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Never drink from the same cup:

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KIPI GEORGE

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE BARAKWENA IN NAMIBIA

Distinguished Guests Brothers and Sisters.

On behalf of the Barakwenas, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) headed by Bishop Kleopas Dumeni and the Government of the Republic of Namibia under the leadership of his excellency, Dr. Shafiishuna Sam Nujoma, may I thank you for inviting me to participate in this important conference for the Indigenous People which takes place in Copenhagen, Denmark.

I also feel honored to say a word in the conference. The colonial government in our country divided us in our homelands, but immediately after independence our government of the Republic of Namibia revoked this. During the Land Conference in June 1992 as well as it is in the Constitution of our country now, the right to occupy the land was emphasised. The Barakwena community feel this is a very important step, because without land you are not able to develop yourself.

Many years ago, many communities in Namibia had the land where they lived, but the San community were moving from one place to another, because they did not have the land where they settled, but today the Government of the Republic of Namibia after 3 years of independence and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia have settled more than 6000 San people in Namibia including the Barakwena San community of West-Caprivi in Namibia.

For many years the colonial government declared our land in West Caprivi to be a nature conservation area where the people were not considered, but only animals and trees, however our government today gave land to the San community to cultivate and for grazing. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia is now helping the San people to develop this land, and we are thankful.

One of the serious problems among the Barakwenas of Namibia is work, as you may know many of the men have been working in the former South African Defence Force, and after Resolution 435, they

were left without work. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia has so far employed some members. However there is still a need for employment to improve the living standard.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia has so far built three primary schools and three clinics, which the Barakwenas feel very happy about. The schools and clinics mentioned above will enable us to be self dependent and develop our community. May I appeal to the international community in this conference to support us for further development in our community. At the same time the schools I mentioned built by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia are contributing to the education of our people, however, there are still not enough classrooms, and we are asking the international community to support us with materials and funds.

The government and ELCIN have drilled boreholes in our area, but because of the growing population, these boreholes are not enough to provide potable water for the people. Again assistance is needed in this field.

At the end may I mention the area of consideration:

1. The Land
2. Education
3. Housing
4. Health
5. Income Earning Projects and
6. Water

Brothers and Sisters I thank you all.

CHAPTER 3

PYGMIES OF CENTRAL AFRICA