

Rákkasorda Declaration

Approved by the Rájeheis youth conference, a gathering of the four Sámi youth organizations Sáminuorra, Noereh!, Suoma Sámi Nuorat and Sámi Nurash in Rákkasorda, Sweden on May 25th-27th, 2012.

The Rájeheis youth conference

reminds Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia (hereby addressed to as “the States”) that we, the Sámi people, are the owners of the territory of Sápmi.

emphasizes that the Sámi have the right to self-determination and self-governance as a human right.

urges Sweden, Finland and Russia to ratify the ILO convention 169.

urges the Nordic countries to finish the ratification process of the Nordic Sámi Convention as soon as possible, and thus improving cooperation regarding issues such as language, traditional livelihoods, economy and health.

urges Russia to rightfully acknowledge the whole Murmansk region as the territory of the Sámi.

points out that the governments should economically compensate all Sámi that have been affected by forced migrations.

emphasizes the human right to our own language. This means that we, the Sámi, have the right to

- use and learn our mother tongue throughout all levels and forms of education
- mother tongue education on the same level in time and quality as the majority language studies

emphasizes the need to educate more teachers of all the Sámi languages in order to provide equal opportunities for all of the Sámi to learn their mother tongue.

encourages Sámi Allaskuvla, in cooperation with other Sámi educational institutions, to provide possibilities for all Sámi students to participate fully, equally and effectively on all of their courses.

requires that the States respect Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

emphasizes the importance of the traditional Sámi livelihoods for the development of the Sámi society and culture.

urges the States to acknowledge and secure the Sámi historical rights to fishing in traditional Sámi waters. Further, we **propose** regulation of the use of Sámi coastal areas and waters to prevent overfishing and other misuse, in order to secure the Sámi culture and abilities to fishing.

points out that the number of predators is too high in traditional grazing lands and causes alarmingly high losses to Sámi reindeer herding and animal husbandry.

urges the States to improve their management of the predator populations. The Sámi traditional knowledge is crucial for a correct understanding of the predator situation.

calls attention from the Arctic States and the Arctic Council to the rapid decrease of reindeer grazing lands and the threat this puts on reindeer herding in the Arctic. Further, we **urge** the Arctic States and the Arctic Council to take necessary measures to secure a future for reindeer herding.

points out the importance of entrepreneurship projects, such as Indigee – Indigenous Entrepreneurship, as a way to develop and assist indigenous youth towards sustainable economic independence through entrepreneurship based on indigenous values.

urges EU to relieve the ban on seal products, as this causes severe economical consequences for both Sámi and other indigenous peoples dependent on fishery.

requires full self-determination in traditional areas exclusively occupied by Sámi and full, equal and effective participation in the decision-making processes of development and use of lands and resources in Sámi traditional areas not exclusively occupied by us. Further, no measures should be taken without free, prior and informed consent of the people concerned.

points out that the States have responsibility to spread information about the colonial history of the States and adequately educate about the Sámi culture, history and current situation. The Ofelaš program in Norway is a good step on the way.

encourages the Sámi society and also the Sámi youth organizations to increase understanding and awareness about norms, differences and everyone's right to determine their own identity regarding ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

encourages Sámi media to report more widely from the different Sámi regions, especially the Russian part of Sápmi.

acknowledges with appreciation that the Sámi Parliamentary Council (SPR) has decided to establish a youth council (SPR-U).