

## **CSD 18 Indigenous Peoples contribution thematic discussions on Chemicals.**

The video we saw today in this session, is a good example of what happens daily in the life of Indigenous peoples and other communities who most of them do not have a voice therefore many of their problems go unreported and unaccounted for. We also associate ourselves with the statement just presented by the youth

The disruption of ecological balance and the destruction of traditional livelihood resources, resulting from landscape changes and pollution brought about by mining activities affects the health and well-being of indigenous communities.

Chemical materials have not only destroyed traditional survival resources but have found their way into the food systems. A 2002 **toxic release inventory** by the Environmental Protection Agency, called the TRI data, documents that gold mines were the largest source of mercury emissions in the tri-state region of Utah, Idaho and Nevada. Overall, TRI revealed that the hard rock mining industry was the nation's largest toxic polluter for the eighth year in a row. Studies in the coal-affected communities in the Appalachian and other regions of the world, where Indigenous Communities live, point to high rates of mortality, chronic heart, lung and kidney diseases. Impacts extend to the community, especially to the young and old. Among other minerals reported to be associated with health problems are asbestos, uranium and gold, primarily from the separation process.

Indigenous Peoples communities in many parts of the world comprise a disproportionately large number of the communities affected by uranium mining globally. The International Labor Organization (ILO) reports that mining is one of the most hazardous industries in which to work.

### **Recommendations**

1. Awareness, sensitization and education is important for communities and should be a priority so that these communities know how to handle substances and prevent risks
2. Capacity Building should be a continuous process in order to update indigenous and local communities on the new updates of chemicals management and all that is involved in them.
3. Policy formulation on sound management on chemicals should be participatory
4. Indigenous communities are the poor of the poorest and if we ever

want to archive the millennium development goals, Governments and industry should engage and develop better working relationship with Indigenous and local communities by respecting the rights and traditions.