

**First session of the
UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples
May 21, 2002
Statement by Mike Lynge, Inuit Youth International**



Inuungujooq siulittaasoq pilluarillu, greetings and congratulations for your election as chairman from the youth of Greenland, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Mike Lynge, I am here as an observer for our organisation called Inuit Youth International based in Greenland. In our organization we are dealing with issues for the youth like culture, art and education as well as international cooperation between indigenous youth. We all are volunteers and have close cooperation with Inuit Circumpolar Conference.

In Greenland there isn't so many schools for higher education with our own language, so if you want to have a higher education like university level, you have to be able to speak two or three languages. And the universities you have to go to are outside Greenland.

There are schools where we can use our own language, but it's not a higher education you're going to get. It is important to use our own abilities to lift up the Indigenous schools in order to help our people in our homelands, because there is people who can get a higher education with their own languages, like there is lot of young people who is very good to mathematics but they can not be educated because they are not so good to the other languages.

We the Indegenous People in Greenland, if we want to work in other countries we have to be able to speak their languages, but why is there so many foreigners in Greenland who can not speak our language even though some of them have lived there in many years.

We have allways heard the politicians saying "the children is our future". I do not agree with that, because when we grow up and becoming teenagers and ready to receive all kinds of knowledge what do they do to us? We just watching the children and elders having a better life than us, don't get me

wrong, I think it is good too, but do not forget the Youth, we are the ones who are becoming the future.

In conclusion, I want to recommend to the members of the Permanent Forum to also consider the Indigenous Peoples Youth issues in the future to come. If you don't do it you will lose us.

Qujanarsuaq oqalugiarsinnaagama.

Thank you for letting me have this opportunity to speak.