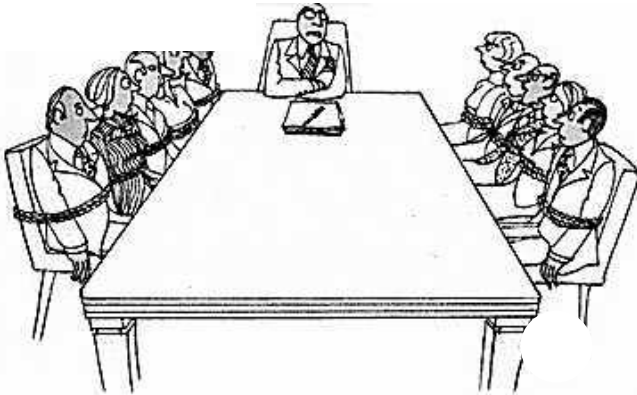


## ***SPECIAL!!! SPECIAL!!! SPECIAL!!!***

### **SHOCKING STEP-BACK FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CBD**

While the CBD calls for full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities and NGOs in the implementation and in the processes of the Convention, at national, regional and international levels (Goal 4.3 of the Strategic Plan and 2010 Biodiversity Target), the meeting on protected areas being held this week at the FAO headquarters in Rome has been a shocking step back.

From day one, upon arrival at the plenary hall, indigenous and NGO delegates found themselves squeezed in tiny seats without access to a microphone and a desk and separated from the government delegates. This built a gap among delegates and sent a negative signal on how participation would unfold.



The worst happened on Wednesday afternoon when the chairperson refused to allow interventions from the representative of the Indigenous Peoples Committee on Conservation (IPCC). Citing some alien UN rules, he tried to justify something that has not happened since time immemorial. Only after the EU delegate suggested to the chair that indigenous and NGO representatives should be allowed to

provide their views during the ongoing informal session, did the chairperson unexpectedly gave the floor to the indigenous and NGO representatives, citing that he was doing so on an exceptional basis. He insisted that only Parties can take part in what he considered was an 'informal' session.

The indigenous representative pointed out that Parties were taking important decisions that impact on indigenous peoples' lives and it is common practice in the CBD for civil society organizations to timely intervene on proposed Conference Room Papers (CRP) text.

Since the chairperson adamantly stuck to his position, the indigenous caucus gracefully walked out. After a group discussion, a note was delivered to the Executive Secretary, Dr Ahmed Djoghlaif, requesting him to meet with the caucus in order to bring this unexpected and unacceptable situation to the Bureau.

**Has this killed any hope to achieve full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities by 2010?**