



**Permanent Mission of Sweden
to the United Nations**



**Permanent Mission of Iceland
to the United Nations**



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF NORWAY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF DENMARK TO THE UN**



**Permanent Mission of Finland
to the United Nations**

JOINT NORDIC STATEMENT

by Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

20th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

**Agenda item 7: Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the
Economic and Social Council and emerging issues, specifically challenges related to
pandemics and responses to them**

21 April 2021

Thank you Chairperson.

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

As the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the health, wellbeing, and livelihoods of people globally, pre-existing inequalities and discriminations have been exposed and exacerbated. As reported and presented here today, indigenous peoples continue to be more vulnerable to the direct and indirect effects of COVID-19. Restrictions on border traffic has had a significant impact on the Sami society, as the Sami people are divided by the borders of four states.

The impact of this crisis is not gender-neutral. The direct and indirect effects of the pandemic on indigenous women and girls are very severe.

Indigenous women in low- and middle-income situations are less likely to be medically insured. They are also over-represented in the informal sectors and other sectors that have been hard hit during the pandemic.

Violence against women and girls is a “shadow pandemic”. Indigenous women and girls are more likely to being subjected to violence. Measures to prevent, protect and mitigate the consequences of all forms of violence against indigenous women and girls must be implemented. In this context, support for indigenous women’s organizations and networks is vital, as they are in the front line of the response.

Public health and emergency measures alone cannot solve the pandemic; Human rights, equality and non-discrimination must be at the center of COVID-19 responses and recovery. The past year’s hard-gained lessons illustrate the need for an equal and inclusive world. All rights of Indigenous Peoples must be respected and protected during and beyond this crisis.

The engagement and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and girls, are paramount in the pandemic response- and recovery plans. We reiterate the importance of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as well as the Secretary General’s Call to Action on Human Rights as tools to guide our efforts.

Thank you.