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The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Third session, 10 - 21, May, 2004

United Nations Headquarters, New York

Agenda item 7; Future Work

Joint intervention by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Saami Council

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

This is a joint intervention by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Saami Council. Mr. Chairperson, allow our organizations to draw your attention to interventions made at the two previous sessions of the Permanent Forum, where we have called on ECOSOC and the Permanent Forum to in joint efforts adopt rules of procedures that allow indigenous elected bodies - such as the Greenland Home Rule Government and the Saami Parliaments - to appear in their own capacity at the Permanent Forum sessions. Today, if these bodies want to participate in the Forum dialogue, they have to do so through the state delegations. The Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Saami Council firmly believes that if the *Permanent* Forum should become a fora where indigenous peoples and states meet on an equal basis, to engage in true, fruitful and interactive dialogues - which we do think is the intention of the Forum - indigenous representative bodies must be allowed to participate in the Forum session in their own capacity. We therefore again recommend that the Permanent Forum to investigate the possibility to adopt such Rules of Procedure. We further call on states within indigenous elected bodies are situated to be supportive towards the representation of such bodies in the Permanent Forum and elsewhere in the UN system.

Mr. Chairperson,

Turning to the organization of work at upcoming sessions of the Permanent Forum, the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Saami Council would like to congratulate the Permanent Forum and its members on the large number of recommendations that the Forum very wisely have adopted at previous sessions. We find them all very helpful, and our organizations are committed to do whatever we can to assist the Forum in the follow-up on these recommendations in the UN system and elsewhere. However, as the Forum starts to prepare for its fourth session, we think that it is time and utmost important that the Forum starts to direct increased attention to the implementation of already adopted recommendations, rather than merely to go ahead and adopt entirely new sets of recommendation. We therefore recommend that the Permanent Forum - instead of adopting a theme for its fourth session - focuses and review the implementation of previously adopted recommendations. We believe that this is imperative that the Forum addresses these issues, prior to the review of the Permanent Forum's operation, called for by the ECOSOC Resolution 20000/22. The review and implementation could possibly be done through identifying some cross-cutting issues for discussion, and should include the highest possible involvement of the UN agencies. In line with the just mentioned, The Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Saami Council further recommend that the Permanent Forum adopts a more long term work plan that stretches over a couple of years, possibly three, in order to enhance the effectiveness of its work.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.