



Naja-Theresia Høeghs tale ved EU-Arctic Forum

Taler

Naja-Theresia Høegh
Studerende og medlem af
bestyrelsen for Avalak

Dato

8. februar 2023

Sted

Nuuk, Grønland

International Cooperation in the Arctic: Moving forward

*Siullermik qujarusuppunga european commissionimut, inuussuttunik
oqalleqataasussanik qaaqqusisimmammata.*

First of all, I would like to thank the European Commission, for inviting youths to participate in these discussions.

My name is Naja-Theresia Høegh, I am a 22 year old law student at the university of Copenhagen. I come from Qaqortoq, situated in Southern Greenland. I am a board member of an organisation called Avalak for Greenlandic students studying in Copenhagen, Denmark. I am also a part of OCT-YN, Overseas Countries and Territories Youth Network, representing Greenlandic youths with Niini Malu Hansen.

I'm here to discuss the youth perspectives in regards to International Cooperations in the Arctic.

We can all agree that International Cooperation is more important than ever, especially in these uncertain times.

In over all, Greenlandic inuit have never been afraid of connecting with other cultures. You would perhaps think that colonization would have resulted in our isolation from other nations. On the contrary, common history and common values continue to connect us.

Our fore-fathers and fore-mothers have welcomed travellers, and have traded with them. And it hasn't changed. Today our government is welcoming

international relations. And I assume, that my generation, which has had the possibility to connect with youths all over the world, with the use of social media and the internet, isn't going to step down.

To mention a few of Greenlandic youths involved in international relations, I can mention:

Linda Lyberth Kristiansen, who attended the Indigenous Youth Leadership Workshop 2023, and she is also here in this room with us today.

Iluuna Inga-Louise Sørensen, who is an "Arctic-Angel" for the Youth-Led organisation ArcticAngel.

Amalie Bourup, representing Greenland in the Nordic Youth Council. The reason why I am pointing this out, is to say that when opportunities arise, young Inuit will take them. And it won't stop there, because the youth want to be included. We would like to be invited to the table. Just like how our Greenlandic government says "Nothing about us, without us" in regards to being included in discussions about the Arctic, the youths have the same motto. "Nothing about us, without us", in regards to discussions surrounding the youths. Proactive involvement strengthens Indigenous values and culture. Proactive involvement ensures that youth become contributing members of our community, who are able to create sustainable solutions fit for the youth.

In regards to that, while I have this platform, it is important for me to point out the mental health crisis our youth are *and* have been experiencing. Greenland has one of the highest suicide rates in the world. It is a statistic I wish I did not have to share with you today. But when we are discussing youth perspectives, we need to give platforms for youths to express their concerns.

I have been in dialog with PhD student Ivalu Katajavaara Seidler, who is researching about the Greenlandic public health. I was made aware that 1 in 10 deaths since 1970 to 2018, has been caused by suicide.

Suicide was almost unknown to Greenlandic Inuit, until between the 1950's and 1960's, when the danification of the Inuit started. I am pointing this out, because we need to re-establish our values, as the current values are not fit for our indigenous youth.

Mental health is just one of the many topics youths want to be included in. Through International Cooperation and involvement of the youths, the generation will have deeper roots in relation with other countries and nations. Afterall, it is the youth who will Greenland in the future.

Cooperation with communities like ours, can initiate problem solving. Indigenous groups share many of the same issues like other indigenous because of our common background. By sharing knowledge between Indigenous communities, youths will be given tools to create initiatives themselves.

Once again, thank you for giving youths a platform. And remember, nothing about us without us.

Qujanaq - Thank you

Kilde

Manuskript tilsendt af taler

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