

**EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> SESSION, JULY 10-14 2017**

**Presentation by the Arctic Caucus on Item 6:**

Ten years of the Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: good practices and lessons learned

Thank you Mr. Chair;

I am speaking on behalf of the Arctic Caucus, which consists of the Saami Council, Same Parliaments of Norway, Sweden and Finland, Inuit Circumpolar Council, and Arctic indigenous youth representatives.

The adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples September 13, 2007 by the UN General Assembly was a major achievement to protect and promote the rights of Indigenous peoples. The affirmation of the right to self-determination and rights to lands, territories and resources reflect collective human rights that are of utmost importance to Indigenous peoples throughout the world.

We marked the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration during the last session of the Permanent Forum, and we expressed that the Arctic Indigenous peoples continue to urge our respective governments to initiate national follow-up processes to implement the Declaration. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to report about any major national level progress in this regard, especially lack of national action plans on the implementation of the declaration is a major concern. We still expecting to hear what some governments will do in this regard as they have positive signal to implement it, but no concrete signals yet. Still, we have the same view.

Mr. Chair;

After considerable consultations among Indigenous peoples and member states as well as UN officials, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution enhancing the mandate of EMRIP in September 2016.

In this resolution the Council decided , *“to amend the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which shall provide the Human Rights Council with expertise and advice on the rights of indigenous peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and assist Member States upon request, to achieve the ends of the Declaration through the promotion, protection and fulfilment of the rights of indigenous peoples.”*

The Arctic Indigenous organization and institutions positively received the resolution and feel that it is a step toward achieving the goals of the declaration and to advance efforts to implement it.

Indeed, the main intention of the Outcome Document of the UN General Assembly High Level Plenary known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples of September 2014 is centered upon member state efforts to promote and protect the rights of Indigenous peoples. Such an objective must be seriously considered and

enhanced. UN member states must do more to effectively dialogue with Indigenous peoples in order to implement processes worldwide to achieve the desired objectives of the UN Declaration.

Achieving the implementation of the UN Declaration at the national level has been identified as one of the primary commitments of member states. Indigenous peoples across the Arctic and those across the globe, remain focused upon the solemn commitments to ensure domestic implementation of rights affirmed in the UNDRIP. When the original commitments were made, there was a sense of urgency.

During the session of the EMRIP last year, we as the Arctic Indigenous peoples' organizations and institutions stated:

"Through the adoption of the Outcome Document of the World Conference in 2014, Member States have agreed that the Declaration is not merely an aspirational document, and that it is required with special measures in order to ensure better implementation at national and international levels. We welcome the fact that there is an ever increasing number of Member States that are joining Indigenous Peoples in expressing commitment to the principles and rights enshrined in the Declaration."

Mr. Chair;

We are still in this position and in conclusion;

we remain hopeful about the future to come and the realization of more comprehensive efforts in cooperation and partnership with UN member states to improve the world for not only Indigenous peoples, but for all of humankind.

**Recommendations:**

1. That EMRIP engage Arctic Member States under the new mandate of EMRIP to finalize and implement national action plans on implementation of UNDRIP as committed in the World Conference outcome document.
2. THAT EMRIP call upon States to work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples in environmental, resource development and other processes that impact Indigenous Peoples' rights. The applicable international standard is free, prior, and informed consent, and States should not proceed with unilateral actions.