



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-fourth session

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights,  
civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

## Written submission by the Danish Institute for Human Rights\*

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Human Rights Council the written submission by the Danish Institute for Human Rights,\*\* which is being circulated in accordance with rule 7 (b) of the rules of procedure of the Council (see resolution 5/1, annex) and with the arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2005/74.

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\* National human rights institution with A status accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

\*\* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Annex**

### **Written statement by the Danish Institute for Human Rights**

#### **Written statement of the Danish Institute for Human Rights on the rights of Indigenous peoples**

The Human Rights Council of Greenland and the Danish Institute for Human Rights welcome the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on his visit to Greenland and Denmark.

The Council and the Institute would especially like to point to the responsibility of the Danish State to ensure that human rights violations – current and historical – are thoroughly covered and recognised.

We welcome the investigation of the historical relationship between Greenland and Denmark from WWII until today, initiated by Naalakkersuisut, the Government of Greenland, and the Danish Government. However, we find it problematic that the terms of reference for the investigation do not focus on human rights or the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

As highlighted by the Special Rapporteur in his End of Mission Statement, a particularly urgent issue is to ensure justice for the victims of the “IUD campaign”. The victims should receive recognition and compensation for the human rights violations they have suffered.

An investigation of the “IUD campaign” has been initiated by the Danish Government upon request from Naalakkersuisut, the Government of Greenland, and Inatsisartut, the Parliament of Greenland. The investigation will look into cases from the 1960s until 1991. However, since newer cases have emerged, the Council and the Institute recommend that the governments of Denmark and Greenland extend the scope of the investigation to include cases after 1991.

We highly encourage that the governments of Denmark and Greenland ensure a focus on human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples in ongoing and future historical investigations, for example by including human rights expertise and Indigenous expertise and knowledge in the preparation of the investigations. We especially encourage the investigations to include a focus on both individual and collective rights as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. From our point of view, it is the responsibility of the state to 1) ensure that human rights violations are thoroughly covered, 2) recognise these violations, 3) ensure inclusion of the groups that the investigations cover, and 4) ensure the proper compensation of the victims.

The ongoing historical investigations should be of highest priority and should not be further delayed.

One of the key challenges raised by the Special Rapporteur is the situation that persons with disabilities face in Greenland. This includes intersecting forms of discrimination, sexual violence and lack of access to education. We support the organizations that work to protect and strengthen the rights of persons with disabilities in Greenland, and call for a strengthened focus on protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, LGBT+ persons, and women and children who are victims of violence.

We also welcome that the Special Rapporteur brings attention to the vital issue of discrimination against Greenlanders in Denmark. Greenlanders in Denmark are met with prejudices, and surveys show that they feel discriminated against or stigmatized in their encounter with public authorities, the healthcare system, employers and the educational system. It is the responsibility of the Danish state to protect all citizens against discrimination. Additionally, Greenlanders in Denmark are protected by the ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples’ Rights. It is the responsibility of the Danish state to protect Greenlanders in Denmark from discrimination and take steps to address any human rights violations in this regard.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for paying attention to these urgent matters and for his important role in protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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