

**PERMANENT MISSION OF DENMARK  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



Statement by

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**11<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous  
Issues**

**Statement by Denmark-Greenland on agenda item 3:**

**"Study, as examples of good practice, of the indigenous  
participatory mechanisms in the Arctic Council, the  
Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development  
Principles in Inuit Nunaat and the Laponia management  
system"**

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Mr. Chairperson, distinguished members of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,

Firstly, let me congratulate you Mr. Chairperson upon your election and the members of the Bureau upon their election.

My delegation would also like to congratulate Ms. Dalee Sambo Dorough, member of the Permanent Forum, for her excellent study on good practices of indigenous participatory mechanisms in the Arctic.

**Our recommendation to the Permanent Forum in this context is to continue to conduct these thorough and informative thematic studies and to provide examples of good practices for the inspiration of both states and indigenous peoples.**

At the 8th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues during the Panel on the Arctic, we highlighted the Arctic Council's uniqueness in terms of indigenous peoples' participation. Six indigenous peoples' organizations, known as Permanent Participants, represent the arctic indigenous peoples in this high-level, intergovernmental forum for discussions of political and scientific issues of relevance to the eight arctic states and its peoples.

As rightly pointed out in the study, indigenous peoples' organizations have been actively participating since the establishment of the cooperation among arctic states in the form of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy in Rovaniemi in 1991. However, it was at the Ministerial Meeting in Nuuk, Greenland, that indigenous peoples' representatives were first given a seat at the table. Denmark and Greenland, at the same time, offered to co-host the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (IPS) to help facilitate the participation of RAIPON, Saami Council and ICC.

When the arctic cooperation evolved into the Arctic Council, established by the Ottawa Declaration in 1996, indigenous peoples' organizations increased in number and became known as Permanent Participants.

The Arctic Council, still a relatively young body, continues to evolve not least owing to the growing interest from the international community to engage in activities of the council, due to climate change and the challenges and opportunities in the wake of rapid environmental changes. At the Seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council in Nuuk, Greenland in 2011, which concluded the Chairmanship of Denmark, Greenland

and the Faroe Islands, the first legally binding document in the form of an agreement on Search and Rescue was signed. At this time, it was also decided to embark on the development of an international instrument on arctic marine oil pollution preparedness and response.

The Arctic Council also decided to strengthen its own capacity by establishing a permanent Arctic Council Secretariat to which the Permanent Participants have been invited to join or to integrate the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat.

Above all, owing largely to the active participation of the Permanent Participants, the Arctic Council has - over time - increased its focus on the human dimension and capacity building initiatives considerably. A trend and good practice, which is expected to continue in future.

Finally, turning briefly to the second example provided in the study and of relevance to our realm, "A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Resource Development Principles in Inuit Nunaat": This initiative emerged out of an initial request by the Premier of Greenland at the ICC General Assembly in Nuuk, Greenland in 2010 to promote cooperation among arctic leaders on the development of good practices with regards to public involvement and democratic participation in decision-making concerning resource development and large scale projects. It has been welcomed as a constructive and balanced contribution to the understanding of the issues at stake. In particular, the strong emphasis on building partnerships between Inuit and both the public and private sectors is commended.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.