



Permanent Mission of Norway  
to the United Nations

**10<sup>th</sup> session Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples  
(EMRIP)**

Item 6 – Ten years of the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: good practices and lessons learned

STATEMENT by Ambassador Hans Brattskar, Permanent Representative

13 July 2017

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Thank you Chairperson,

Since the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ten years ago, governments and indigenous peoples have continued the work to strengthen the rights of indigenous peoples, and improving their living conditions.

The World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014 was an important landmark. Its call for action has started to yield concrete results. We welcome the revised mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) agreed last year. We also welcome a strengthened mandate to provide assistance and advice for the implementation of recommendations made at the Universal Periodic Review and by treaty bodies, on request.

At the national level, the Norwegian Government is taking steps to further strengthen the right of the Sami people to participate in decision-making processes. The Government is preparing a draft bill regarding consultations with state authorities, municipalities and counties in matters that may affect the Sami people directly. The Government intends to continue the consultations with Sámediggi (The Sami parliament) on the draft bill with the objective of achieving agreement on the proposed measures.

Furthermore, Norway has recently adopted new regulations relating to the protection of traditional knowledge. The regulations ensures that free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples is obtained when others access and use their traditional knowledge associated with genetic material. These regulations are a part of the national implementation of the Nagoya protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

In January this year Norway, Sweden and Finland concluded the negotiations on the Nordic Sami Convention. Representatives from the three Sami Parliaments have been members of the national delegations from their respective states and have participated in the negotiations. An overall objective of the convention is that the Sami should be able to preserve, practice and develop their culture with as few impediments as possible due to national borders. The Convention will not be signed and ratified unless all three Sami Parliaments give their support to the negotiated document.

Over the last 10 years, we have taken some important steps to improve the situation of women and children affected by violence. Sámediggi and the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security have had a joint project and launched 8 March findings from a research project on violence against women in the Sami society. We want to emphasize how important it has been that Sámediggi has taken up this issue. Good cooperation between the Government and Sámediggi has been – and still is – important to have a fruitful process.

With many positive developments at the national and international level, the 10th Anniversary of the Declaration is a cause for celebration.

There are, however, also many challenges.

I would like to take this opportunity to recall the plight of indigenous peoples' human rights defenders in particular. Norway urges all states to ensure better protection of human rights defenders, both through law and in practice.

Thank you.