



PERMANENT MISSION OF NORWAY

STATEMENT

EMRIP 8th Session

20 July 2015

Thank you, Chair,

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

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was an important milestone in recognizing the status and rights of Indigenous Peoples. Fulfilling the objectives of this Declaration requires continuous and consistent work. We therefore welcomed that the UN membership reaffirmed its support for the Declaration at the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and undertook commitments to promote its realization. Implementation of the Declaration and of our commitments at the World Conference is crucial if this work at the multilateral level is to bear fruit.

The Outcome document provides an important road-map for the realization of Indigenous Peoples' rights. We welcome the recent report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of the outcome document of the World Conference and hope that the recommendations in regard to the Expert Mechanism will inform the deliberations of this EMRIP session. We find it very positive that Indigenous Peoples were invited to contribute to the report and that 425 responses from Indigenous Peoples' representatives and organizations were received.

International human rights law and the UN Declaration recognize Indigenous Peoples' right to participate in decision-making in matters that would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves. For our countries it is of

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utmost importance that the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples is ensured throughout the follow-up of the World Conference and its Outcome document. This applies both to the UN as well as regional and national levels.

Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions are not NGO's. Due to their status they cannot attend most UN meetings and make their voices heard independently. Examples of such institutions are the representative bodies of the Sámi – the Sámi Parliaments – in Finland, Sweden and Norway.

We believe that in addition to existing participatory rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Peoples' representatives and institutions that are constitutionally, legally and/or politically acknowledged should have the right to participate in meetings of relevant UN bodies on issues affecting them. From our point of view this is the minimum starting point for the discussions. This participatory status should not be below the one given to NGO's having ECOSOC consultative status.

We would like to echo one particular recommendation of the Secretary-General's report, namely to encourage the President of the General Assembly to appoint co-facilitators, including indigenous representatives, to lead an open-ended consultation process. We stand ready to take actively part in the decision-making on Indigenous Peoples participation in ECOSOC and during the 70th session of the General Assembly.

Chair,

Our countries support the work of the three UN mechanisms for the protection and promotion of the rights of Indigenous Peoples. These mechanisms are and should remain complementary. We appreciate the coordination that takes place to avoid duplication of work and to create synergies.

As regards the review of EMRIP's mandate, we consider the review to be an excellent opportunity to provide specific, constructive proposals to enhance the work and functioning of this mechanism with a view to strengthening it. EMRIP has much potential to serve as a new kind of platform for dialogue between States and Indigenous Peoples on achieving the ends of the Declaration. We stand ready to work with the main sponsors of HRC resolutions, Guatemala and Mexico, on the

revision of the EMRIP's mandate during this EMRIP session and in the upcoming session of the Human Rights Council in September. The Nordic countries call on the Council to set a timeline for the review and commit to secure its inclusive nature throughout the process.

Finally, we believe a UN system-wide approach is crucial for the full realization of Indigenous Peoples' rights, including in the Post-2015 context. We welcome the identified key action areas by the UN on the basis of the call of the World Conference. The system-wide action plan should include support to UN agencies in order to ensure that operational policies and guidelines relating to Indigenous Peoples are in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. To be successful, the system-wide approach must fully embrace a gender perspective and be based on participation of Indigenous Peoples in matters that affect them.

Thank you.