

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

15th session May 9-20 2016

Presentation by Inuit Circumpolar Council on behalf of the Indigenous Arctic Caucus on:

Item 4: Implementation of the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum with reference to the UNDRIP

Thank you Mr. Chair,

I am giving this intervention on behalf of the Arctic Caucus who are the Indigenous organizations and institutions of Inuit and Sami.

Mr. Chair, Let me first of all on behalf of all Arctic Indigenous Peoples congratulate you on your election as Chair for the 15th session of the UN Permanent Forum.

The UNPFII tasks are wide and interconnected. This complexity can hinder the possibility to implement the UNDRIP in a full and effective manner. A good dialogue within the Forum itself, other UN bodies, states and IP is important.

The Forum should be visible in the UN system. The platform between states and Indigenous Peoples should be strengthened by encouraging more states to participate at the sessions of the Forum. We hope the development of the Forum with interactive dialogues is experienced as positive also by the State Governments.

After dialogue with the ECOSOC, information should be shared on how the ECOSOC follows the advice and recommendations of the UNPFII. Today it is challenging to understand the scope of this interaction between the Forum and ECOSOC, and how ECOSOC deals with the advice and recommendations from the Forum.

The states has by the Outcome document of WCIP 2014 expressed that they commit to give due consideration to recommendations and advice issued by, amongst others the Forum, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, and can be referred to in the dialogues with the states to enhance the implementation of the UNDRIP within the six mandate areas of the Permanent Forum (UNPFII).

We continue strongly encouraging member states, that still has not ratified the ILO Convention No 169, to do so.

The Forum has an important role, and holds a high position in the UN system, in contributing and influencing a strengthened implementation of the UNDRIP. An important goal is to strengthen equality and prevent negative discrimination in the mandate areas of the Forum. The Forum should contribute in developing, promoting and protecting the Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination.

Speaking on behalf of the Arctic Caucus, and in this case especially, speaking on behalf of Inuit, I take this opportunity to echo my many colleagues in applauding the new and positive approach taken (and announced yesterday) by the Canadian Government.

It is indeed encouraging and gives us new and stronger hope for a brighter future both for Inuit and for all indigenous peoples. We are all committing ourselves to do our utmost to

assist the Canadian government in implementing its new policies towards indigenous peoples in general.

Indigenous Peoples need to control the development within the six mandate areas of the Forum, to ensure the existence of Indigenous Peoples today and in the future. The Indigenous Peoples' right to Free Prior and Informed Consent needs to be respected by states and third parties with commercial interests in Indigenous Peoples' territory, land and resources.

Indigenous Peoples with special needs may need appropriate and special measures that ensure their rights in a good way. For instance children and youth, elders, women, Indigenous Peoples with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples with distinctive sexual orientation or identification.

Indigenous Peoples' knowledge is important to protect, both within education and environment management. Our goal is that Sami and Inuit traditional knowledge gains the same equality value as scientific knowledge within decision-making processes regarding use or protection of land and resources.

The traditional knowledge shall be available and known, acknowledged and implemented in the management of territories and resources in Sami and Inuit areas. Traditional Sami and Inuit knowledge is a wise and a proper management of nature resources and the human place in the nature, and has been used over time by the Sami and Inuit ensuring their survival as peoples. Traditional knowledge is basic for the Sami and Inuit to be able to transfer our culture and understandings to future generations.

The Forum contributes to a good dialogue between Indigenous Peoples and state representatives in the follow-up process of the World Conference in 2014. The Forum can use this process to strengthen its own work within its six mandate areas. The states have through the World Conference re-engaged themselves to respect, promote and develop the principles of the UNDRIP.

The Indigenous Peoples' possibilities to participate in decision-making processes within the six mandate areas on the national and international levels is important. Therefore we encourage the Forum to support the establishment of a global fund for financing the participation of Indigenous Peoples to international meetings dealing with Indigenous issues, and that such fund is established and managed by the Indigenous Peoples themselves.

Thank you Mr. Chair.

Qujanaq.