



25 April 2017

IITAC and ACAT Intervention on Listing of New POPs

Given by Tai Pellicier

Hahom, Thank you, Mr. Chair

I am presenting this statement on behalf of The International Indian Treaty Council, Alaska Community Action on Toxics and the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus we are very pleased to be here addressing the listing of DecaBDE's. We know that in the past, Indigenous Participation has not been as it is stated it should on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Our Indigenous relatives from the Arctic, are living in a non-relenting Typhoon of Toxics and Chemicals that are drawn to the North. They depend on the migration of animals, fish and birds for their Traditional sustenance. Studies have shown that these same animals, birds and other food sources, human blood serum and breast milk are showing extremely high rates of DecaBDE's. Indigenous communities have been enduring the fact our territories and in my case, our islands in the Caribbean, have become the dumping ground for many. We state, that in Indigenous Cultures Globally, Water, Land, Mother Nature, are not perceived as commodities; we are interconnected both physically and Spiritually.

For example: Our island of Borikén (aka Puerto Rico), a colony of the United States, is being battered with Environmental Racism and Violence. The town of Arecibo suffers the contaminating harms of a Battery Recycling Company; they have been fined several times by EPA. Arecibo has been declared a “non-attainment area” since 2011, now a Waste Incinerator is in the process, regardless of the opposition, scientific evidence and rise of non-contagious diseases in the area. Our sub-terrain aquifers have shown to have rates of contamination higher than those of surface water. We have an accumulation of over 60 years of military waste and that island municipality have cancer rates 30% higher than the main island. In Latin America and the Caribbean NEW phones are refurbished phones. Their lifespan will be shorter and they will die and be disposed of IN OUR LANDS. The same happens with other forms of electronics. We have also seen an increase in developmental issues and learning disabilities in our children.

We embrace the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and would like to remind the States of their commitment to those 17 goals and 169 targets.

We urge the delegates to include DecaBDE's in Annex A of the Convention with no exemptions. An IPEN study found children's products purchased in the European Union polluted with OctaBDE and DecaBDE due to recycling. An exception would be absolutely outrageous.

Your decision is critical to protect the health and well-being of ALL people, including Indigenous Peoples.  
Hahom. Thank you.