

n° 6

**Human Rights Council
15th Session
Item 6: UPR Sweden
22 September 2010**

Speaker: Joshua Cooper EIP, INDIG

Mr. President, The participation of Sweden in the UPR is an important opportunity to discuss the human rights of the indigenous peoples living in the Nordic. The Saami were pleased with the questions and recommendations regarding the realization of human rights for the Saami.

The UPR process allows for civil society to gather together to educate and engage together on the common aspirations for dignity and equality. It is also an excellent opportunity for human rights education. In May 2010, a Saami delegation participated in our 4th International Training Session on the UPR of the Human Rights Council for the Actors in Civil Society and Education along with other indigenous peoples.

The Saami believe the initiatives for international instruments and standards can create a culture of peace and rule of law in Sweden. The Saami are interested in the implementation of the article of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Saami are also quite interested in the legal clarification regarding the consequences of ILO Convention 169 ratification. Finally, the Saami are also interested in the Saami Convention to establish a Nordic framework for freedoms and equality for the future to advance the effective enjoyment of human rights while also addressing the historical abuses and discriminatory practices.

The implementation of these international and proposed regional instruments can be a positive means to provide recognition to the Saami people as indigenous peoples.

We also believe a national human rights institution would be an important development to realize the rights of the Saami people.

We are eager to see how the recommendation by South Africa recommendation regarding ensuring access to basic services in economic, social and cultural rights such as education, employment and health, as well as access to land and ensuring the right to land and cultural life is promoted and protected.

Important issues for Saami regarding land rights is also legal aid regarding land rights cases that have also been raised during the human rights treaty bodies such as the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the UN Human Rights Committee. Along those lines, Saami are very interested in a fair trial in land rights by not placing the entire burden of proof on Sami parties as was noted by the CERD and HRC recommendations.