

18th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Agenda item 11: Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and the Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Wednesday April 24th 2019

Nordic statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the Nordic countries

As delivered

Thank you Chairperson,

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

It remains a longstanding priority of the Nordic countries to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples. Both the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples play an important part in ensuring the realization of the UNDRIP – to ensure that rights on paper are turned into reality outside these chambers.

However, as recent work of the Special Rapporteur as well as the HRC's recent resolution on environmental human rights defenders illustrate, indigenous peoples' rights and indigenous human rights defenders continue to be under pressure. Therefore, it is as important as ever to keep focus on the matter, and that is why we are pleased to participate in today's dialogue with you both. You play key roles in ensuring that we deliver what we pledge.

Ms. Victoria Tauli Corpuz, in the fulfilment of your mandate as Special Rapporteur you work with the promotion of good practices, such as government programs and cooperation between states and indigenous peoples. You have now held your mandate for more than five years and have been able to follow and monitor the agenda since the World Conference on the Right of Indigenous Peoples in 2014. We would like to take this opportunity to ask you: What are the

main changes or developments that you have seen during this period? And where do you see the greatest need for further attention from the international community?

Turning to the Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we follow with interest the developments in the work of EMRIP since the revision of its mandate in September 2016. The mandate was revised to ensure closer monitoring and focus efforts on implementation of the articles of UNDRIP. We therefore particularly welcome the choice of topic for your thematic report of 2021, namely that of self-determination.

EMRIP's first ever country engagement mission took place – at the request of the Sámi Parliament of Finland - in Inari and Helsinki in February 2018. The advice and facilitation provided by EMRIP was found very valuable. The Nordic countries look forward to continuing the dialogue with EMRIP also in the future to further develop this kind of collaboration.

We would like to ask you if you could elaborate on other concrete measures envisioned by EMRIP in order to promote the articles of the UNDRIP?

Allow me to conclude by reminding all of us about the significance of the letter “S”. The UN Charter's opening sentence is not “We the People”. It is “We the Peoples”.

I thank you.