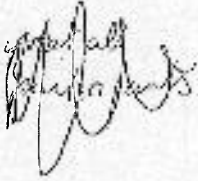


20080424/183 /charlotte / item 5 / pm  
Schlyter

Madam Chairperson,

[since this is the first time I take the floor during this session I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for the very able way in which you are guiding our work.]



~~para state that~~  
Sweden is pleased to participate in this 7th session of the Permanent Forum, which, as has been noted by other speakers, is the first since the successful adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples last fall.

Madam Chairperson,

I thank you for the opportunity to respond on behalf of my Government to the questions asked of Sweden in today's statement by the Arctic Indigenous Caucus. The Arctic Indigenous Caucus has asked why the most recent human rights communication to the Swedish parliament, adopted by the Government on 13 March of this year, does not state an intention by the Government to ratify ILO Convention no 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.

The Swedish government deems that ratification of Convention no 169 is not possible at the present time. The reason for this is that Swedish law when it comes to land rights does not concur with the provisions relating to land rights in the Convention. Ratification of the Convention would affect land rights in relation to an area constituting one third of the Swedish territory. A decision to ratify must therefore be considered carefully and in great detail. Ratification of international conventions require prior approval by the Swedish Parliament. For Parliament to consider ratification of Convention no 169, all issues relating to the legal consequences of a ratification must have been clarified. This is not the case at the present time.

On behalf of my Government, I would also like to address the question posed to Sweden why ratification of the Nordic Saami Convention has been deferred. The same question was also asked of Norway and Finland, given that this concerns a text drafted by an expert group for the consideration and eventual ratification by all three Governments.

Work is ongoing with regard to the draft Nordic Same Convention. At a meeting in Stockholm last fall, the presidents of the three Saami Parliaments as well as the responsible ministers for the three respective countries agreed that once all parties had completed their analysis of the legal implications of

the proposed text, a roadmap would be prepared for further negotiations in preparation for ratification.

Thank you Madam Chairperson.