

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL****MESSAGE TO THE 12th SESSION OF THE UN
PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES
New York, 20 May 2013**

*Delivered by Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General
for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations*

I am pleased to send greetings to all those gathered for the 12th session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

This year, your deliberations will place special emphasis on the implementation of the Permanent Forum's recommendations on health, education and culture.

We must treasure, reflect and protect the rich heritage and value systems of indigenous peoples, starting with education. We must also do more to improve the availability of health care services to indigenous peoples, while respecting traditions. And in all we do, we must have a better understanding of the views and values of indigenous peoples by engaging them in decision-making and providing a platform for issues affecting their lives and livelihoods.

As we intensify action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in less than 1,000 days and as Member States begin to define a post-2015 development agenda, we must work to ensure that all our development efforts address the priorities and vision of indigenous peoples, in keeping with their identity and culture. Let us also work together to help make next year's World Conference on Indigenous Peoples a success.

Once again, thank you for joining forces to address these and other challenges. I wish you all the best in your deliberations.