

**STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION  
PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES (13<sup>TH</sup> SESSION)  
AGENDA ITEM 7 (D): POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

**May 21, 2014**

**New York**

***Delivered by Mr. Patrizio Civili , Permanent Observer to the UN***

**Check against delivery**

Thank you Madam Chair,

For this opportunity to address briefly this Forum under agenda item 7(d) on the “Post-2015 development agenda”. We chose this item for our intervention at the current session of the Forum because some of the basic principles that this Forum is promoting – equality, non-discrimination, sustainability, culture and identity – are very much at the center of the causes that we, at IDLO, are advocating for in our participation in UN debates on shaping a new development agenda for the post-2015 period.

These principles – and a strong belief in legal pluralism and in the equal value of different legal systems, including traditional systems – constitute in fact the very core of IDLO’s *raison d’être*. IDLO is the only intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to advancing the rule of law. In carrying forward our mandate, we have very much in mind the distinction between rule by law and the rule of law. Beyond the formal aspects of the legal process, the rule of law speaks to outcomes. Consistent with human rights norms and standards, the rule of law implies certainty, predictability but, most of all, justice. The rule of law is not an abstract concept, but a concrete platform from which to fight discrimination and exclusion; ensure equitable, affordable and meaningful access to basic services; set regulatory frameworks for natural resource management; provide access to justice in a way that ensures that every individual, in particular vulnerable groups – that frequently face both structural and cultural barriers in accessing justice – can seek adequate redress; and empower people to participate fully in decision making processes, claim their rights, and hold institutions accountable.

In trying to advance the rule of law so conceived, we seek to ensure that our research and indeed our advocacy are rooted in experience and in lessons we learn from our operations. We have prepared a summary report that we are asking your secretariat to share with this Forum. It provides highlights of our operational work in support of indigenous issues and peoples. We hope that some of the achievements that have resulted from this work and our analysis of the many challenges that remain can be of some help to you in strengthening the evidence base for the causes that this Forum is

seeking to promote and advance.

During the course of 2013, IDLO undertook several activities involving participation, orientation and legal empowerment of indigenous peoples, particularly in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Collaborating with the UN System and key multilateral forums, IDLO is actively supporting activities that promote equal protection of the law, respect for human rights, and an approach to sustainable development and social inclusion particularly geared to the needs of the most vulnerable populations, especially women and indigenous peoples. Guided by its strong commitment to legal pluralism and local ownership of rule of law initiatives, IDLO has sought, through tailored activities aimed at engaging indigenous organizations with governmental actors and other stakeholders, to enable an environment of genuine mutual respect that serves to prevent conflicts, promote economic opportunity, advance legal empowerment and nurture cultural sensitivity.

As an integral part of its effort to support the implementation of indigenous rights according to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), IDLO looks forward to contributing to the preparations for, and to actively engaging in, the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (UNWCIP) to be held in New York next September.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

*The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) enables governments and empowers people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.*