

Statement on Item 4 (continued) Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

On International Expert Group Meeting on the theme: "The rights of Indigenous Peoples, including those in voluntary isolation and initial contact in the context of critical minerals".

Thank you Chair.

I speak today on behalf of the Alyansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara and the Asia Indigenous Peoples Caucus to bring urgent attention to the O'Hongana Manyawa. They face cultural discrimination, depopulation, and unjust legal persecution. Now, their survival is threatened by **nickel mining** for electric vehicle batteries.

**French company Eramet**, via Weda Bay Nickel, operates the world's largest nickel mine on their ancestral lands—despite their own reports confirming the presence of **uncontacted O'Hongana Manyawa** since 2013. At least **500 uncontacted people** live in voluntary isolation, a right protected by international law.

Instead of respecting this, mining projects now cover over 40% of their territory. This has caused deforestation, food insecurity, forced displacement, and—most gravely—exposure to diseases to which they have no immunity.

The uncontacted O'Hongana Manyawa are the guardians of Halmahera's forest, managing it sustainably for generations through rich cultural and spiritual traditions.

We therefore call on this Forum to:

1. Urge the Indonesian Government to recognise and protect the O'Hangana Manyawa as Indigenous Peoples entities in North Maluku;
2. Urge the Government of Indonesia to immediately halt mining operations on uncontacted territory;
3. Establish and enforce a permanent **no-go zone**, with an ecological and cultural buffer area, to protect their lands from intrusion;
4. Condemn any plans of forced contact or settlement, which pose a direct threat of disease and cultural extinction;

5. Call on downstream users, including electric vehicle manufacturers and battery producers, as well as institutional investors, to adopt robust policies and due diligence measures that exclude all operations linked to uncontacted Indigenous Peoples;

We cannot claim progress on the Sustainable Development Goals or on green or clean energy transition- while enabling the dispossession and disappearance of uncontacted peoples such as the O' Hongana Manyawa who have upheld distinct ways of life rooted in self-determination. Let us instead ensure that a truly sustainable and just transition includes and safeguards the O'Hongana Manyawa.

Thank you.