

[Translation into English from North Sámi]

## **VIRTUAL NORDIC EXPERT SEMINAR: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & PROTECTION OF SÁMI TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE 22 OCTOBER 2020**

### **1. Current issues concerning the protection of traditional knowledge**

#### **► Co-operation within the Sámi Parliamentary Council SPC**

**Tuomas Aslak Juuso**, President, Sámi Parliament in Finland on Cooperation on the issue within the framework of the Sámi Parliamentary Council (SPC)

Thank you. As I mentioned in the opening speech, when talking about Sami cultural heritage and traditional knowledge it is always important to keep in mind that the Sami, as an indigenous people, has the right to self-determination and to manage the cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. And to decide in matters connected to the utilization and use of it.

The base for the discussions must be the Sami culture starting point, and in centre of this should Sami values. The Sami people lives in four states. Traditional Sami knowledge and cultural heritage cannot be viewed from the framework of one state only. In the practical work in our Sami Parliament we have often ended up in a situation where we should decide on issues connected to Sami cultural heritage that are transboundary. These could be a matter of sacred places, or issues connected to possibility of commercial activity/business. It would be very important that Sami, regardless of borders, would have a joint standpoint so that we could act as one people in order to protect common cultural heritage. In the Sami community all Sami should be able to manage issues concerning them as one people across borders. This is based in the work of the Sami Parliamentary Council (SPC). This council is the co-operational body between the Sami parliaments in Finland, Norway and Sweden. The Russian Sami organizations participate in this cooperation as observers. The Sami parliamentary council develops the cooperation between the Norwegian, Finnish and Swedish Sami Parliaments. It also represents the Sami people in Scandinavian and international connections. Every second year the council presents an action plan. In the latest action plan, from 2020, the need for common lines for cultural heritage are expressed. And special attention is put on Sami cultural heritage and traditional knowledge in the plan. In the action plan we have defined what actions should be done for the cultural heritage issues within all Sami Parliaments. The goal is to outline guidelines for the use of Sami cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. And the needs and means for protection. With this it will be possible to protect traditional heritage, knowledge, language and traditional livelihood in the future. And the survival of Sami culture. In the action plan it is underlined that we Sami should have the ultimate say. On concrete level we should map and collect the principles and regulations for these rights.

Since the content of Sami self-determination means both regulations for how to utilize cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, the Scandinavian countries decided to organize and develop common model for the management of this. In this model basic questions in the present cooperation regarding Sami cultural heritage and traditional knowledge are collected as basis.