



Ilisimatitsissut Notat

Uunga Menneskerettighedsenheden
Til Udenrigsministeriet
 Socialministeriet

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UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Fourth periodic report of Denmark to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (incl. appendix on Greenland and The Faroe Islands)

Response to list of issues 14. October 2010

Part I

Ad 3 In the beginning of 2011, the Ministry of Social Affairs will initiate a reform process to amend the Act on Help to Children and Youth passed by the parliament in 2003. The aim of the reform is to further emphasize the rights of the child and incorporate the Convention of the Rights of the Child even more in Greenlandic legislation.

19 August 2010 the Government of Greenland signed a five year cooperation agreement with UNICEF Denmark. The agreement declares that UNICEF will contribute to the revision of Greenlandic legislation with advice and proposals on how to ensure children's rights in the legislation.

Ad 5 18 May 2010 the parliament decided on a model for an independent children's council in Greenland. The Greenlandic model is based on the Paris Principles and the guidelines devised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The model contains a children's council, a children's spokesman, a secretariat and a research/information centre. The main objective of the children's council is to monitor the development of society based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The main objective of the children's spokesman is to ensure children de facto access to public complaints boards' and to spread the debate on children's rights. The overall aim for the institution is to include children's voices and perspectives. The bill will be introduced to the parliament at their next gathering in spring 2011.

Ad 6 20 November 2010 Greenland celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Convention in schools, kindergartens, local halls etc. The Minister of Social Affairs, Maliina Abelsen, made a speech to the children of Greenland to mark the day.

The 2010 strategy "A safe Childhood" contains measures to raise awareness of the Convention in the State party e.g. by a book on children's rights composed by The Documentation Centre on Children and Youth (MIPI). The book will be distributed to public schools, where the Convention is part of the curriculum.

The cooperation agreement with UNICEF will contribute to raise awareness of the Convention through initiatives to increase social responsibility and improve the level of knowledge in society on children's needs and rights. There will be a specific focus on children's knowledge about children's rights based on UNICEF's "Nordic Study on Child Rights to Participate 2009-2010".

In the future the children's council (incl. the children's spokesman and the research/information centre) should contribute significantly to raise awareness of the Convention in Greenland.

Ad 7 2009-2011 the Government of Greenland has initiated continuing education for employees at family centres and shelters for battered women. The education program includes understanding and support of exposed children and families.

Ad 8 25th and 26th of November 2008 the Government of Greenland held the national conference "Violence is not the solution" on domestic violence. The first day of the conference brought status and development of Greenlandic shelters for battered women into focus. The second day of the conference was centred on the human consequences of domestic violence and measures to prevent/combat domestic violence. The results of the conference are described in a publication and included in the preparation of a national action plan on domestic violence.

2nd September 2010 the Government of Greenland was responsible for a Nordic seminar on gender equality in the West Nordic region (Iceland, The Faroe Islands and Greenland). At the seminar there were topics levelled at children and youth including measures to prevent violence and abuse amongst young couples and measures to prevent/combat violence against women. The Government of Greenland put emphasis on NGO participation, as Nordic experiences suggest that NGOs can contribute significantly in this focus area. Thus, West Nordic NGOs promoting gender equality held a NGO seminar the day before the Nordic seminar to discuss, how NGOs can participate in initiatives to prevent/combat domestic violence and abuse. The Nordic Council and the Government of Greenland have subsequently offered to finance a web-portal for NGOs promoting gender equality in the West Nordic region on basis of the seminar results.

Ad 11 Child poverty in Greenland has been addressed in the survey "Child poverty in Greenland" from 2007 prepared by The Documentation Centre on Children and Youth and in an introduction to a debate, "Pilot project on poverty", prepared by external consultants in 2010. The existing survey material does not describe the extent of child poverty in Greenland fully. However, the survey materials contribute to a diversified debate on the socioeconomic mechanisms that cause child poverty in context of unique

Greenlandic social conditions e.g. an extensive subsistence economy. In general the surveys conclude that child poverty in Greenland is mainly a matter of social conditions related to deprivations and disparities in relation to e.g. access to education, employment, proper housing, mobility etc. The economic conditions concerning a minority of families and children are also considered problematic.

In 2009 the Government of Greenland formed a tax and welfare commission to look at public subsidy schemes and unbalanced income distributions in society. The task of the commission is to come up with socioeconomic proposals to improve welfare for Greenlandic citizens in general; and for citizens living under difficult economic conditions in particular. The commission submitted their first status report in 2010. The final report will be submitted in March 2011.

In conjunction with existing material on social and economic poverty, the commissions socio-economic analyzes will offer a more complete image of the extent of poverty as well as measures to balance income distribution and prevent social poverty.

Part II

(a) The Government of Greenland currently revises the following bills:

- Act on Help to Children and Youth 2003

The Government of Greenland currently prepares the following bills:

- Act on a Children's Council incl. a children's spokesman, a secretariat and a research/information centre

(b) 2008 the Government of Greenland completed a municipality reform. Thus, the number of Greenlandic municipalities has been reduced from 18 to 4 municipalities.

2010 the Government of Greenland established The Knowledge and Advice Centre on Disability (IPIS). The centre will accumulate, increase and communicate knowledge on disability through personal channels, data bases, books, conferences etc. Also, the centre will offer advice to interested parties and establish networks for citizens and employees.

2010 the Government of Greenland prepares to establish a cross-organizational centre for sexual abused children to improve treatment and support to sexual abused children. The model for the centre includes knowledge sharing and dissemination of information. The Government of Greenland plans to establish centres for sexual abused children in all four Greenlandic councils.

In the municipalities there has been a growth in the number of family centres and family education sessions as well as activities for children and youth from 2008-2010.

(c) The present Government of Greenland was formed 2 June 2009. The coalition programme emphasizes that improved conditions for children and youth is a matter of the highest priority.

2009 the Government of Greenland initiated the preparation of a children and youth strategy, which will establish an ambitious framework for the political initiatives on the children and youth area up until 2025. The children and youth strategy will be introduced to the parliament in the fall 2011.

2009 the Government of Greenland formed a tax and welfare commission to look at public subsidy schemes and unbalanced income distributions in society.

2010 The Government of Greenland prepared the strategy "A safe Childhood".

19 August 2010 the Government of Greenland signed a five year cooperation agreement with UNICEF Denmark to further promote children's rights in Greenland.

5 February 2010 the Government of Greenland signed a cooperation agreement with the mayors of the four Greenlandic municipalities entitled "Social responsibility must be carried on many shoulders". The main objective of the agreement is to improve the cooperation between the Government of Greenland and the municipalities concerning children and youth.

(d) The Government of Greenland has not ratified instruments of human rights recently.

Part III

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(a) The local authorities in Greenland are economically responsible for social support given to children and families in Greenland.

In 2008 the expenses to out of home placements and support to children and families amounted to approx. 225 million DKK. Expenses concerning administration in the social welfare departments are not included in the figures. Another 17 million DKK were invested on special projects for children and youth.

In the National Healthcare Program approx. 6.5 million DKK were invested on activities aimed at children and youth in 2008.

(b) At present there are no certain figures on children living in poverty in Greenland. Estimates have been initiated in the survey "Child poverty in Greenland" from 2007 prepared by The Documentation Centre on Children and Youth.

Greenland does not have an official poverty line. However, in 2007 the Documentation Centre on Children and Youth (MIPI) published figures on relative poverty. The figures showed that 9 percent of Greenlandic children live in households with an income below 50 percent of the median income. The figures do not take into account the substance economy.