

Intervention Indigenous peoples - Drought and desertification Morning - 5/8/08 By Lucy Mulenkei- Indigenous Caucus

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Thank the panelists for their good contribution and covering issues that Indigenous peoples major group have noted and prioritized are key to the development of Indigenous and local communities living in rural areas of our different continents. Dr Sarah Scherr discussed comprehensively on the need to fully involve communities in several activities and especially on Policy formulation and implementation. This has been key to our various recommendations and demands for governments to involve fully our communities, elders, women and youth in different developments activities and especially in Policy formulation as we all have the knowledge to help in the success of the developments. In Africa for Example, Nomadic Pastoralists, Hunter Gatherers have survived in drought and desert areas using their traditional knowledge of coping mechanisms and drought cycle management without any problems. Good examples are the San (Bushmen) from the Kalahari who have lived. Survived, protected and conserved all the rich biodiversity and ecosystem in the kahari for centuries, the Great Nomads of the north and their fellow colleagues from Sub Saharan Africa have moved from place, country to country with their livestock looking for pasture and water without destroying their environment but managing in a sustainable manner. Our communities have to be fully involve and recognize them and their knowledge and all will be successful.

We were happy to hear Dr. bakery Kante of UNEP give clear and important recommendations during his presentation on Synergies.

- To document Traditional Knowledge
- Have centers of excellence on drought and desertification management
- Support the UNCCD- we support all this recommendations

Having Synergies and linkage with all the Conventions is important but at the same time UNEWP and the commission has to open doors for the participation of Indigenous Peoples in different conventions. The lead conventions should follow the example of the convention on Biological diversity. We remind Government and all in this commission should the political declaration of WSSD ***"reaffirmed the vital role played by Indigenous Peoples in sustainable development."*** Thank you Mr. chairman