

UN Human Rights Council 42nd Session

Items 3 and 5: clustered interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

18th September 2019

Intervention by ESTONIA

Mr. President,

Estonia thanks the Chair-Rapporteur, Ms Kristen Carpenter and other experts of the Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples Rights (EMRIP) for their work and the latest reports.

This year we are celebrating the international year of indigenous languages. Promotion and preservation of indigenous languages is paramount for cultural identity, diversity, traditions and intercultural dialogue. We are concerned that despite their indispensable value, languages around the world continue to disappear at alarming rates. Estonia has been proud to serve in the Steering Committee of the IYIL and we hope that the work on promotion of indigenous languages will continue also beyond 2019.

We commend the EMRIP for bringing to the Council's attention concrete recommendations on how the Human Rights Council can contribute to the enhancement of the rights of indigenous peoples. Estonia particularly welcomes the attention on the indigenous peoples participation and would in that context condemn all reprisals and threats against indigenous human rights defenders and other activists working on the rights of indigenous peoples, including for their participation in the work of the UN.

Estonia would like to reiterate its call to all States to contribute to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations. This fund enables the actual participation of representatives of indigenous peoples in UN meetings affecting them and for this reason, Estonia has provided regular financial support to the fund. We hope that many countries will follow the lead in order to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples in the work of the UN.

To conclude, we would also sincerely thank Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for her tireless work and for the report presented today. We fully agree with your recommendation that states, indigenous peoples and others should work cooperatively to address the special needs and concerns of indigenous

women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and others who frequently face discrimination or other barriers in the areas of access to justice within both the ordinary and indigenous justice systems.

Thank you!