

UNPFII 15TH SESSION

9th to 20th May 2016

Denmark and Greenland

Questionnaire to Governments

The report of the 14th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues provides a number of recommendations within its mandated areas, some of which are addressed to Member States.

The Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues invites Governments to complete the attached short questionnaire on any action taken or planned in response to the Permanent Forum's recommendations and other relevant issues. All the questionnaire responses from Governments will be compiled into one report for the fifteenth session of the Permanent Forum.

Please submit your completed questionnaire by **4 January 2016** to:

Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Division for Social Policy and Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Room: S-2954
United Nations Headquarters
New York, USA 10017
Telephone number 917-367-5100; fax number 917- 367-5102
Email: smallacombe@un.org

The questionnaire can also be downloaded from this site:

<http://undesadspd.org/IndigenousPeoples/UNPFIIISessions/Fifteenth/Questionnaire.aspx>

Question 1

Briefly state what recommendations from the Fourteenth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)¹ or recommendations from previous sessions (not included in your previous reports) that have been addressed by your Government. Where possible, also provide information on the situation of indigenous women.

Response

Denmark and Greenland have studied the recommendations stemming from the 14th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and find few to be directly applicable to the context of Denmark/Greenland. Recommendation 6 regarding the follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples is, however, of general relevance.

Recommendation 6:

Denmark and Greenland remains actively engaged in discussions on follow-up to the outcome document of the World Conference Indigenous Peoples.

A second Nordic expert meeting was held in Helsinki on 15th December 2015 with the participation of indigenous representatives. The focus of the Nordic countries remains in particular on the question of Indigenous Peoples' participation at the UN and the review of the mandate of EMRIP. These are questions of crucial importance to Indigenous Peoples in the Nordic countries and therefore the aim is first and foremost to contribute constructively and actively to the realization of these outcomes.

Indigenous women:

Reference is made to the information provided in the report by Denmark and Greenland to the 14th Session of the UNPFII.

Question 2

What are some of the obstacles your Government has encountered in implementing the recommendations of the Permanent Forum?

Response

Reference is made to the information provided in the report by Denmark and Greenland to the 14th Session of the UNPFII as well as to the statement by the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN, Mr. Ib Petersen, made on behalf of the Nordic countries at the mentioned session.

In this statement, the Nordic countries noted that a key function of the Permanent Forum is to provide recommendations of general relevance with benchmarks and that the Forum should, to ensure their impact, issue fewer recommendations and give priority to their follow-up. It was further noted that recommendations could have benchmarks and targets and be supplemented with a short background note with, *inter alia*, suggestions for implementation. Moreover, the Nordic countries suggested that fewer recommendations are

¹ The following paragraphs of the Report on the Fourteenth Session of the Permanent Forum (E/2015/43) contain recommendations addressed to Member States: 6, 8, 10, 13, 18, 22, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 40, 41.

adopted at each session – for instance a maximum of five per session – and that it would be useful if recommendations were distributed well in advance of the session to allow an interactive discussion of them during the session.

Question 3

What are some of the factors that facilitate your Government's implementation of the recommendations of the Permanent Forum?

Response

Reference is made to the information provided in the report by Denmark and Greenland to the 14th Session of the UNPFII.

Question 4

The theme of the Permanent Forum's fifteenth session in 2016 will be "Indigenous peoples: conflict, peace and resolution".

Briefly state how your Government deals with this issue in regards to indigenous peoples?

Response

In Greenland, the Reconciliation Commission was established by the National Budget Proposal for 2014 as approved by the Parliament of Greenland, Inatsisartut, with the desire for reconciliation to take place amongst the population of Greenland. The Reconciliation Commission has initiated various activities to uncover cultural and societal challenges resulting from the colonial heritage that generate tension in the present. A series of public meetings in different settlements is being conducted by the Commission along with collecting narrative perspectives as told by residents of Greenland. The Commission will complete its work by the end of 2017 by presenting the recommendations and conclusions in a final report.

Another question that has had attention in recent years in that of the so-called legally fatherless persons in Greenland.

Until 1963 (1974 for North and East Greenland) the legislation for Greenland did not contain rules on paternity for children born out of wedlock. Thus, children born out of wedlock had no right to inheritance after their father. The term "legally fatherless" is used when referring to such persons.

In 2014 the Danish Parliament passed an Act aiming at improving the legal status of the "legally fatherless" by giving them the possibility to initiate proceedings to legally determine who their biological father is. Paternity established according to these rules has the same legal consequences as ordinary paternity, including normal inheritance rights. However, paternity will not entail the reopening of closed estates. In practice this means that it is not possible to reopen an estate which has been completed before initiating the paternity case.

A number of "legally fatherless" Greenlanders have for many years been in a difficult situation due to not having a legal father. Thus, when adopting the Act on the "legally fatherless", the Danish Parliament called for a number of initiatives to be initiated concerning the "legally

fatherless”, including identifying human consequences of having been “legally fatherless” and offering assistance to help coming to terms with having been “legally fatherless”. A joint working group with participation of Greenlandic and Danish authorities has been established to follow up on these initiatives.

Foreign policy

In Danish foreign policy much attention is paid to the need to pursue a balance with rights of Indigenous Peoples and those of other vulnerable groups, to support conflict resolution and to work for acceptable compromises and long-lasting peaceful solutions. Denmark has amongst others supported peace processes and processes of state reform of indigenous relevance in countries such as Bolivia, Nepal and Bangladesh and continues to advocate for the importance of progress on the implementation of the Chittagong Hill Peace Accord in the context of Bangladesh.

Question 5

Please provide information on how your Government currently promotes and/or implements the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Response

Indigenous Peoples’ rights remain an overall, high priority in Danish foreign policy. On the multilateral level, Denmark has promoted the rights of Indigenous Peoples in relevant international processes such as the 2030 Development Agenda, the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP21) and the High-Level Conference on Global Value Chains.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark also hosted a roundtable conference organized by IWGIA on Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Development agenda in Copenhagen on 8-9 October 2015.

Reference is further made to the information provided in the report by Denmark and Greenland to the 14th Session of the UNPFII.

Question 6

Does your national statistics agency or a similar public entity collect disaggregated statistical data about indigenous peoples? If so, please provide practical information on how to access this information (i.e. website address, publications or other sources of information).

Response

First, it should be noted that the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (paragraph 10) recognises that data on the situation of Indigenous Peoples may be provided through various means, including through surveys.

In Denmark, the Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI) has amongst others published various reports and surveys on the situation of Greenlanders. The most recent survey from September 2015 concerns the situation of Greenlanders living in Denmark (*Grønlandere i Danmark – en registerbaseret kortlægning*). It is a comprehensive survey based solely on

information available in public registers. Also, in 2015 the Danish Institute for Human Rights published a thorough study (142 pages) that examines the status of equal treatment of Greenlanders living in Denmark (*Ligebehandling af Grønlandere i Danmark – Grønlanderes oplevelser af mødet med det danske samfund*).

Statistics Greenland (*Grønlands Statistik*) also publishes a yearly statistical yearbook. The yearbook contains wide-ranging statistics and information about the Greenlandic society, including on education, labour market, income, housing, health, social benefits and population. Statistics Greenland does not disaggregate data in regard to indigenous persons living in Greenland and non-indigenous persons but collects data on persons born in and outside of Greenland.

Question 7

The outcome document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2) invites the UN system to “...to support the implementation, upon request, of national action plans, strategies or other measures to achieve the ends of the...” UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (paragraph 32).

Please provide information on how the UN system (at all levels) could best support your Government’s efforts to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Response

A specific need for support from the UN system has currently not been identified.