



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/Sub.2/2004/29/Add.1
2 June 2004

ENGLISH ONLY

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on the Promotion and
Protection of Human Rights
Fifty-sixth session
Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda

PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION

**PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION
OF MINORITIES**

**The Report of the Working Group on Minorities
on its visit to Finland (17 to 20 January 2004)**

By Mr. Asbjørn Eide, Chairperson-Rapporteur

Summary

The Working Group on Minorities of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights visited Finland from 17 to 20 January 2004 at the invitation of the Government of Finland. It visited the Aland autonomous Province and the capital Helsinki. In Aland Islands, the Working Group's visit focused on the legislation and the implementation of autonomy and, in particular, on autonomy as a mechanism for conflict resolution; while in Helsinki, the Working Group looked at the participation and the integration of all communities in political and social life and on the issues of languages and cultures. The Working Group met with a number of the local government officials in Aland and various representatives of civil society, including those from minority groups and the indigenous Sami people in Helsinki.

The Working Group noted that, with regard to the autonomy in the Aland Islands, all parts involved, the local Swedish-speaking self-government and the State have developed a common ground for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and sought the balance between minority protection and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State. It noted with appreciation the experience of autonomy in the Aland Province as an inspiration for the peaceful solution of conflicts between a minority and the State in other parts of the world. In Helsinki, the Working Group observed that there existed in Finland a comprehensive legislative framework and monitoring mechanisms for minority protection, which was in conformity with international and European standards of human rights and minority rights. The Working Group noted that, however, the "new" minorities were the most exposed to stereotyping in the media and to racism and discrimination in the labour market and social services. It recommends that the Government of Finland consider the establishment of a relevant advisory body to look at integration issues of the Russian-speaking community, and invites those minority community organizations it did not meet to send information to the Working Group. With regard to the indigenous Sami people, the Working Group recommends that the Government ratify without delay ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At the invitation of the Government of Finland, the Working Group on Minorities of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights conducted a visit to Finland from 17 to 20 January 2004. The Working Group was composed of the following members: Mr. Asbjørn Eide (Chairperson), Mr. José Bengoa, Mr. Vladimir Kartashkin and Ms. Leïla Zerrougui, members of the Working Group.
2. The objectives of the visit were to draw lessons from the experiences of Finland with regard to good practices for group accommodation, autonomy and minority protection in this country. The Working Group visited the Aland Islands (17 to 18 January) and Helsinki in mainland Finland (19 to 20 January).
3. In the Aland Islands, the Working Group was received by Mr. Roger Nordlund, the Head of Government of Aland, Ms. Elisabeth Nauclér, the Head of Administration of Government of Aland, Mr. Roger Jansson, member of the Finnish Parliament, Ms. Susanne Eriksson, Deputy Secretary of the Aland Parliament and Mr. Peter Lindbäck, the Governor of Aland.
4. In Helsinki, the Working Group met with representatives of minority communities, journalists, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, the Ombudsman for Minorities and the Ministry of Labour.
5. The Working Group wishes to thank the Government of Finland for its invitation permitting the visit. It also extends its appreciation to the various representatives of civil society with whom it met during the visit, including those from minority groups.
6. The two primary issues during the visit were the autonomy in Aland Islands, and the constructive accommodation for the different ethnic groups in the Finnish society. With regard to the first issue, attention focused on the legislation and the implementation of autonomy in the Aland Islands, and in particular on autonomy as a mechanism for conflict resolution. Concerning the second, including the participation and integration of different communities in political and social life, and on the issues of languages and culture, the Working Group held discussions with representatives of various communities and non-governmental organizations in Helsinki.

II. VISIT TO THE ALAND ISLANDS

A. Brief background and history of autonomy in the Aland Islands

7. The Aland Islands form an autonomous, demilitarized and monolingual Swedish-speaking province of Finland. The archipelago is located in the northern Baltic Sea between Sweden and Finland and consists of about 6,500 islands, of which only 50 are inhabited. The population of Aland is 26,000, 97 per cent of them are Swedish-speaking and 3 per cent Finnish-speaking. From the thirteenth century until 1809 when Russia took both Aland and Finland under its sovereignty, Aland and Finland were part of Sweden. Under the Russian

control, Aland was a part of the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland. During the Crimean War (1854-1856), Russia fortified the Aland Islands, but the fortifications were destroyed by the British. In conformity with the Peace Treaty of Paris of 1856 after the Crimean War, the Aland was demilitarized.

8. Finland gained its independence from Russia in December 1917. At the same time, the question of the future of Aland arose. The overwhelming majority of Alanders expressed their wish to reunify with Sweden, but the newly independent Finland rejected the idea and the situation became so tense that two of the Aland activists were arrested after their return from Sweden where they went to seek support. Under such a context, Sweden and Finland agreed to submit their dispute to the Council of the League of Nations. The Council decided to recognize Finnish sovereignty over Aland in June 1921, against the will of Alanders. In the meantime, Finland had anticipated the view of the League of Nations by enacting the Autonomy Act of Aland in 1920. This first Act constituted the legal foundation of the autonomy in Aland. In addition, under the auspices of the League of Nations, the Convention on the Demilitarization and Neutralization of the Aland Islands was concluded in 1921, completing the international status of Aland.

9. Following the decision of the League of Nations, Sweden and Finland concluded an agreement with provisions for the guarantee of autonomy. The League of Nations endorsed the agreement in a decision of 27 June 1921, under which Finland would amend its Autonomy Act of 1920. The provisions of the autonomy law would guarantee Swedish as the sole official language taught in public schools of Aland, the maintenance of land and property in the hands of Islanders, the restriction of the outside settlers' right of franchise, and provisions for ensuring that the Governor will have the confidence of Islanders. Moreover, the League of Nations would supervise the implementation of autonomy of Aland, and the people of Aland would have the right to appeal to the League of Nations if any matter affects these guarantees. In 1945, the United Nations succeeded the League of Nations, but discontinued its role of considering the Aland issue. Finland, however, maintained the autonomy of Aland and amended and reinforced the Autonomy Act in 1951 and 1991, respectively.

B. Provisions and implementation of autonomy

10. The Autonomy Act lists the areas in which the Assembly of Aland has legislative authority. Finnish law applies in areas such as foreign affairs and civil and criminal law. The 1999 Constitution of Finland stipulated that the Aland Islands have autonomy in accordance with what is set out in the Autonomy Act which grants certain legislative and administrative powers to the organs of Aland. The Act can be amended only by the Parliament of Finland and the Assembly of Aland in the same way as provided for amendments of constitutional acts, which give the autonomy a strong legal protection. The Act contains, inter alia, the basic provisions on the division of powers and competences between the Aland authorities and the State.

11. The Assembly of Aland elected by Alanders based on the same principle as national legislative election in Finland and the Aland Government are the two bodies which exercise their power on affairs relating to the life of Aland people. The State levies taxes and customs duties in Aland but returns 0.45 per cent of the State budget to Aland in the form of a lump sum, which represents 75 per cent of the Aland Government's budget. The official representative of the

State is the Governor of Åland, who is appointed by the President of Finland with the agreement of the President of Assembly of Åland. As a constituency, Åland elects one member to the Finnish Parliament. When Finland enters into an international treaty concerning Åland, the consent of the Assembly is required. For example, when Finland joined the European Union in 1995, the "Åland Protocol" was concluded to maintain Åland outside the EU tax union.

12. The Åland Delegation is the body responsible for the settlement of disputes between Åland autonomous Province and the State. It examines the laws promulgated by the Assembly of Åland and gives its opinions on the question of the division of powers between Åland and the State to the Ministry of Justice, which presents them to the President of Finland. The President can use the right of veto against a law voted by the Assembly of Åland after seeking the opinion of the Supreme Court. The Delegation is composed of five members of whom two are chosen by the State and two by the Åland Government; the Governor of Åland is the chairperson of the Delegation.

13. One of the characteristics of the autonomy of the Åland is the right of domicile, which requires any new settler to have five years of residence in the province and proficiency in Swedish in order to be eligible to take part in local and regional elections, to own property and to set up business.

C. Autonomy as a mechanism for conflict resolution

14. The eighty years' history of autonomy in Åland has proven a successful example of minority protection in Finland. The autonomy guaranteed by the Autonomy Act has continued to broaden the scope of self-government. The growing international interest in the Åland experience as an example of peaceful solution to minority conflicts has contributed to raising the awareness of local people themselves of autonomy. The autonomy is not only self-governance guaranteed by the constitutional law and international status, but also has become a process of development of the local identity which is distinct from that of the majority Finnish society and Swedish cultural and linguistic affiliations.

15. The Working Group noted with particular interest the autonomy through the lenses of conflict-resolving. The experience of Åland has been internationally recognized as positive and workable for solving conflicts between a minority and the State. It was noted that the decision made by the League of Nations in 1921 on the Finnish sovereignty over Åland was not satisfactory either for Ålanders or for Sweden. However, in the process of solving this crisis, Sweden, the Åland people and Finland have managed to set up the common ground for peaceful resolution and sought the balance between minority protection and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State. It is true that the historical realities and international guarantee have contributed to the success of the autonomy in Åland, but it is also true that the political will of the State and the trust gained between the two parties have made the autonomy a practical reality. The mechanisms for solving disputes, settling difficult issues and disagreements have always involved the State and the autonomous region through dialogues and negotiations.

16. The Working Group noted that, based on the experience of the Åland autonomy, many factors and conditions are necessary for the functioning of autonomy, and each case has its specificities. However, three important conditions are required for the management of

autonomy: the willingness of the parties involved to settle conflicts peacefully, good faith and the confidence of the State in which minority protection would be guaranteed in the form of self-government, and respect for the legal framework and dialogue by both sides. As pointed out by several representatives of the Åland Government, the autonomy of Åland is not a model, rather, it can be an inspiration for other minorities and States in seeking a peaceful solution to conflicts.

III. VISIT TO MAINLAND FINLAND

A. General overview of minority groups in Finland

17. Out of the 5 million population of Finland, nearly 300,000 are Swedish-speaking, a few thousands settled Russians, 10,000 Roma, several hundred Jews and Tatars, and 7,000 indigenous Sami people who speak three different Sami languages; all these minorities are considered as established minorities. In the last 10 years, some “new minorities” have started arriving in Finland, among them about 30,000 Ingrians. Ingrians are descendants of Finno-Ugric people who originally lived in the areas around Saint Petersburg in Tsarist Russia during the seventeenth century. When Stalin conducted the mass deportation of peoples inside the Soviet Union, Finno-Ugric people were forcibly moved to other parts of the Soviet Union, including the Baltic countries of today. For the past 10 years, many Finno-Ugric people have migrated to Finland as people with Finnish origin. Their arrival in Finland has been granted under the return programme initiated by the Finnish President, Mauno Koivisto, in early 1990. Due to the fact that the Ingrians had lost contact with the Finnish language during the Stalin period, the majority of Ingrians have become de facto Russian-speaking when arriving to Finland. In addition to the Ingrians as “new minorities”, there are approximately 4,000 Somalis living in Finland. They are mainly Somali students who were studying in Russia when the Soviet Union was collapsing and were not able to go back home because of the civil war in Somalia. They arrived in Finland and were followed by their families later.

18. Finland is party to the six major international human rights treaties and the optional protocols thereto; it has also ratified other European treaties on minorities. The new Constitution, which entered into force on 1 March 2000, contains extensive provisions with regard to the rights of minorities. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, the Minority Ombudsman’s Office was established in 2001 to promote good inter-ethnic relations and to monitor the status of and respect for the rights of foreigners and persons belonging to minorities in Finland. Finnish and Swedish are official languages of Finland, while the other minority languages are used and protected under the legislation of the Finnish Language Act, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the European Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities.

19. The Working Group met with a number of representatives of minority groups and non-governmental organizations in Helsinki. Below is a summary of issues discussed during those meetings.

B. Meetings with different representatives of minority groups and non-governmental organizations

Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)

20. ETNO was appointed by the Council of State on the submission of the Ministry of Labour. It is an independent body that deals with minority issues. ETNO is composed of 27 ordinary members, 27 alternate members and 3 chairpersons. Half of the members are officials from governmental agencies, ministries and local authorities, while the other half are from ethnic minority communities and minority non-governmental organizations. All the minority groups have representatives in ETNO. The representatives of ETNO informed the Working Group of their concerns with regard to the integration of some new minorities in Finland, such as the insufficient number of kindergartens for Russian-speaking children in order to better prepare them for primary schools, the lack of communication between schoolteachers and parents due to the language barriers and difficulties encountered by minorities in the labour market.

21. The Working Group was informed that the provisions of the new Constitution of 2000, which extended the notion of discrimination as a result of the reform of the Constitution, came into effect in 1995. It was, however, told that the change of attitude on the part of public service and the police in particular demanded more efforts to address discrimination. The high rate of unemployment among minorities, in particular among newcomers, was stressed; it was estimated that 30-35 per cent of minorities were unemployed compared with 9 per cent of national average. Another issue is the acquisition of citizenship. For example, in 2003, only 6,000 out of 160,000 immigrants living in Finland acquired citizenship.

The Swedish Assembly in Finland

22. The Swedish Assembly in Finland is a non-governmental organization. Swedish is one of the two national languages of Finland; the Swedish-speaking Finns are not considered as a minority as such, but rather a de facto linguistic minority accounting for nearly 6 per cent of the Finnish population. The Working Group was informed of some perceptions on the limited interest in Swedish in the public services and of the change of demography in some traditional Swedish municipalities in the south of the country as Swedish-speaking people have decreased as a proportion of the total population. This is a result of the increasing migration.

23. The Working Group was informed that some municipalities had undertaken projects on "languages charters" with a view to identifying problems in using the minority language, Finnish or Swedish, at the local level. The outcome of the study is due to be published in late 2004 and will make recommendations to the Government and local authorities to address the language issue. One of the aims of the new Languages Act is to make the society more open for all minority languages.

The Finnish Association of Russian-speaking Organizations (FARO)

24. The Russian-speaking minority is among the most rapidly growing community in Finland with approximately 30,000 people arriving over the past 10 years. The community is, however, not homogenous; it includes Russian nationals, Russian-speaking Ingrians and nationals from the Baltic countries and other former Soviet Union republics.

25. The FARO representatives pointed to a number of difficulties the Russian community were facing in their integration into the Finnish society, such as stigmatization and stereotyping about Russians by a few media outlets, the lack of communication with and understanding by the Finns at large, and the fact that Russian higher education diplomas and working experience in Russia were not fully taken into consideration in employment. Since Finland is a bilingual country (Finnish and Swedish), the Russian language is not taken into account when two languages are required for a given job. As a result, there is a very high unemployment rate among the educated Russian-speaking people who speak Finnish but not Swedish. It was also noted that more support was needed for Russian-speaking kindergartens and better structured Finnish-language courses for adults.

26. Considering that the Russian-speaking minority ranks the largest in terms of number after the Swedish-speaking Finns, the Russian-speaking community has been asking the Government to set up an advisory body similar to other bodies on Romany and Sami affairs, to address the integration issues of the Russian-speaking minority. So far, there has been no favourable response to this demand.

Advisory Board on Romany Affairs

27. This Board, currently under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, was established in 1956. Half of the Board members are governmental officials and the other half are representatives of Roma non-governmental organizations. There are about 10,000 Roma living in Finland and they all are Finnish citizens. The rights of the Roma are protected under the Finnish legislation and other related international and European minority protection laws. The general feeling of the Roma people on their situation in Finland is quite positive and satisfactory. The Working Group was told that four Regional Advisory Boards on Romany Affairs were to be established in early 2004 to deal with Romany affairs at the provincial level.

28. The Advisory Board on Romany Affairs pointed out that problems of discrimination exist concerning, in particular, access to housing and employment for Roma. They expected that the new Law on Discrimination, enacted on 1 February 2004, would more effectively address discrimination and ensure the equality of access in public, social and economic life. The high unemployment rate among the Roma has been coupled with a higher proportion of Roma in prisons compared with the national average. A better legal assistance is needed for these Roma, after having left prisons, to reintegrate into society. Concerning the Roma language and culture, the new Constitution guarantees their rights to develop their own language and culture, but in reality there has been a serious lack of skilled teachers and materials to teach the Roma language in schools; only 5.26 per cent of the schools with Roma children could provide courses on Romany language and culture. It was noted that most Roma education and cultural facilities were concentrated in urban areas, while those Roma who live in other areas were not necessarily aware of their rights and disadvantaged in accessing those facilities.

Union of Ingrians in Finland

29. As mentioned above, Ingrians are people with Finnish origin who migrated to Finland mainly from Russia and Estonia very recently under the return programme applied since 1990. Unlike their ancestors, many of them do not speak Finnish any more. They were considered as Finns in Russia, but once they arrived in Finland they somehow felt as Russians. Currently, only 2,000 Ingrians are authorized to return to Finland every year and thousands of them are on the waiting list in Russia and the Baltic countries.

30. Despite the substantive supporting programme for learning Finnish and housing provided by the Government, the fact that Ingrians are Russian-speaking constitutes a major difficulty in their new life in Finland. The Working Group was informed that Ingrians wished to integrate into Finland because of their historical ethnic and linguistic relationship with Finnish, while having the possibility to preserve their Russian language and cultural identity. They called for a better understanding from Finnish society of their double identity, as Finland has become a more diverse country in which people from different cultural and historical backgrounds live together. They also expressed concern about the slow procedure of acquiring citizenship, which currently requires five years of permanent residence and considerable paperwork.

Jewish community in Helsinki

31. The Jewish community counts about 1,500 people in the whole of Finland and is concentrated in Helsinki and Turku. The settlement of Jews in Finland dates back to the early nineteenth century when the Russian army took Jewish boys from other parts of Russia to work in the army and to be soldiers when they were adults. After 25 years of service in the Russian army, Jews were allowed to settle in Finland. The community has its rabbis, associations, synagogues, schools and kindergartens. The relationship with Finns has been peaceful. During the Second World War, Finland opened its doors to refugees, including Jews who fled from Eastern and Central Europe. No institutionalized persecution or discrimination has been reported, contrary to many other countries in Europe.

32. The Jewish community is concerned about the emergence of marginalized activities of the few neo-Nazi groups in Nordic countries and the link made between Jewish and Muslim communities and the conflict in the Middle East. They have been following closely the current debate in Finland with regard to the circumcision of boys; the question was raised on the conditions and safety of such practices. The Jewish community explained that circumcision as part of their cultural and religious identity has been practised by the community without any accidents for one hundred years. They are concerned that restrictions would be imposed to allow circumcision only in public hospitals.

Finnish Tatar Islamic Community

33. The Tatars are a Turkic-speaking Muslim people. The number of this community in Finland amounts to less than one thousand. They first came to Finland under the Russian rule in the nineteenth century to work in the construction of the fortress in Åland and other islands off Helsinki. After the war, the soldiers returned to Russia but the rest of the arrived Tatars stayed in Finland. Those who stayed behind became successful merchants at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century and so became part of Finnish society.

Fully integrated in Finland, Tatars have also at the same time successfully maintained their Islamic faith, culture and language. The Congregation was established in 1925, and the Tatar language has been successfully maintained not only through prayers but also at home and at cultural centres. Being successful merchants, the Tatar community has also been able to cater for its own needs and to develop its own culture and language activities.

34. In recent years, the Tatars of Finland have considerably strengthened the exchange with Tatars of other regions of the world, including the Republic of Tatarstan of the Russian Federation. The new opening has increased the interest of the young generation of the community in Tatar language and culture and brought up the international dimension for the Tatar community in their relationship with the outside world.

35. The representative of the Tatar community expressed the wish of his community to share their experiences of integration with other Muslim communities recently arriving in Finland. In his view, it is possible to integrate while preserving traditions and culture with flexibility. Moreover, he stressed that some practices which are not in conformity with basic human rights standards cannot be accepted in the name of tradition.

Sami Parliament in Finland

36. The Sami are the indigenous people of Finland, who, along with other ethnic minorities, have been making tremendous efforts to voice their concerns. Sami organizations have also played an important role in advancing indigenous issues both at the national and international levels. In their view, major achievements of the last decade with regard to the Sami in Finland concern mainly the field of linguistic and cultural rights as set out in the Act on the Sami Parliament of 1995. The main role of this Parliament is to safeguard and develop the Sami language and culture and deal with the status of Samis as indigenous people in Finland. The Sami Parliament has no legislative powers. Any Sami person included in the Sami Electoral Register is entitled to vote and stand for election in the Sami Parliament whether she/he lives inside or outside Sami Homeland in the north of Finland.

37. For the Sami people, they have gained cultural and linguistic autonomy but many other important issues remain unsolved, one of which is land rights. In their ancestral land, the Samis have become a numerical minority and the ownership of land, water and natural resources has not been settled. Without control over land and the environment, language and cultural autonomy cannot preserve their identity. Some proposals to address the land rights of the Sami have been made, but not been adopted yet. In responding to a call by the Sami to ratify the 1989 ILO Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (hereafter referred to as "ILO Convention No. 169"), the Government of Finland explained that Finland did not meet the requirements of the Convention regarding land rights. In this regard, the Government appointed a rapporteur to examine the land issue of Sami people in 1999; the rapporteur proposed that a Land Rights Council of the Sami Homeland be established with both Sami and non-Sami living on Sami traditional land to supervise the respect of the rights and interests of Sami and other local people. In 2000, the Ministry of Justice appointed another rapporteur to undertake a legal assessment of the land issue in Sami Homeland. It was noted that so far none of the two reports submitted by the rapporteurs has led to a government initiative to change the law.

38. The representatives of the Sami Parliament expressed their view that no further study would be needed and that Finland should ratify ILO Convention No. 169 without further delay.

The Ombudsman for Minority, Ministry of Labour

39. The Office of the Ombudsman was established in September 2001, replacing the former Ombudsman for Aliens with broadened mandates. The Ombudsman is an independent authority, whose main tasks include the protection and promotion of the rights of foreigners and ethnic minorities, regardless of whether they are new or old, the promotion of good inter-ethnic relations and giving views on motions for expulsion orders.

40. The Ombudsman briefed the Working Group on the main activities carried out since the establishment of his office. They included participating in the preparation of periodic reports to various international and European human rights treaty bodies on minority protection, promoting minority issues in public debate, providing legal assistance to minorities with regard to their residency status, monitoring the Aliens Act and tackling discrimination. From early 2004, when the Law on Equality entered into force, the role of the Ombudsman was accordingly reinforced to have a monitoring role with regard to alleged discrimination outside the workplace, e.g. education and social services. It was acknowledged that new minorities, such as the Somali community, were the most exposed to racism, harassment and discrimination in the labour market and in public and social services.

41. The Ombudsman pointed out that Finland, like all post-industrialized countries, has been facing challenges in integrating new minorities while respecting cultural diversity. In his view, the Finnish society has not been as homogeneous as people used to think. The integration policy should also focus on respect for diversity, and the whole society has been learning to manage multiculturalism.

IV. PRESS CONFERENCE

42. The visit of the Working Group to Finland drew greater interest of the media in Åland and in mainland Finland. Two press conferences were held, one in Åland and the other in Helsinki. In total, 24 journalists of Finnish- and Swedish-speaking newspapers, television, radio and correspondents of foreign press attended the conferences. At the press conference held in Helsinki, the Working Group gave a briefing on its visit and answered questions. In addition, the Chairperson of the Working Group also gave interviews to Swedish-speaking media.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

43. **The Working Group noted with appreciation the interesting and successful experience of autonomy in Åland thanks to Åland and the State's willingness and sincerity in the implementation of autonomy "in the interest and happiness of Åland people". The Working Group welcomed the initiative of the Governments of Åland and Finland to share their experiences in international forums as an inspiration for the peaceful resolution of conflicts between minorities and the State in other parts of the world.**

44. **The Working Group observed the importance placed on the promotion and maintenance of a spirit of equality and respect between and among various ethnic communities in Finland and the peaceful coexistence of all communities in the country. There is in place a comprehensive legislative framework and monitoring bodies for the protection of all citizens from discrimination on the grounds of religion, language, nationality, ethnic origin or gender.**
45. **The Working Group stressed the importance of participation by all communities in the political, social and economic life in Finland. In this regard, the Working Group noted with appreciation the newly enacted Law on Equality, and the establishment and activities of the Ombudsman for Minorities. The Working Group believes that the identity of the indigenous Sami people is closely linked to their traditional livelihood and environment. In this regard, the Working Group recommends that the Government of Finland ratify ILO Convention No. 169 without further delay.**
46. **The Working Group notes that the Russian-speaking community called for the establishment of an advisory body to examine integration issues. The Working Group suggests that the Government of Finland consider this demand.**
47. **The Working Group regrets that the organizations of the Somali Islamic community did not respond to the invitation to meet with the Working Group during its visit, and invites the Somali community to send information to the Working Group.**

Annex

I. PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT

Saturday, 17 January

Evening:

Arrival in Aland and dinner hosted by Mr. Roger Nordlund, Head of the Aland Government

Sunday, 18 January

Morning:

- Meetings with - Ms. Elisabeth Nauc ler, Head of the Administration
 - Mr. Roger Jansson, Member of the Finnish Parliament
 - Ms. Susanne Eriksson, Deputy Secretary-General of the Aland Parliament

Afternoon:

- Meeting with Mr. Peter Lindb ck, the Governor of Aland
- Press Conference
- Leave for Helsinki

Monday, 19 January

Morning:

- Meetings with - Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)
 - Swedish Assembly in Finland
 - Finnish Association of Russian-speaking Organizations (FARO)
- Lunch hosted by Mr. Perti Harvola, Deputy Director-General for Legal Affairs, Legal Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Afternoon:

- Meetings with - Union of Ingrians in Finland
 - Sami Parliament in Finland

Tuesday, 20 January

Morning:

- Meetings with - Jewish Congregation in Helsinki
 - Finnish Tatar Islamic Congregation
 - Ombudsman for Minorities
- Lunch hosted by Mr. Hannu Kyröläinen, Director for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Afternoon:

- Press Conference
- Departure from Helsinki

II. LIST OF INDIVIDUALS AND NGOs MET DURING THE VISIT

In Aland Islands

1. Ms. Elisabeth Nauclér, Head of the Administration
2. Mr. Roger Nordlund, Head of the Aland Government
3. Mr. Roger Jansson, Member of the Finnish Parliament
4. Ms. Susanne Eriksson, Deputy Secretary General of the Aland Parliament
5. Mr. Peter Lindbäck, the Governor of Aland

In Helsinki

6. Mr. Daryl Taylor, Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)
7. Mr. Silvain Sagne, Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)
8. Mr. Erik Mickwitz, Swedish Assembly in Finland
9. Mr. Kirill Gluschkoff, Finnish Association of Russian-Speaking Organizations (FARO)
10. Mr. Eugen Novitsky, Finnish Association of Russian-Speaking Organizations (FARO)
11. Ms. Anna Leskinen, Finnish Association of Russian-Speaking Organizations (FARO)
12. Ms. Sarita Friman, Advisory Board on Romany Affairs
13. Ms. Janette Grönfors, Advisory Board on Romany Affairs

14. Mr. Toivo Iho, Union of Ingrians in Finland
15. Mr. Toivo Tupin, Ingrian Centre
16. Mr. Pekka Aikio, Sami Parliament in Finland
17. Ms. Irja Seurujärvi-Kari, Sami Parliament in Finland
18. Mr. Dan Kantor, Jewish Congregation in Helsinki
19. Mr. Okan Daher, Finnish Tatar Islamic Community
20. Mr. Mikko Puumalainen, Ombudsman for Minorities
