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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Agenda 4 (d) Human Rights

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**Statement
by
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Mr. Chairperson
Distinguished Members of the Permanent Forum
Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Sami Parliamentary Council it is an honor for me to address this session of the Permanent Forum. The Sami Parliamentary Council is a parliamentary collaborative body of the publicly elected Sami Parliaments in Norway, Finland and Sweden. The Russian Sami are permanent participants at the council. The Sami Parliamentary council's international involvement currently takes place through a formal cooperation between the national authorities of Finland, Norway and Sweden. In the future we hope that the indigenous peoples parliaments will be given the opportunity to be represented in their own right at Permanent Forum.

I would like to thank the Members of the Permanent forum for incorporating indigenous women as a special theme of this year's session.

Mr. Chairperson

Equality between women and men has to do with human rights and democracy. It has to do with the individual's opportunity and rights to make independent choices and the right to take responsibility in all aspects of life. We live in a world where many political and economical decisions are taken by men, and where indigenous peoples, especially women often have no access. The decision making is often not representative from a gender equality perspective.

Our objective that women and men shall have equal rights and opportunities in all fields of society depends on us being able to bring about changes in the decision-making structure at all levels.

In this context we would like to propose:

- That the Permanent Forum recommends states to make rules and regulations which affect our life gender- neutral.

Further more we would like to propose that:

- The Permanent Forum recommends states to establish committees and decision-making bodies where Indigenous women's and men's issues are on the agenda, and indigenous peoples are given the opportunity to participate and influence our lives in areas such as land rights, education, health, environment, business, culture and social affairs and so on.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman

It is a human right of women to take part of the decision-making process.

Than you for you attention