

Copenhagen, 12 January 2012

Indigenous peoples to discuss participation in World Conference

Friday and Saturday, indigenous peoples' representatives from all over the world will participate in a brainstorm meeting in Copenhagen to discuss indigenous peoples' participation in the planning of the UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. The meeting is organized by the Greenland Self Rule Representation in Copenhagen, the Sami Parliament of Norway and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, IWGIA.

The world will assess the implementation of indigenous rights

UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples to be held in 2014 will focus on the state of implementation of indigenous peoples' human rights. Indigenous peoples' special rights are described in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007. Among indigenous peoples' rights is the right to participate in decision making.

Indigenous peoples demand full participation in the planning of the World Conference

Since the UN General Assembly in 2010 adopted Resolution A/C.3/65/L.22/Rev.1 the holding of a "high level segment" meeting in the form of a world conference on indigenous peoples, the World Conference has been on the agenda in a number of UN bodies such as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the UN Human Rights Council's Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples' Rights. A crucial point has been the discussion about ensuring indigenous peoples' full participation in both the preparatory process and the conference itself.

Indigenous representatives have made clear their desire to participate actively in the planning of the conference and not be relegated to an observer role. They see the World Conference, its possible outcomes and the preparation process itself as an important opportunity to implement the UN Declaration, particularly with regards to indigenous peoples' right to participate in decision making that affects their lives and future.

UN mandates and 27 indigenous peoples' representatives will attend the meeting

The meeting will be attended by representatives of indigenous peoples from Africa, Asia, Arctic, North and South America and Oceania. Furthermore, the UN Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Mirna Cunningham, and the chair of the UN Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Bambanze Vital will attend the meeting.

Strong signal of Danish support

The Danish Minister for foreign affairs Villy Sovndal and the Premier of Greenland Self Rule (*Naalakkersuisut*) Kuupik Kleist will participate in the opening of the meeting. Their participation confirms a continued strong Danish / Greenlandic cooperation on indigenous issues and the new Danish government's

willingness to continue Denmark's leading role in relation to the current process around the World Conference and the work for strengthening indigenous peoples' rights in general.

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