

Notáhta • Notat

Geasa/Til: The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Min čuj./Vár ref: 16/712 - 4

Beaivi/Dato: 17.02.2016

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Ápningstider:
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08:00-15:30

The respond by the Sami Parliament of Norway on the UNPFII Questionnaire 2016

1. Please provide the name of your organization and the country where it is based.

The Sami Parliament of Norway is located in Karasjok, Norway.

2. What are the main objectives and goals of your organization?

The Sami Parliament of Norway (Sami Parliament) is an indigenous elected assembly, elected by and among the Sami people. The Sami Parliament is an indigenous people's parliamentary governance.

The elections of the Sámi parliament are held every fourth year. Anyone registered in the Sámi Parliament's electoral roll can vote or run for office. Anyone who perceives themselves as Sámi and who has Sámi as their home language, or who has a parent, grandparent or great-grandparent with Sámi as their home language, can register on the parliament's electoral roll. Children of individuals who are, or have been registered, in the parliament's electoral roll can also register. Totally, there were registered 15.356 in the electoral roll system of the Sami Parliament in 2013, when the last elections for the parliament were conducted.

The representatives of the Sámi Parliament are distributed relative to the number of votes for the individual lists or the parties in each constituency. The number of representatives eligible for election from each constituency is determined by the number of registered voters in the constituency in the most recent municipal and county elections. The Sami Parliament constitutes a plenary assembly with 39 Members of Parliament that meets four times a year. The Speaker of the Parliament is the presiding officer of the Plenary. The Plenary also works through four standing committees.¹

The Governing Council heads the executive branch of the Sami parliamentary system in Norway. The President of the Sami Parliament is the head of the executive branch. The Governing Council is composed by the President, Vice-President and three other council members. They hold full-time positions and are responsible for the daily political business.

The Sami Act provides that the Sami Parliament's mandate includes all questions that the Parliament considers to relate to the Sami people in Norway. The Parliament can on its own initiative raise and issue statements on all questions within its mandate, and raise questions

¹ The Planning and Finance Committee; The Welfare and Education committee; The Business and Culture Committee; and The Audit Committee.

before public authorities and private institutions. It also has the authority to make decisions when this follows from legislative or administrative provisions. In 1988, a specific section on Sami rights was included in the Constitution of Norway, establishing constitutional guarantees for Sami language, culture and society. The Constitution states that it is the obligation of the State to create the conditions necessary for the Sami to protect and develop their language, their culture and their society. The establishment of the Sami Parliament in 1989 is regarded as an important part of the implementation of Sami rights under the Constitution.

3. Which indigenous groups does your organization represent and what is the total number of indigenous peoples within these groups?

The Sami Parliament of Norway represent the Sami people living in Norway.

The Sami are the indigenous people of Finland, Norway, Sweden and the Kola Peninsula in the north-western part of Russia. The Sami is one people residing across the national borders of four countries, with their own distinct identity, language, culture, social structures, traditions, livelihoods, history, and aspirations. The present Sami settlement area is significantly smaller than the Sami traditional homeland. In Norway, it stretches from Finnmark County in the north to Hedmark County in the south.

The total Sami population is estimated to be somewhere between 80,000 - 100,000 individuals in the respective countries as follows: Finland 8,000; Norway 50 - 70,000; Sweden 20,000; and Russia 2,000. These figures are estimates only as the national censuses do not include a specific Sami component.

4. Has your Organization participated in any sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues? If yes, please indicate the year(s).

Since the establishment of the Permanent Forum, the Sami Parliament of Norway has participated at all annual sessions of the Forum.

5. In what ways does the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues support indigenous peoples in your organization?

The annual sessions of the Forum assembles indigenous representatives from around the world, and creates an important meeting platform for indigenous peoples. The annual sessions contribute to strengthening the dialogue and cooperation between indigenous peoples worldwide.

The Forum is an arena, which enables us to address matters that are of high importance for the Sami people and other indigenous peoples. For instance, the indigenous preparatory process for the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples was initiated by indigenous peoples and supported by the Forum, at one of its annual sessions. Without an international meeting platform, which the Forum constitutes, it would be more difficult to cooperate, establish and maintain dialogue with other indigenous people's representatives.

6. At its fifteenth session in 2016, the Permanent Forum's theme will be "Indigenous Peoples: conflict, peace and resolution".

Please provide information as to whether your organization is working on issues related to conflict, peace and resolution for indigenous peoples. Where possible, please include information on the situation of indigenous women in your responses.

In the autumn 2015, the Sami Parliament of Norway adopted a White Paper on Solidarity and International Affairs.

The White Paper focuses on how we can contribute as an indigenous parliament to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The main areas of the White Paper are; “1. Sami collaboration”; “2. The High North”; “3. The UN rights of Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights”; “4. Equality and Solidarity”; and “The Global Challenges that Affect the Indigenous Peoples”.

The Sami Parliament expresses tolerance for distinctiveness (differences) in both the Sami civil society and societies in the Global context. Each individual has the right to enjoy respect for his or her background, culture and identity. Together with others, The Sami parliament has the responsibility to contribute to ensure equality, solidarity and peaceful co-existence between peoples. Equality, gender equality, acknowledgment, understanding, respect and recognition of indigenous rights constitutes the platform for the solidarity and international work for the Sami Parliament of Norway.

We use the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a tool through this White Paper to enhance our effort on contributing with peace-making efforts for indigenous peoples.

Our White Paper states clearly that the Sami Parliament will enhance our dialogue with the Norwegian Government to safeguard the right of Sami children, youth, elders, women, men and individuals with disabilities or distinctive sexual orientation or gender identity. Through solidarity responsibilities, we might express our support to other indigenous peoples in their efforts in enhancing and ensuring equality and gender equality.

7. In the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/69/2), member States committed themselves to “taking, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, appropriate measures at the national level, including legislative, policy and administrative measures, to achieve the ends of the Declaration...” (paragraph 7) on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and that the action plan be developed in consultation with Member States, Indigenous Peoples and the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues.

In relation to the outcome document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, please outline the following:

(i) Has your organization been involved in any State-led measures to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples? Please provide details on the level of your participation.

The Sami Parliament has not been involved in State-led measure to implement the UN Declaration on indigenous peoples’ rights.

(ii) What are the major successes as well as the remaining obstacles for the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the

people that organization represents?

Since the Declaration was adopted in 2007, there has not been conducted an evaluation by the Norwegian Government on how they consider the Declaration has been, or is to be implemented in Norway. This makes it difficult to give an objective and fair respond to this question No. 7ii of the questionnaire. Such an evaluation should be done in dialogue and consultation with the Sami Parliament of Norway.

The Sami Parliament is in dialogue with the Government on the national follow-up of the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples 2014, which may pave the way for agreeing on how to implement the Declaration.

(iii) Is your organization involved in the collection and dissemination of disaggregated data or culturally relevant data on indigenous peoples?

As there existed a need for studies and knowledge regarding Sami matters, the Sami Parliament and Norwegian State Authorities addressed this need in the agreement on Procedures for Consultations by Royal Decree (2005). Article eight in the Procedures states that the Government and the Sami Parliament shall jointly appoint a specialized analysis group which, inter alia, shall submit an annual report concerning the situation and developmental trends of the Sami society on the basis of Sami statistics. The report shall be used as the basis for consultations on specific matters and for consultations concerning the developmental needs of the Sami society at one of the half-yearly meetings between the Minister responsible for Sami affairs and the President of the Sami Parliament. The Sami Parliament gives information on statistics and other relevant matters to this analysis group on issues the Sami Parliament works with.

The Sami Parliament has an agreement with Statistics Norway on the collection of Sami statistics. For year 2016 the parliament financially supported this work with NOK 375 000 (approx. 41.666 USD).

8. How does your organization implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the community level?

As mentioned above in our respond to question No. 6 the Sami Parliament of Norway's White Paper on Solidarity and International Affairs focuses on how we can contribute as an indigenous parliament to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We will contribute to the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Declaration into law and policy that affects our every-day life.

We use the governmental allocated budget as a tool for our implementation of the Declaration, which is stated in our budget. For the Sami Parliament being able to implement the Declaration on the community level, we are depending on sufficient budget allocations from the government for the tasks we are granted the authority (and financial recourses) to manage. To maintain and develop our civil society we, amongst others, need to financially support Sami kindergartens; education; language measures; cultural activities; business development; cultural heritage; and health.

The agreement on Procedures for Consultations by Royal Decree (2005) does not include the right of the Sami Parliament to be consulted on the Governmental budget allocations for the

Sami Parliament. This lack of acknowledgment, respect and implementation of our right to participate in decision-making processes affecting the Sami people, enables us to agree on acceptable financial parameters and budget allocated for the Sami people. This hampers the Sami Parliaments possibilities to implement the Declaration in a sufficient manner on community level.

9. Does your organization provide regular or ad hoc capacity-building programmes on indigenous peoples' rights for staff and members of the community, or planned capacity-building activities in this area?

The Sami Parliament does not provide capacity-building programmes on indigenous peoples' rights.

The Sami Parliament collaborates with the Arctic University of Norway on the Indigenous Studies-master and Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas-master (GENI):

- The Centre for Sami Studies is an all-university resource Centre for Sami and indigenous research, education and knowledge production at The Arctic University of Norway. The Centre promotes multidisciplinary research, education and outreach on Sami and indigenous issues.
- GENI is for students interested in taking a leadership role in supporting their communities with economic development through innovative and entrepreneurial approaches. Governance, consultations and entrepreneurship for northern and indigenous communities is part of the GENI program. GENI is a joint master's program offered by The Arctic University of Norway and the University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

10. Does the United Nations support your organization's work on indigenous peoples' issues?

The processes towards the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention – No. 169 (1989); the UN Declaration on the rights on Indigenous Peoples (2007); and the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples 2014 are good examples on ways that the UN support the indigenous peoples.

In addition, the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues; a Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples Rights; and the Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples Rights, are mechanisms addressing and therefor enhancing the focus on implementing indigenous people's rights on a national and international level.

We have high expectations on the follow-up of the Outcome Document on the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples 2014, and those indigenous establishments as the Sami Parliament is granted a particular accreditation status for the UN meetings that addresses indigenous people's issues. The discussions on changing the mandate for the Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples Rights are of high importance for the Sami Parliament.

11. Please provide information of conferences and other meetings organized or supported by your Organization for 2016 and 2017.

The Sami Parliament has supported or will support these meetings:

- International meetings:
 1. The Sami University College and the Sami Parliament of Norway are arranging an Arctic Indigenous Education Conference in March 2016. www.aiec2016.com

- Pan-Sami Meetings:
 1. Sami Parliamentarians Conference in Trondheim, Norway in 2017
 2. The 100 year Celebration on the first pan- Sami meeting lead by Ms. Elsa Laula Renberg, Trondheim 2017
 3. Possible Sami youth meeting in 2016 or 2017.

- National meetings:
 1. Sami handy-craft conference in Karasjok January 2016
 2. Sami art conference in Mai 2016