

PRESS RELEASE

Sami Parliament of Sweden

2015-08-20



The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples Victoria Lucia Tauli-Corpuz is going to participate in a conference in Hemavan, Sweden, hosted by The Sami Parliamentarian Council on August 25-27, 2015. Representatives for the three Sami Parliaments, as well as the governments for Sweden, Norway and Finland, will be attending. The Swedish Minister for Democracy and Culutral Affairs, Ms Alice Bah Kuhnke will be in Hemavan on Wednesday.

The United Nations Human Rights Council appointed Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz as Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in June 2014, tasked with monitoring, reporting and advising on the situation of Indigenous Peoples' rights worldwide.

This is the second time that the Special Rapporteur visits Sápmi as a region of its own. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz was appointed in June 2014. Her predecessor Professor James Anaya visited Rovaniemi, Finland in 2010 to meet with the Nordic Sami Parliaments and the governments. His report with reflections and recommendations can be found here: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/SR/A-HRC-18-35-Add2_en.pdf

There report from 2011 will be followed-up at the conference in Hemavan, where issues like self-determination and the Nordic convention are important topics. The Sami parliaments in the Nordic countries especially want to discuss the exploitation of natural resources; mining, wind mills, oil extraction, forestry etc. where the Sami according to present legislation have very little influence.

The conference will start on Tuesday afternoon with an excursion to the Rönnbäck area, where a nickel mine is being planned. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz will be informed of the consequences for the environment and the local people, if a mine would be built there. Representatives for the reindeer herding district (Vapsten sameby) and the organization Vaapsten Sijte will participate in this excursion.

- We are very pleased and honored that the Special Rapporteur is interested in the situation of the Sami people, living in several nations, says the chairman of the Sami parliament in Sweden, Mr Håkan Jonsson. Her visit means a lot to us.
- The Nordic countries have a good reputation and are role models for other countries on how to deal with indigenous issues. We hope that the dialogue during this conference will result in amendments of the law that will give the Sami people more influence, and that the negotiations on the Nordic Sami Convention will be successful. I do want to believe that Sweden in the future will respect indigenous rights more seriously, Håkan Jonsson concludes.

N.B! There is time reserved for a press conference on Wednesday afternoon at 4 p.m.

Ms. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz is a member of the Kankana-ey, Igorot Indigenous Peoples in the Cordillera Region in the Philippines. She played a key role in drafting and negotiating the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and pushing for its adoption by the UN General Assembly in 2007. She was the Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues from 2005-2009. Ms. Tauli-Corpuz is an indigenous activist and leader who has an expertise on human rights (particularly on indigenous peoples' rights and women's rights), development and environment issues, institution building, community organizing and leadership development.

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OFFICIAL PROGRAM

Conference is located at Hemavan Wårdshus (Blå vägen 17)

Tuesday August 25

12.00 *Lunch*

12.45-17.00 *Field trip:* Visit to planned mining area in Rönnbäck, meeting with local people affected by the plans

17.00-18.30 *The Special Rapporteur meets Saami Council*

19.00 *Dinner*

Wednesday August 26

8.30 *Welcoming words*, president of SPC

8.35-8.50 *Opening statement* by the Special Rapporteur

08.50-16.00, 12.00 *Lunch*

The Special Rapporteur meets the Sami Parliamentary Council and the Nordic governments

Presentations and discussion of issues of self-determination, exploitation of natural resources and update of the previous report (The situation of the Sami people in the Sápmi region of Norway, Sweden and Finland - 6 June 2011- A/HRC/18/35/Add.2)

- Presentations by the Sámi parliaments
- Response by the Nordic governments
- Time for discussion

Approx. 16.00 Press conference

16.30-18.30 *The Special Rapporteur meets The Nordic governments separately, Sami Parliamentary Council boardmeeting*

19.30 *Dinner*

Thursday August 27

8.30-10.00 *Windmill parks:* Presentation of Voengelh-Njaarke reindeer herding district in Gaelpie/Kalvvatnan, Norway

10.00 *Coffee break*

10.00-12.00 *The Special Rapporteur meets the Sami parliaments separately*

12.00 *Lunch*

13.15 *Discussion:* The Special Rapporteur, the SPC, Saami Council and the Nordic governments

14.40 *Coffee break*

15.00-15.30 *Conclusions by the Special Rapporteur*

15.30- *Board meeting of Sami Parliamentary Council continues*