

## **Statement submitted to United Nations, ECOSOC**

Using its consultative status within ECOSOC the Åland Islands Peace Institute has submitted the following written statement ahead of the 2020 ECOSOC High Level Segment to take place in July 2020.

### **Differentiated Solutions to Global Problems**

The development of inclusive and peaceful societies is a constant struggle for all states around the world. It is so now and shall be so in the future, since natural and human conditions change constantly. Sustainable Development Goal No. 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions in inclusive societies is the thrust of the work of the Åland Islands Peace Institute.

Nature impresses us with its multiplicity and biological diversity. Those are values to be cherished and are well enshrined in Agenda 2030. Such pluralism needs to be affirmed also in human societies. Human rights, the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples as well as mechanisms for power-sharing and multilevel governance are tools for this goal. The rights of minorities and indigenous peoples are inherent components of the human rights undertakings of states. Such rights need to meet also the challenges posed by climate change, ecological degradation and pandemics.

Regional differentiations and the use of local knowledge are necessary tools while trying to solve global problems in local contexts. Inclusive and pluralistic institutions and processes are, therefore, needed within the broader frameworks of human rights and the rule of law.

Only conditions of peace can allow us to meet the demands of pandemics and environmental threats. We support the call of the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, for a global ceasefire, the ending of the “sickness of war” and the strengthening of health systems in all states and regions. The principles of the UN Charter give us good ground for such efforts. The on-going work of the International Law Commission for rules on environmental protection in relation to armed conflict is in line with this direction and deserves our full support. These were also themes that were discussed recently in the Kastelholm Peace Talks held on the 30th of March 2020 on the Åland Islands under the heading “War, Peace and the Environment”.

The Åland Example shall soon be celebrating its centenary anniversary (1921-2021). This prompts us to celebrate, but also to enquire. How well do we respect minorities today? How well do we recognise the pluralisms of our world and our societies?

**April 2020, The Åland Islands Peace Institute**

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