

also welcomed the 1998 decision of the Commission on Human Rights to establish an open-ended inter-sessional ad hoc working group on the permanent forum for indigenous people in the UN system; recommended that the permanent forum be established as soon as possible in the course of the Decade, financed through the UN regular budget; and, encouraged the High Commissioner for Human Rights to consider organizing a follow-up workshop to put into practice the recommendations arising from the Madrid Workshop for indigenous journalists.

#### **Resolution related to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations**

The resolution (1998/23), *inter alia*: reaffirmed the urgent need to recognize, promote and protect more effectively the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples; welcomed the decision of the Working Group (WG) to highlight the specific theme of "Indigenous peoples - education and language" during its 1998 session, and the fruitful discussions on this and others themes; recommended that the WG cooperate as a body of experts in any conceptual clarifications or analysis, which might assist the working group elaborating the draft declaration; welcomed the invitation from the Director-General of the UNESCO to host the 1999 session of the WG at the organization's headquarters in Paris; endorsed the WG's decision, in view of the concerns expressed by a number of indigenous organizations, not to take a final decision on the invitation until it receives information at its 1999 session on the results of the consultations with their communities on this issue; recommended that the WG adopt as the principal theme "indigenous peoples and their relationship to land" for the 1999 session; noted the WG's decision to request, for its session in 2000, a preliminary working paper on possible principles and guidelines for private sector energy and mining concerns that may affect indigenous lands; and, requested the High Commissioner to encourage studies and to call for an international workshop on the rights to food and adequate nutrition of indigenous peoples as they relate to their access to land, cultural heritage and health.

#### **Decision related to the study on treaties and agreements**

The Decision (1998/107), *inter alia*: noted that the late submission of the study allowed only limited discussion of it by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the Sub-Commission; requested the Special Rapporteur to submit, not later than 31 March 1999, a new version of the final report, including any revisions that might be introduced to the present unedited English version of that document in the light of the debates held at the 1998 sessions; requested the Secretary-General to give the Special Rapporteur all necessary facilities to secure the completion of this task, in particular the distribution of his final report in all working languages, to the Working Group and the Sub-Commission in time for their respective 1999 sessions.

## **Resolutions of the General Assembly**

### **International Decade of the World's Indigenous People**

At the 1998 session the General Assembly (GA) adopted by consensus a resolution on the International Decade (A/C.3/53/L.19). The GA, *inter alia*: recalled that the goal of the Decade is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health; affirmed its conviction of the value and diversity of the cultures and forms of social organization of indigenous peoples; also affirmed that the development of indigenous peoples within their countries will contribute to the socio-economic, cultural and environmental advancement of all the countries of the world; emphasized the importance of strengthening the human and institutional capacity of indigenous peoples to develop their own solutions to their problems; and requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as coordinator for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, to: (a) continue to promote the objectives of the Decade, taking into account the special concerns of indigenous people; (b) proceed with the organization of the workshop for research and higher education institutions focussing on indigenous issues in education; (c) give due regard to the dissemination of information on the situation, cultures, languages, rights and aspirations of indigenous peoples; and (d) submit, through the Secretary-General, an annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the programme of activities of the Decade. The GA also reaffirmed that the adoption of a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples was a major objective of the Decade; and that among the objectives of the Decade is consideration of the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations system. It encouraged governments to support the Decade by: (a) preparing relevant programmes, plans and reports in relation to the Decade, in consultation with indigenous peoples; (b) seeking means, in consultation with indigenous peoples, of giving indigenous peoples greater responsibility for their own affairs and an effective voice in decisions on matters that affect them; (c) establishing national committees or other mechanisms involving indigenous peoples to ensure that the objectives and activities of the Decade are planned and implemented on the basis of full partnership with indigenous peoples; (d) contributing to the UN Trust Fund for the International Decade; (e) contributing to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations; (f) considering contributing to the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, in support of the goals of the Decade; and (g) identifying resources for activities designed to implement the goals of the Decade, in cooperation with indigenous peoples and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Finally, the GA invited UN institutions, programmes and specialized agencies to: (a) give increased priority and resources to improving the conditions of