

**Tenth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

New York 16-27 May 2011 *Carsten Staur*

Statement by Denmark – Ambassador ~~Erik Jensen, Deputy~~ Permanent Representative  
on agenda item 4b:

**Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

Thank you Madam Chair,

It is with great satisfaction, that Denmark once again participates in the annual discussion of the Permanent Forum on the issue of human rights. We would like to reiterate our strong support for the efforts by the Permanent Forum - since its creation – to advance the human rights of indigenous peoples. The Forum plays a highly important role in promoting respect for and full application of the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in accordance with article 42 of the Declaration.

We are much encouraged by the fact that the UN Declaration now enjoys universal support and hope that this will pave the way for an engaged international commitment to ensure the implementation of the provisions set out in the Declaration. The challenge ahead is how to convert principles into practical results on the ground.

Denmark attaches high importance to the protection and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples at national and international level. It is a priority in both our foreign policy and our development cooperation and is identified as thematic key priority in the Danish Government's strategy for its international human rights cooperation.

Denmark will continue to speak out for the advancement of indigenous peoples' rights in relevant international fora where indigenous issues are discussed, including in this Forum and in the context of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, we engage actively in international negotiations on indigenous issues - including on resolutions in the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly - that will help advance the implementation of the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples.

The establishment of the Self-Government arrangement for Greenland in 2009 is an illustration of Denmark's de facto implementation of the UN Declaration vis-à-vis Greenland. Furthermore, the Government of Greenland strives on a daily basis to implement important provisions of the Declaration. As reported last year, the Act on Greenland Self-Government opens for expansion and transfer of further competences and responsibilities from the Danish authorities to the Greenland authorities.

Denmark's work to mitigate and adapt to climate change is another example of our efforts to implement provisions of the UN Declaration. I would like, in particular, to mention the international agreement on Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation – REDD

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that was reached at COP 16 in Cancun last December. Denmark supports the REDD programmes in the World Bank and the UN. We advocate in the steering committees the importance of adhering to the rights of indigenous peoples. Specifically, we point to the necessity of not only consulting with relevant stakeholders, but obtaining consent from indigenous peoples and local communities.

In cooperation with the Government of Greenland, Denmark has recently completed a review of Denmark's 2004 strategy for support to indigenous peoples. The Review was officially launched on April 8 this year at an event co-hosted by the Danish Minister for Development and the Government of Greenland. The Review points to very significant results from the Danish effort - both with regard to international and normative processes as well as to improvements on the ground for indigenous peoples through implementation of the principles set forth in the UN Declaration. The recommendations and conclusions listed in the review will feed into the elaboration of our future efforts to promote the rights of indigenous peoples.

I am very happy to inform you that – in accordance with one of the recommendations of the Review - Denmark has decided to offer financial assistance to the newly established UN Indigenous Peoples' Partnership, which will be officially launched on Friday and where we will announce our concrete pledge. We are pleased that a key element of the future work of UNIPP is implementation of the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples at country level. Denmark is happy to be contributing further to this effort.

Thank you.