

AIPP Chairperson delivered Asia Indigenous Peoples' statement in the high level opening session of Indigenous Peoples' Day in the COP23



Mr. Kittisak Rattanakrajangri, Chairperson of Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) spoke on behalf of Asian Indigenous Peoples in the high level opening session of the Indigenous Peoples' Day on 7 Nov in Bonn Zone in the Twenty Third Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP23). This is the first time in the history of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that indigenous peoples' organisations are allowed to

organise Indigenous Peoples' Day in the Conference of Parties (COP). The other speakers in the high level opening session of the Indigenous Peoples' Day included; COP22 President, COP23 President and the UNFCCC Secretary.

Please find below the statement delivered by Mr. Kittisak Rattanakrajangri:

On behalf of the indigenous peoples from Asia who are in this COP, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the COP presidency, member states and the secretariat for allowing us to organize Indigenous Peoples Day in COP23. This is a very important step in strengthening our partnership and recognition of our roles and knowledge in contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In Asia, indigenous peoples, including indigenous women have been sustainably managing natural resources through customary laws and practices for hundreds of years, and we continue to do so. The recognition, protection and promotion of these traditional knowledge systems are vital in the fight against climate change, deforestation and water pollution and in ensuring sustainable development

On the other hand, eviction and threats of eviction from forestlands to give way to, economic land concessions, national parks, industrial plantations, tiger reserves, and other extractive industry projects continue among indigenous communities. The classification of dams as clean energy has engendered a global rush to build large dams, of which at least 200 are across Asia. Any projects on our rivers and lands must undergo a consultation process based on our right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as stipulated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Yet this is not done and what is worse, indigenous peoples who oppose these are considered criminals and face persecution, some are even killed.

If we are all serious to combat climate change, indigenous peoples defending our homes must be protected and our collective land rights should be recognized, promoted and fulfilled. Without security to our collective rights to lands, territories and resources, climate solution becomes incomplete.

Indigenous peoples of Asia are ready for constructive dialogues and engagement with parties in COP23 on the operationalization of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform. Let's help each other. Let's work together. Let's come out with a good decision in COP23 on a platform that will benefit not just indigenous peoples but the entire humanity.

Thank you