



THE DANISH
INSTITUTE FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS

WILDERS PLADS 8K
DK-1403 COPENHAGEN K
PHONE +45 3269 8888
NAFI@HUMANRIGHTS.DK
HUMANRIGHTS.DK

DOC. NO. 22/00031-4

JANUARY 2022

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
(OHCHR)

Palais des Nations CH-1211 Geneva 10

E-mail: OHCHR-vaw@un.org

CALL FOR INPUTS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Danish Institute for Human Rights and the Human Rights Council of Greenland welcome the call for submissions communicated by email of 21 December 2021 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) concerning inputs to receive information on violence against indigenous women and girls from the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Ms. Reem Alsalem.

The Danish Institute for Human Rights is the national human rights institution of Denmark and Greenland and works closely with the Human Rights Council of Greenland regarding monitoring of the human rights situation in Greenland. By request of the Greenlandic parliament, Inatsisartut, and government, Naalakkersuisut, the Institute shall evaluate, promote and monitor the implementation of human rights in Greenland, including giving advice to public authorities on new legislation and by request. In cooperation with the Human Rights Council of Greenland, the Institute drafts parallel reporting to international bodies and compiles status reports on various human rights topics.¹

In 2021, the Institute submitted a letter responding to the OHCHR call for written submissions for CEDAW day of general discussion on the rights of indigenous women and girls. The information below is an extract from the letter. For more information, see the letter “Call for

¹ Status reports are available in Danish and Greenlandic on e.g. the website of the Danish Institute for Human Rights, <https://menneskeret.dk/kalaallit-nunaat/saqqummersitat>

written submissions for CEDAW day of general discussion on indigenous women and girls (24 June 2021)".²

On the same day, the Human Rights Council of Greenland delivered an oral statement contributing to the discussion. For more information, see "Oral intervention for Part 2: 'Effective participation, consultation and consent of indigenous women and girls in political and public life'"³.

Information on violence against women and children in Greenland

The level of violence in Greenland is significantly higher than the level in Denmark and the Faroe Islands, as 24.7 out of 1,000 citizens were exposed to violence in 2020, according to the reported incidents to the Greenland Police. The equivalent number was 1.3 for the Faroe Islands and 3.5 for Denmark.⁴ However, the figures from the Greenland Police are not disaggregated by gender.

According to a report from 2019, women in the age group 25-34 years represent the group of adults where the largest proportion has been exposed to violence during the last year (11 percent).⁵

Reports also show that domestic violence against children and sexual abuse in the childhood is a substantial problem. According to reports, 28 percent of the youngest group of children have been exposed to

² The Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2021, Letter, Call for written submissions for CEDAW day of general discussion on indigenous women and girls (24 June 2021), available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/DGD24June2021/28.docx>

³ The Human Rights Council of Greenland, 2021, Oral intervention for Part 2: 'Effective participation, consultation and consent of indigenous women and girls in political and public life', available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/DGD24June2021/NGOs/19.docx>

⁴ Greenland Police, Yearly Statistics 2020, p. 9, available in Danish at: <https://politi.gl/statistik-og-udgivelser/aarsstatistik>

⁵ Violence and sexual abuse in Greenland (mainly based on the Population study in Greenland 2005-10), p. 2, available in Danish at: https://www.sdu.dk/da/sif/rapporter/2019/vold_og_seksuelle_overgreb_i_groenland

domestic violence, and 24 percent of 15-29-year-olds have experienced 'forced or attempted forced sexual activity before they turned 18'.⁶

According to Greenland Police, 13.3 out of 1,000 citizens were sexually assaulted in 2020. The equivalent number was 1.1 for the Faroe Islands and 1.1 for Denmark.⁷ However, the figures from the Greenland Police are not disaggregated by gender.

The Council for Human Rights of Greenland and the Danish Institute for Human Rights have recently made recommendations on the topic for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Committee)⁸ and in the NHRI Stakeholder report⁹ for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

The reports include the following recommendations regarding Greenland:

- Strengthen initiatives against violence and repercussions of violence and coordinate with initiatives against substance abuse;

⁶ The Danish National Institute of Public Health, "The Greenlandic Population Survey 2018 – living standards, lifestyle and health" ("Befolkningsundersøgelsen i Grønland 2018 – levevilkår, livsstil og helbred"), 2018, p. 17-18, available in Danish at: https://www.sdu.dk/da/sif/rapporter/2019/befolkningsundersoegelsen_i_groenland

⁷ Greenland Police, Yearly Statistics 2020, p. 10, available in Danish at: <https://politi.gl/statistik-og-udgivelser/aarsstatistik>

⁸ The Council for Human Rights of Greenland and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, Parallel Report CEDAW (2021) 9th Examination of Denmark, Chapter 3, 2021. Available at: https://www.humanrights.dk/sites/humanrights.dk/files/media/document/parallel%20cedaw_2021.pdf

⁹ The Council for Human Rights of Greenland and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, Annex I to NHRI Stakeholder report, Recommendations pertaining to Greenland submitted by the Human Rights Council of Greenland and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2020. Available at: https://menneskeret.dk/sites/menneskeret.dk/files/media/document/Anbefaling_GRM_UK.pdf

- Take initiative to introduce legislative measures on a general protection against discrimination on all generally recognised grounds, including gender, race or ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion, both within and outside the labour market, including by establishing an independent appeals board;
- Ensure data collection and analysis on violence against children and women in close relationships, including persons with disabilities.

The Institute refers to the Human Rights Council of Greenland, the Council for Gender Equality in Greenland and the Spokesperson on Children's Rights in Greenland for more knowledge on the situation on violence against indigenous women and girls in Greenland.

Discrimination against Greenlandic women and girls in Denmark

The Institute and the Council would also like to highlight the issues with discrimination against Greenlandic women and girls in Denmark. Surveys indicate that Greenlanders in Denmark are discriminated against or stigmatized in their encounter with public authorities, the health care system, employers, and the educational system. Women are over-represented in the group of Greenlanders in Denmark.¹⁰

The Institute and the Council suggest that the Special Rapporteur contact organisations such as *De grønlandske huse i Danmark (the Greenlandic Houses in Denmark)*¹¹ and *Danner (organisation working with violence against women in Denmark)*¹² for more knowledge on the situation on violence against Greenlandic women and girls in Denmark.

Yours sincerely,

Qivioq Løvstrøm

CHAIR OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL OF GREENLAND

Nadja Filskov

SENIOR ADVISER, THE DANISH INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

¹⁰ SFI The Danish National Centre for Social Research, "Greenlanders in Denmark" (Grønlændere i Danmark), 2015, available in Danish at: <https://www.vive.dk/media/pure/5566/278073> and: The Danish Institute for Human Rights, "Equal Treatment of Greenlanders in Denmark" (Ligebehandling af grønlandere i Danmark), 2015, available in Danish at: <https://menneskeret.dk/udgivelser/ligebehandling-groenlaendere-danmark>

¹¹ E-mail: illu@sumut.dk

¹² E-mail: kontaktdanner@danner.dk