

Concluding remarks by Saami Council

13.10.2014 by Åsa Larsson Blind

Thank you Mr. Chair,

Saami Council would like to share some thoughts at the conclusion. We appreciate that the European Commission invites the Arctic Indigenous peoples for the Arctic Indigenous Peoples dialogues as part of their policy for the Arctic region. In particular we appreciate to see the same faces on the other side of the table from one meeting to the other meeting that helps in developing a relationship in a trustful and respectable manner. We also appreciate that the agenda has developed for pure information sharing and capacity building, to be a bit more action oriented.

The Saami people are seeking a better and stronger representation in the European Capital. So we appreciated in particular to hear about the Greenlandic experiences with their representation in Brussels and also about how the strong representation and position they have also opens for funding opportunities. We will bring this inspiration with us to the workshop for the Saami people here tomorrow.

Finally, you are all aware that traditional knowledge is close to our hearts. We found the presentation of your work on the Arctic Lay and Traditional Knowledge to demonstrated good results so far. The project is conducted in relation to the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks - SAON that applies Arctic Council rules, so the Permanent Participants have been invited to join and contribute to the work. Sometimes we miss the opportunities due to shortage of capacity.

Regarding Traditional Knowledge, we would like to draw your attention to the Arctic Council Canada chairmanship initiative to develop recommendations on how to integrate traditional knowledge in the work of Arctic Council. With the help of two workshops hosted by Canada, the Permanent Participants has agreed upon a set of Fundamental principles for use of traditional knowledge in Arctic Council activities. At the end of the Canadian chairmanship, we hope these will become Arctic Council principles for Traditional Knowledge. These principles might be interesting and useful also for European Commission and EU.

We look forward to future commitments to implementation of the EU Policy towards the Arctic Region and we to keep the agenda of the dialogues to focus on actions. And as said at the opening, se stand ready to also contribute through consultations on processes concerning the Saami people directly.

- Thank you.