not undertaken to break the systems that are causing unsustainable development and social injustice, we will not only fail in achieving the SDGs, but we are also jeopardizing the present and future generations.