

Final Document

The Second Sami Parliamentarian Conference in Roavvenjárga/Rovaniemi 28 October 2008

The Second Sami Parliamentarian Conference, comprising representatives of the Sami Parliaments in Finland, Norway and Sweden, and with the participation of representatives of the Sami in Russia, met in Roavvenjárga/Rovaniemi on 28 October 2008:

Endorsing, in its entirety, the Declaration from the First Sami Parliamentarian Conference, the Jokkmokk Declaration, and wishing to underscore the importance of the grounds for this declaration,

Emphasising national states' responsibility for implementing the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and wishing at the same time to declare that we as Sami Parliamentarians and Sami Parliaments bear a responsibility for ensuring that the provisions of the Indigenous Declarations are applied and followed,

Reminding the national states in which the Sami live that many commitments under international law still remain to be met in a satisfactory manner, and that the efforts to ensure that the national states meet these commitments should be given priority,

Emphasising that we Sami are one nation, united through our common history, culture, language and land areas, and confirming that the borders of national states shall not break our solidarity;

Proclaim agreement on the following:

1. By virtue of their right to self-determination pursuant to Article 1 of the UN Covenants of 1966, the Sami as a nation have the right to determine their own political status, to pursue their own economic, social and cultural development and to control their own natural resources and deposits, and

shall under no circumstances be deprived of the right to the resources required for their own subsistence.

The Sami shall be heard and participate in decision-making processes on issues that have a direct impact on the Sami, and the national states shall seek the Sami's free and pre-informed consent regarding all initiatives that affect the Sami.

2. Traditional knowledge/árbediehtu is an important part of Sami culture and identity. The Sami are entitled to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and cultural forms of expression, including the collateral intellectual property rights. In collaboration with the Sami, the national states shall implement effective measures to ensure the recognition and protection of the exercise of these rights. Traditional Sami symbols must not be used without the Sami's consent and only for reasons accepted by the Sami themselves.
3. Since time immemorial, the Sami have lived with and by nature and have special expertise in the conservation and use of nature. The Sami's traditional knowledge *per se* contributes to sustainable development. The Sami's special bond with nature entails both a duty and a responsibility to take the requisite environmental and resource-related considerations and to hand down traditional knowledge to upcoming generations.
4. The right to protect, use and develop one's native language is a basic human right. The Sami have the right to use and to be understood in their own language. Through the Sami Parliaments, the Sami themselves shall steward the Sami language. The national states must fulfil their national and international commitments with a view to the Sami language.
5. Sami children and youth have the right to speak and to learn their language, to practise their culture and to develop their identity. The national states and the Sami Parliaments must cooperate to organise forums for children and youth, such as organisations and net-based meeting places, also across national borders. Sami children and youth have the right to adequate health and social services based on their language and culture, and their ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background must be taken into account when developing support and assistance measures. Along with the national states, the Sami Parliaments aspire to follow up the challenges presented in the joint Nordic Report from the Ombudsmen for Children in Finland, Norway and Sweden. The national states must ensure the rights of Sami children and youth under national legislation and international legal standards.

6. The Sami Parliaments are duty-bound to ensure that no one is discriminated on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity. Sami men and women shall have equal opportunities, rights and obligations in all areas of society. Women and men shall have equal opportunities to participate in decision-making bodies and to promote further cooperation in all areas of society.
7. The national states must identify and recognise the Sami's property rights and right of use to their territories. There must be no encroachment on Sami territories without the prior informed consent of the affected Sami. The Sami shall have full compensation in the form of land areas or remuneration for encroachments on their territories. The compensation must reflect the rights of future generations. The national states shall return the areas in which encroachments have taken place once the period of encroachment is finished. The national states must recognise the Samis' right to part of the value derived from the exploitation of minerals or subterranean resources, and their rights to other resources to which the national states claim the right of ownership in areas in which the Sami live or use in other ways. Local Sami communities must be equipped to meet challenges that ensue as a result of the exploitation of resources in their territories.
8. The Sami Parliaments have ascertained that none of the national states in which the Sami live have mechanisms for involving the Sami Parliaments in the work of budgeting and funding for Sami objectives or for the realisation of the Sami Parliaments' own priorities. The Sami Parliaments point out that the right of self-determination, the right to set our own priorities and the right to be consulted on initiatives that may have a direct impact on the Sami as an indigenous people are key principles of international law. These principles must be recognised and complied with by the national states, also when stipulating budgets and funding for Sami objectives.
9. The Sami Parliaments underline that a Nordic Sami Convention is of great importance for Sami social development, and point out with concern that some uncertainty has arisen about the follow up of the agreement between the cabinet ministers responsible for Sami issues and the presidents of the Sami Parliaments, cf. the protocol of 14 November 2007. The Sami Parliaments would also point out the positive work that all three states have done in connection with the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Sami Parliaments urge the cabinet ministers responsible for Sami issues and the presidents of the Sami Parliaments to continue the process towards a Nordic Sami Convention by following up the agreement of November 2007 as soon as possible.

10. The Sami Parliaments ask that the national states, in collaboration with the Sami Parliaments, begin the work between the states on a Nordic Sami Convention with a view to finding a common solution that applies to all Sami. The Sami Parliaments urge the national states to comply with the spirit of ILO Convention No. 169, and urge Finland and Sweden to ratify this convention.

Finland, Norway and Sweden bear a special responsibility for preserving and developing Sami as a living language, also outside Sami territories. The Sami Parliaments ask the national states in question to establish a resource centre where Sami youth have the opportunity to develop Sami language skills.
