

Arctic Caucus
UNPFII 2017
Agenda item 4

Thank you Madam chair,

Indigenous peoples have managed their lands and resources in a sustainable fashion for centuries. Indigenous methods of conservation not only contemplate but require customary and sustainable use of natural resources.

We call on the Permanent Forum and relevant international organizations to produce a report on indigenous protected areas and recommend to relevant international organizations that they develop an integrated program to implement indigenous protected areas on a regional basis.

We want to raise concerns that a new agreement on salmon fishing in the Deanu river between the governments of Finland and Norway, will negatively affect the Sámi culture. The new agreement includes heavy reductions on fishing and will mostly affect the Sámi traditional way of fishing. This endangers continuation of culture, language, traditional livelihood and way of life. The agreement does not enjoy the free, prior and informed consent of the Sámi people, which is clearly stated by the Sámi parliaments of Finland and Norway and also the local Sámi individual right holders.

Free, Prior and informed consent is a crucial part of UNDRIP but we believe it to be a global challenge to understand the scope of FPIC. One of our concerns is how the FPIC is interpreted in different cases and member states. We call on the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to hold an expert group meeting on Free, prior and informed consent. This to assist especially member states to better understand the content of FPIC and how to ensure the implementation of FPIC on national levels. We hope this to be done in co-operation with the Expert Mechanism

on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Special rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and individual experts selected from the 7 different socio-economical regions of Indigenous Peoples.

And at last,

The Arctic states are among the wealthiest states in the world. Yet there are indigenous peoples in the Arctic that suffer from deep and entrenched poverty. The social, economic and health gaps in the Arctic are among the largest globally, resulting in deep and pervasive social, economic and health inequalities between indigenous peoples and others in Arctic states.

Rather than focussing on the symptoms of social, economic and health gaps, the Permanent Forum, member states, international organizations and indigenous peoples should focus on broad solutions to address the root causes of such gaps. This includes recognition of rights to educations and economic development.

Thank you.