

**Commission on Sustainable Development 13**  
**Interactive discussions on Access to housing and public services.**  
**Indigenous Peoples.- 12.4.2005**

*Lucy Mullenkei, Indigenous Information Network and Estebancio Castro, International  
Indian Treaty Council*

Thank you Madam Chair,

Indigenous Peoples live in remote areas worldwide. These areas when it comes to Government planning are easily forgotten. Most of the Peoples have also now settled in their territories and due to poverty and increased population cannot afford good and safe shelter where public services are not available and where available are poor. The problem has caused most of the indigenous peoples productive group to move to urban areas causing women stress and vulnerability and security risks for women and children

- As we think of upgrading slums in urban areas, there is need for equitable attention of the rural areas too and especially the remote areas where the Indigenous Peoples and local communities live.
- Development of action plans on human settlements and implementation of integrated land use planning and IWRM plans must be strengthened to provide security of tenure and legal protection of indigenous peoples lands and territories.
- Legal protection for Indigenous Peoples rights in development processes, planning and implementation of accessible water, sanitation, labor, and other infrastructure projects for human settlements are some of the outstanding obstacles that must be addressed.
- Safeguards must be put in place to protect vulnerable and poor communities impacted by human settlement and involuntary resettlement, those whose well-being is closely linked to biodiversity and natural world integrity.
- Strengthen and build capacity of Indigenous and local communities applying both improved housing while focusing on indigenous Knowledge to ensure full and effective participation of the communities.
- Financing Institutions should provide funding to assist the Indigenous Peoples and the local communities to control and to manage their own services and improve their shelters for sustainable development.
- States must develop and strengthen policies, targets and institutional frameworks to improve human settlements services.

Thank you Madam Chair.