



The 19<sup>th</sup> Saami Conference, Rovaniemi, October 29-31, 2008

Declaration

Land, waters - including sea waters - natural resources and self-determination

1. By using its traditional homeland since time immemorial, the Saami people has established ownership and through customary law, traditions and habits. This right should not be impeded by the national borders today dividing Sápmi;

Considering itself as a distinct people on its traditional territory, the Saami people is further entitled to the right to self-determination, encompassing a right to freely determine over its land and natural resources, obliging the States to respect this right.

3. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right.

Saami reindeer husbandry is unique as bearing witness to a long and rich history of human interaction with nature. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right.

territories

4. The States shall take effective measures to secure this right.

5. State authorities and the private sector shall consult and cooperate in good faith with affected Saami communities and organizations in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before any such activities. This right is particularly important with regard to industrial activities that have the potential to cause considerable damage to the environment.

6. The States shall provide means for the financing the Saami autonomy, including by ensuring the Saami fair and

independent of (Sweden) - that Saami reindeer husbandry shall be protected and supported in order to ensure its sustainability. Such measures shall be taken without the consent of or benefit to anyone other than the Saami.

7. Court proceedings concerning Saami rights to land as well as in land demarcation processes must respect and uphold the rights of the Saami. This means that the States shall ensure that the rights of the Saami are protected in accordance with Saami and non-Saami laws, norms and protocols. Saami perspectives shall prevail in such cases.

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notably since any further appropriation of such use. The tourism industry in particular in Finland must minimize misappropriation of the Saami traditional dress.

21. States and their cultural institutions, such as museums, must be aware of and acknowledge the secret, sacred, spiritual and cultural meaning of Saami artefacts in their collections, such as interviews containing Saami oral traditions. Such objects should further be returned upon the Saami's request. If the objects

are returned, the state must ensure that they are

22. Whenever elements of the Saami culture are used for commercial purposes, the Saami shall benefit from such activities.

23. The states must ensure that their national policies and decision-making on the environment and natural resource management:

24. do reflect a deep understanding of the Saami culture and the need to preserve and develop the Saami language, as a prerequisite for preserving Saami traditional knowledge and other parts of the Saami cultural heritage. For the same reason, the states have the responsibility to ensure that they are open to the Saami to preserve and establish their own educational institutions.

25. The Saami shall have the right to write in their own language and to transmit their language to future generations. The Saami shall have the right to use their own language in their own communities. The Saami shall have the right to use their own language in the entire Saami area. Saami children and youth must be provided with education in and on the Saami traditional livelihoods.

## Implementation

26. The states are obliged to provide the Saami with resources so that all the rights contained in this Declaration can be effectively implemented, without further delay.

27. To further the realization of the rights in this Declaration, Finland, Norway and Sweden must ratify the Nordic Saami Convention, which is also open to other states. The Saami shall have the right to be consulted on all matters affecting them.

and Sweden must ratify the ILO Convention No. 169. Norway must comply with its provisions.

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Declaration by their highest representative bodies.