



PERMANENT MISSION OF FINLAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
17th session

Item 10: Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of
Indigenous Peoples,
The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) and others

Joint statement by the Nordic Countries

Addressed by

H.E. Mr. Kai Sauer
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations
Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

New York, 18 April 2018

(check against delivery)

Thank you Chair,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark together with Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country Finland.

In celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, States must uphold their shared commitment to the goals of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous peoples' human rights defenders working to protect their social and economic rights are particularly vulnerable to violence and killings. We call on all States to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples. At the same time we call on all States to defend those promoting Indigenous Peoples' rights from attacks and to ensure their safety, whether the threat comes from state or non-state actors.

Both the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples EMRIP work to ensure that Indigenous Peoples' voices are heard. Their work and independence must always be respected. We have noted with great concern reports on the current situation for the Special Rapporteur. We reiterate our strong support for this mandate as well as other UN Human Rights Council Special Procedures.

We welcome the operationalization of EMRIP's mandate, as one achievement in the follow-up to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and to reaching the ends of the Declaration. We hope to see it leading to strengthened support to the realization of Indigenous Peoples' rights. In this context, we wish to welcome EMRIP's first-ever country mission to Finland in February and the advice provided to the ongoing work to revise the Sámi Parliament Act.

To ensure complementarity in the best interest of achieving the ends of the UN Declaration, we encourage the Special Rapporteur and EMRIP, as well as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, to continue close coordination with each other.

A question to both the Special Rapporteur and the Chair of EMRIP: What is your assessment of the scope of intimidation and reprisals against Indigenous Peoples trying to cooperate with you?

Thank you for your attention.