



26 March 2008

Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to share with you the **Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues** which were adopted by the United Nations Development Group on 1 February 2008. This represents a major achievement for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, and provides the United Nations system with an important opportunity to make a difference in the lives of indigenous peoples and to include them as full partners in our work in the field.

These Guidelines respond to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which specifically calls upon the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to contribute to the full realization of its provisions. They demonstrate the great potential of inter-agency initiatives: fifteen agencies, funds, programmes and departments participated in the UNDG Task Team on Indigenous Issues, while thirty-one were part of the Inter-agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues that supported the preparation of this document.

We must now strive to fully implement these Guidelines, and to ensure that we make a difference on the ground.

Handwritten signature of Sha Zukang in Chinese characters.

Sha Zukang

Under-Secretary-General
and Chairman of the International Decade
of the World's Indigenous People

Handwritten signature of Kemal Dervis in cursive.

Kemal Dervis

Chair
UN Development Group

To: UNDG Heads of Agencies, Resident Coordinators, UN Country Team members

cc: CEB secretariat, HLCP secretariat