UNREPRESENTED NATIONS AND PEOPLES ORGANIZATION

RESOLUTION TEMPLATE FOR THE XIII GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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RESOLUTION

After a long struggle, the indigenous Jumma people compelled the government of Bangladesh to engage in negotiations which resulted in the signing of the ‘CHT Accord’ on 2nd December 1997 in order to resolve the CHT crisis through political and peaceful means. However, the main issues of the CHT Accord, such as, preservation of tribes-inhabited characteristics of the region; devolution of effective authority to the CHT Regional Council and three Hill District Councils, resolution of land disputes; withdrawal of all temporary camps and de facto military rule and ‘Operation Uttoton’ for demilitarization of the region; rehabilitation of returnee Jumma refugees and internally Jumma displaced families; amendment of all the other laws applicable to CHT including the Police Act, Police Regulation and CHT Regulation 1900 to make them in conformity with the Accord; rehabilitation of Bengali settlers outside CHT with dignity etc. are yet to be done.

After 15 years of intensive lobbying and campaigning demanding for the amendment of these contradictory provisions of the Act, the government has amended contradictory provisions of the CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act 2001 in the Parliament on 6 October 2016. But the CHT Land Commission could not start its functions for resolution of land disputes due to lack of adequate funding, staff and office set-up. The government is yet to allocate adequate funding, approve adequate manpower and set up two sub-offices in the Rangamati and Bandarban districts. The Rules of Business of the Commission has not been finalised to this today. The CHT Regional Council submitted a draft Rules of Business to the government on 1 January 2017, but no substantial progress has been made in finalizing and approving it. It would be difficult for the Commission to start processing cases relating to land disputes as well as adjudicating them without the Rules of Business.

Because of the lack of implementation of the CHT Accord, human rights situation in the CHT is worsening very sharply. Land grabbing, violent communal attacks, violence against indigenous women and girls committed by Bengali settlers, in most cases in collusion with security forces are common in the CHT; and in those cases, the perpetrators enjoy absolute impunity. Increasing massive political migration of the outsiders continues, and religious militancy is now in alarming scale in the CHT. With support of the civil and military administration, racist Bengali settlers’ group are active with their hatred against the process of the implementation of the CHT Accord and indigenous Jumma peoples.

The UNPO General Assembly,

Appreciating the Government of Bangladesh for recognising rights to self-determination of indigenous Jumma people in CHT by signing CHT Accord in 1997;

Noting that Bangladesh is one of the current members of the UN Human Rights Council; Bangladesh is one of the top contributors to the UN Peace Keeping
Mission; and the current government of Bangladesh has been awarded for its significant achievement in Millennium Development Goals (MDG);

Fully believing recommendations of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in its 11th session in 2011 regarding speedy and proper implementation of CHT Accord and prevention of military personnel and units that are violating human rights from participating in the UN peacekeeping operations;

Appreciating voluntary commitment of the Government of Bangladesh in the second cycle of the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2013 and in the election manifestos in 2008 and 2014 regarding implementation of CHT Accord and ending the culture of impunity in order to ensure access to justice of indigenous peoples including protection of women and girls;

Condemning against the Bengali settlers led by ruling party with active support of the army-police forces perpetrated an organized attack involving arson and plundering the Jumma houses in Longadu under Rangamati district which left around 250 houses burnt to ashes and an elderly woman burnt to death;

Expressing grave concern continuing de facto military rule named “Operation Uttoran (Operation Upliftment)" imposed in 2001 in violation of the provision of the CHT Accord relating to demilitarization, rather authorising the military forces for their interference and domination over the civil administration, law and order, and also on the matters of implementation of the CHT Accord;

Therefore, we, the UNPO General Assembly:

1. Solemnly affirms our support to the fullest implementation of CHT Accord of 1997 in its letter and spirits.

2. Calls upon the Government of Bangladesh for declaring a timeline (roadmap) for speedy and proper implementation of the CHT Accord giving priority to devolution of authority to the CHT Regional Council and three Hill District Councils, resolution of land disputes, withdrawal of all temporary camps and de facto military rule ‘Operation Uttoron’ from CHT, relocation of government-sponsored Bengali settlers outside the CHT, among others.

3. Calls upon the United Nations, the European Union and the international community to support proper implementation of the CHT Accord with priority given to the land issue and good governance as well as to provide necessary economic assistance to the CHT in line with the provisions of the CHT Accord and to exert their good offices upon Government of Bangladesh for implementation of the resolutions of the UNPFII adopted in 2011 about fullest implementation of the CHT Accord and screening of armed forces personnel in deploying in the UN Peacekeeping Force.

4. Calls upon the government of Bangladesh to end the culture of impunity in order to ensure access to justice for indigenous Jumma people, including immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the persons including security and law enforcement personnel involved in incidents of looting, killing and arson in the shops and houses of the Jumma peoples in Longadu.

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