Norwegian statement in the general discussion on the 24th of June 2021: “Effective participation, consultation and consent of indigenous women and girls in political and public life”.

Thank you, chairperson,

We appreciate this opprtunity to contribute to the development of a General Recommendation on the rights of indigenous women and girls.

[Effective participation]

The right to participate in the development of the society as a whole and in one's own language and community is essential. Therefore, we highlight indigenous women's right to full, equal and and meaningful participation. Indigenous women have equal rights in respect of participation in public life and must be consulted before decisions that may affect them are taken.

[Health care services]

Indigenous women need and have the right to a health care service where they can communicate in their own language, and with health professionals with cultural knowledge about indigenous people.

[Education]

In this regard education is a crucial element. The right to education applies to each and every child in the world, without discrimination. Still, the education gap between indigenous children and mainstream populations remains critical.

The education of indigenous girls and women contributes both to their individual and community development as well as to their participation in the wider society. Quality education enables indigenous girls and women to exercise and enjoy economic, social and cultural rights for their personal benefit as well as for the benefit of their community.

[Violence]

Many indigenous women and girls experience violence. Indigenous victims may also experience specific challenges when they meet support services and the police. Language and sensitivity to indigenous culture and experiences, are important in order to build trust. The adaption of services should be reflected in planning, assessment and decision-making. This also includes services aimed at prevention of violence.

[Climate change]

Indigenous women experience the effects of climate change closely. Indigenous communities often live close to nature and experience changes in climate and nature. At the same time, indigenous peoples have over time gained expertise and first-hand knowledge about climate change and variations in nature. It is necessary to ensure that indigenous women are given the opportunity to participate in the debate and being consulted.

[Indigenous women human rights defenders]

Indigenous women human rights defenders are in a particularly vulnerable position. Therefore, Indigenous women human rights defenders must be ensured protection both through law and in practice.