

Human Rights Council

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Item 4 - Intervention by the Danish delegation

Mr. Chairperson,

Distinguished Members of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, delegates of the 4th session of the Expert Mechanism.

On behalf of Denmark and Greenland, let me start by congratulating the new and the reappointed members of the Expert Mechanism on their appointments to this important body. I would also like to thank the outgoing Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for their able leadership and congratulate you, Mr. Chairperson, on your election.

My delegation would also like to congratulate the Expert Mechanism on the comprehensive study and final report on indigenous peoples and the right to participate in decision-making. The report provides a valuable contribution in outlining different decision-making structures and mechanisms for indigenous peoples throughout the world to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its 18th Session in September of this year. Having carefully studied the report, our delegation would like to put forward the following reflections:

We are pleased that the Arctic Council is included in the study on decision-making (para 78). The Arctic Council is a high-level inter-governmental forum, which addresses issues faced by Arctic governments and the indigenous peoples of the Arctic. Indigenous peoples play an important role in the Arctic Council and we would like to highlight the fact that the Arctic Council operates on the basis of consensus, which is not currently reflected in the final report. We are pleased to note that the Permanent Forum will further study indigenous peoples' participation in the Arctic Council.

Mr. Chairperson,

We believe that effective follow-up to the reports prepared by EMRIP is of key importance. As regards the study on Indigenous Peoples' Right to Education, delegations have already reported on follow-up activities at previous sessions of EMRIP and the Human Rights Council. One important follow-up measure to the Expert Mechanism's recommendations will be the holding of a panel on the role of languages and culture in the promotion and protection of indigenous peoples' well-being and identity at the 18th Session of the Human Rights Council. However, follow-up – including to the most recent report on decision-making – should also increasingly be expanded to other processes and bodies. In this regard, the treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review are highly relevant. In our view, the report on good practices as regards indigenous peoples and the advice on the right to participate in decision-making provides a firm foundation for the further promotion of this right for both governments and indigenous peoples. Indeed, the right of indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making ties in with the first study and is bound to be at the core of any number of future thematic studies. In this respect, the Expert Mechanism may want to elaborate further on this issue and we would be interested to hear views from the Expert Mechanism on the most effective way forward.

Finally, Denmark and Greenland would like to reaffirm our strong commitment to continuing our work with the Expert Mechanism to further expand our knowledge and understanding of these issues.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson