

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues Sixteenth Session, UN Headquarters, New York
Agenda Item 3: Follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum: (b) Indigenous youth,
Intervention by the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS)
in conjunction with the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), April 27, 2017
Presented by Christine Diindiisi McCleave, Turtle Mountain Ojibwe, NABS**

Thank you Madame Chair and respectful greetings to all delegations. For this agenda item, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) and the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) highlight the important recommendations of the report of the International Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Indigenous Children and Youth in Detention, Custody, Foster-Care and Adoption presented to the Permanent Forum (UNPFII) 9th session in 2010.

The Boarding School Healing Coalition was formed in 2012 to develop a strategy to focus public attention on the impacts on American Indian and Alaska Native individuals, families, and communities impacted by the US Indian Boarding School policy which was implemented in 1869. The US has not taken responsibility for the ongoing impacts which include intergenerational trauma, loss of language and culture, cycles of imprisonment, and thousands of missing children whose fate while in government custody remains yet unknown.

We underscore in particular the Experts' recommendations in paragraph 104, "*Experts call upon States to fully accept responsibility for the impacts of past state sponsored child removal programs and practices...*" and paragraph 119 "*Experts urge the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to conduct a follow-up seminar (prior to the 11th session) to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the EGM and document additional good practices, solutions and lessons learned...*"¹

This follow-up seminar has not yet been carried out. Since 2010, there have been many important developments from Indigenous Peoples around the world which could be presented and discussed at this seminar. For example, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Canada from 2010-2015 which investigated the cultural genocide of Indigenous children by the government and church-run residential schools. The Commission made 94 Calls to Action. The assessment of the implementation and impacts of those calls to action would be an important contribution to the development of models that could be applied in other countries which carried out similar programs.

In January 2016, our organizations made a joint statement at the Permanent Forum (UNPFII) Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Languages addressing the US Boarding School policy's intentional destruction of our languages. Examples of the relationship between Boarding School Policies on the viability of Native languages as well as effective models for language restoration being carried out by Indigenous Peoples would make a significant contribution to the Permanent Forum's preparations for the year of Indigenous Languages in 2019.

¹ E/C.19/2010/CRP. 8

An additional critical human rights concern is the unknown status of the many Indigenous children who never returned home after removal to Boarding Schools as well as the many unmarked graves at former Boarding School sites in the US. Disproportionate levels of Indigenous Children in State Custody in the US and many countries, as well as elevated impacts on disabled Indigenous children including greater levels of death in custody, are also in need of further investigation.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the follow up seminar called for by the EGM's Report from the UNPFII Ninth Session be organized in the next year.

Chi miigwich. Thank you.