



## Resolution from

### The SPR youth conference in Lycksele, Sweden, 2-5 October 2008

During the SPR youth conference in Lycksele, Sweden, on 2-5 October 2008, a survey was carried out in the form of group projects, where the conference formulated a vision based on the challenges which Sámi society faces. We Sámi youth of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia make this our message to the generations of tomorrow.

We young Sámi people see the importance of creating meeting places for all young Sámi. To us, nationality is of vastly subordinate significance. Regardless of whether we live in Norway, Sweden, Finland or Russia we are one people. Therefore we want to emphasise the importance of the work to create an all-Sámi youth organisation as a common platform for all young Sámi people. We therefore urge the SPR to give this issue high priority.

The conference included two sessions, where in groups we discuss questions drafted in advance. We young people here gave our view on what the Sámi Parliaments should work with. Examples of areas for discussion were education, language and virtual meeting places. Concrete measures which we suggested include scholarships for Sámi student teachers, quotas in the education system, common language arenas and a Sámi social meeting place on the Web. More detailed information in the form of excerpts from the discussion is in the appendix attached to this resolution.

The most crucial issue that has engaged our conference participants is the theme of mental health. We have been appalled by the fact that some young Sámi people are in such a bad way that they actually choose to take their lives. During the conference, we listened to speakers who talked about how they themselves suffered depressions for long periods, and how they found help. We also had specialists, including psychologist, who spoke on the subject. They emphasised the importance of daring to open up to those closest, and also to seek professional help. The question aroused great interest among the participants. Suicide and depression have long been, and still are, a taboo subject about which it is difficult to talk. For that reason, we considered it extremely important that the problem should be addressed. We came to a breakthrough point where we could openly discuss the subject. We considered it important to be able to use professional help with competence in Sámi culture, in the reindeer industry and other Sámi industries.



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The issue of mental ill-health must be central in the work of the Sámi Parliaments. The Sámi Parliament should work to establish Sámi forms for professional support offered to the Sámi who are afflicted in this way.

Lycksele 2008-10-05