

MGOS RESPONSE AND QUESTIONS FROM THE CSOs IN FINLAND TO THE VNR OF THE GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND

We like to congratulate Finland with the VNR to this year's HLPF. Finland is and has been a good example of working closely with all stakeholders. But still there is room for improvement. We would like to put forward the following questions:

1. What actions have been undertaken by Finland to amend the Sámi definition in the Sami Parliament Act according to the obligations of the State party as stated by the UN Human Rights Committee in February 2019?
2. What steps are being planned by Finland to prevent similar violations of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in the future and provide reparation to individuals whose rights have been violated?

The UN Human Rights Committee found in February 2019 that Finland violated the article 25 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, read alone and in conjunction with article 27, as interpreted in light of article 1. This was found in a two individual communication cases.

In accordance with article 2(3)(a) of the Covenant, the State party is under an obligation to provide the authors with an effective remedy. This requires it to make full reparation to individuals whose Covenant rights have been violated. Accordingly, the State party is obligated, inter alia, to review Section 3 of the Sami Parliament Act with a view to ensuring that the criteria for eligibility to vote in Sami Parliament elections are defined and applied in a manner that respects the right of the Sami people to exercise their internal self determination. The State party is also under an obligation to take all steps necessary to prevent similar violations in the future

Indigenous peoples group also urges Finland to take clear action in relation to the aforementioned obligations stated by the UN Human Rights Committee. One of the crucial elements would be the amending of the so-called Sámi definition in the Sami Parliament Act according to the commitments of the State party under the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). By solving this issue, Finland would reinforce the implementation of the Leave No One Behind principle of the 2030 Agenda and it's SDGs.