

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Seventh Session

Intervention by Larson Bill, Western Shoshone Defense Project

Joined by: Indigneous Network on Economies and Trade, Rigoberta Menchu Fund, Indigenous Environmental Network, Flying Eagle Women Fund, and others

Item 3: Climate change, biocultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges.

April 22, 2008

Good morning, Madame Chairperson, Members of the Permanent Forum:

My name is Larson Bill from the Shoshone nation located in the United States. Today I am here to talk to this Forum and all Indigenous Peoples on the world conditions, global warming and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Today we all face unjust laws made by man, imposed upon us and our traditions. The resources taken from our homelands are the four elements of the Creators' L.A.W.S.: Land, air, water, and sun or spirit. Today these are called resources, which are taken for exploitation and money. Mother Earth is not a resource, She is the source. Extracting her parts and using them in a bad way is creating an unbalance of the environment, Global Warming is the result of the mis-use of the four sacred elements for life, used in a bad way, not the indigenous way. They say climate change is a result of the unbalanced environment, we say that we are all being called upon to assist the environment during this difficult time using indigenous ways to educate the violators that they must change their behavior.

All the nations of the world are now facing the after shocks and looming environmental devastation at the hands of transnational companies who tear apart the communities where they operate. In most areas of the world, including even the United States, these non-human entities are more powerful than the governments and use their money and influence to create and maintain laws that legitimize the theft and destruction of indigenous lands and peoples. Thereby expediting the devastating impacts of Climate Change and Global Warming. We, Shoshone people, have met with some of these companies – they talk about social responsibility – but just like the U.S. government – they want only to apologize and then continue with business as usual with maybe just a few monetary benefits trickling onto the ground. There is no accountability and no real change in these industries of extraction and energy consumption.

We extend our appreciation to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination which in its Concluding Observations and Recommendations to the U.S. in 2007 and to Canada in March of 2008, has taken a bold step in informing both the U.S. and Canada that they must regulate their transnational corporations impacting indigenous communities outside of their borders. In following with these CERD recommendations and in order to fulfill its mandate under Article 42 of the Declaration, **we call upon the Permanent Forum to urgently address the impacts of transnational corporations on climate change and Indigenous Peoples by:**

- 1. Requesting a dialogue and attendant written report from the offices of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on business and human rights and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of**

indigenous people with identification of the transnational actors detailing the types of behavior which threaten the basic fibers of human rights and the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples. This Report to be completed prior to the 8th Session of the Permanent Forum with adequate time for consideration and comments by the Indigenous Regional Caucuses,

- 2. Calling upon ECOSOC to advise member states to adequately regulate and monitor the activities of their respective transnationals and to make preliminary reports back on their actions by the next General Assembly session, and**
- 3. Taking all further action necessary to call immediate attention to the role played by transnationals in the impacts of Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples.**

Thank you for your time and attention.