

New York, 30 April 2012

**JOINT STATEMENT BY WOMEN, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND WORKERS
AND TRADE UNIONS MAJOR GROUPS**

On the occasion of the meeting of the Rio+20 Bureau with Major Groups

Read by Grace Balawag, from Tebtebba (indigenous Peoples' International Centre on Policy Research and Education) and Organizing Partner for the Indigenous Peoples Major Group

Ambitious and Just Transitions to the Futures We Want

Co-chairs, members of the Bureau, distinguished delegates, fellow major group representatives

On behalf of indigenous peoples, women and trade unions, I would like to share with you some ideas which found strong consensus among us.

Our world is wealthy on natural and human diversity, and our three groups are an example of the latest. This has not been a barrier for agreeing on key elements of the way forward.

We ask you to go beyond the differences apparent in the negotiations, and think what your people and future generations need the most, and what can Rio+20 do for them: a reinvigorated commitment to their rights, with a coherent, ambitious and rights-based framework for action.

We have two key messages:

First, Rio+20 must be based and framed on rights that represent the heritage of years of negotiations at the international level, as well as national and local struggles. We are talking about human rights, rights of workers, women's rights, indigenous peoples' rights, we are talking about peoples' empowerment and participation which are the wellspring of sustainable development. These rights guarantee the capacity of each one of our communities to live in freedom and prosperity, while guaranteeing respect for diverse ways of living, diverse jobs, and diverse economies. Rio+20 is part of a long history of global governance, and as such, must build on those milestone principles in sustainable development: precaution, polluter pays, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities. These principles and rights belong to the Rio heritage which must be retained, strengthened, and restated with renewed political will.

Second, we also expect Rio+20 to deliver on those rights and principles by articulating new elements in the sustainable development agenda. And we have some ideas and concrete proposals.

Rio+20 must integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability, and expand to incorporate the cultural and ethical values of equity and justice. Decisions must satisfy progress across all dimensions of sustainability: if it implies trade offs, we ask you to re-think again and find holistic solutions.

Rio+20 could move forward on new ideas such as non privatisation of the commons, like water, the no-go zones for mining and extractive industries, the idea of no-regression on previous commitments, the creation of a participatory multilateral mechanism to evaluate other new technologies for their environmental, health and socio-economic impacts.

Rio+20 must also be the place where initiatives are taken to make diverse local economies, transformed workplaces and communities, the heart of the sustainable development agenda.

This requires the adoption of a right-based framework for sustainable development also for the post 2015 development agenda.

Each of the three MG representatives will give concrete proposals how these rights should be implemented, and how Rio+20 should agree on these implementation proposals.

Thanks for your attention