**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee)  
Virtual day of general discussion**

**Human Rights Council of Greenland**

**Oral intervention for Part 2: “Effective participation, consultation and consent of indigenous women and girls in political and public life”**

Honorable members of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

My name is Sara Olsvig and I represent the Human Rights Council of Greenland, of which I am the chairperson.

The Human Rights Council of Greenland was established by law in 2012. Our main task is to guide and advise the NHRI of Denmark, which also covers Greenland, and to develop and strengthen the Human Rights work in Greenland by ensuring capacity building.

We work closely with the NHRI of Denmark, but we also wish for the Greenlandic institutions, including our Council and secretariat, to be strengthened, as we see an important task in promoting and protecting human rights nationally in Greenland. The Council and its secretariat are underfunded.

In Greenland, general and municipal elections were held on April 6 this year, and we raised our concern of the low number of women running for public offices. Only approximately 30 % of the candidates were women, which was also reflected in the election results.

There is a need for further focus on gender equality, prevention of sexism and harassment in public offices, and the environment around politics and we are pleased to see, that our recommendations are included in the concluding observations of the CEDAW.

Cases of sexual harassment of women within the business sector have also been exposed. We again wish to praise the women, who step forward and speak up. We are convinced, that parts of the gender inequality we see in, for example, political leadership and leading positions, relate to the predominant view of women in our society, among both men and women.

Formally, legislative measures have been taken to promote gender equality, and this takes us some of the way – in spite the fact, that women make up most people in Greenland who finalize highereducations the numbers remain imbalanced, and more than legislation is needed to change the predominant attitudes.

Ladies and gentlemen. We struggle as a society with large numbers of sexual abuse and violence against women – just as we see in many other Indigenous communities and nations. Greenland has a wide degree of self-determination, and we find, that the right of self-determination must go hand in hand with ensuring as safe society for all genders.

Inuit and Kalaallit do not have a history of being war faring peoples. But if half of the population live at risk of unsafe lives, with discrimination based on their gender, we are not at peace.

From the Human Rights Council of Greenland, we call for a strong focus on gender equality among Indigenous Peoples, a strong focus on women’s participation and gender diversity in leadership and for sharing knowledge about human rights approaches to deal with these issues among Indigenous Peoples around the World.

We support the written statement submitted by the NHRI of Denmark.

In conclusion, we would like to express our support to all Indigenous women and human rights defenders around the World that live under threats and violence.

We stand with you in solidarity.

Qujanaq, thank you again for this opportunity to speak.