

NORWAY

We would like to make <sup>no rights the</sup> ~~commit a~~ <sup>an effort</sup>

Mr President,

follow - up of

The rights of indigenous peoples are of key importance to Norway. This issue affects the lives of, not only the indigenous peoples in our country, but the population as a whole.

The Human Rights Council, during it's first session in June this year, decided with a large majority to adopt the draft Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and to send it to the General Assembly for final adoption.

The Declaration is the result of more than 10 years of hard work amongst member States and representatives of indigenous peoples and groups. As is obvious from the long lasting negotiations within the Working Group, concluding the task was not easy, and many compromises had to be made to reach an end result.

We view the Declaration as an important tool in underscoring the principle of full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making processes. The adoption of the Declaration by the UNGA will in our view strengthen the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide. It can serve as a comprehensive framework for partnership between states and indigenous peoples. The Declaration is first and foremost a political document setting a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect.

We regret the decision by the 3<sup>rd</sup> committee of the General Assembly to defer consideration and action on the Declaration. We do, however, welcome the commitment of the GA to take action on the Declaration before the end of its sixty-first session.

It is of utmost importance that the GA lives up to this committment. The work of hundreds of government's and indigenous peoples' representatives should be honored and the process be brought to a honorable and meaningfull end.

The General Assembly now has the responsibility of proclaiming the Declaration during its present session, consistent with its commitment to the universal protection and promotion of human rights. We call upon all Member States to support the adoption of the Declaration by the General Assembly.