Committee: United Nations General Assembly

Topic: Special Session on Indigenous Affairs

Country: The Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea, also known as South Korea, is one of the few countries that has maintained the survival of one ethnic group. The Korean population is for the most part, from the same ethnic and racial background; making it a homogenous population. However, there is a small minority of people from nearby countries such as Japan and China who reside in South Korea. (“Demographics of South Korea” 2015) Regarding issues on Indigenous Affairs, South Korea has shown a support towards the issues at hand; this has been demonstrated in their decision to sign the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). South Korea was one of the 144 states who voted in favour of implementing guidelines to ensure that the rights of Indigenous groups are maintained. (“Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples” n.d)

In terms of health, one of the major issues that Indigenous groups are faced with is the risk of these vulnerable populations getting Tuberculosis. This is also a present issue for the South Korean government. However, the implementation of South Korea’s National Tuberculosis Program has impacted the spread of the disease and is seen as a successful model for other countries and at risk groups, such as Indigenous populations. (Kim 2015)

Regarding economy, South Korea has proven to be an emerging economic force and technologically industrialized country; yet, with a growing economy comes environmental problems. (“Forbes: South Korea” 2015) Since the world is extremely interconnected, one country’s emissions cause environmental problems to other countries as well; which has an impact on the people living in those countries who are dependent on natural resources to survive. Therefore, at the 2015 Paris Climate Conference South Korea formally proposed to cut 37% of their emissions. (“Paris Climate Conference: South Korea” 2015) South Korea values the importance of environmental change, especially for the greater good.

Once again, due to South Korea’s homogenous population there are no programs implemented for the development on the lives of Indigenous people. Nevertheless, South Korea does believe in improving the lives of Indigenous groups seeing as they signed the UNDRIP resolution. (“Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples” n.d)

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