

Office of the High Commissioner of Human  
Rights  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
SWITZERLAND

Your ref.

Our ref.

Date

24/1808-

18 February 2025

**Information on measures undertaken to give effect to the Views, adopted  
by the Human Rights Committee on 19 July 2024, concerning  
Communications No. 3588/2019 – Jovsset Ante Sara**

We refer to your letter 22 August 2024 transmitting to the Norwegian Government the Views adopted by the Human Rights Committee on 19 July 2024 concerning Communications No. 3588/2019. Norway is requested to inform the Committee within 180 days of the transmittal of the Views of all measures undertaken to give effect to the Views.

Please find below an outline of the relevant measures. As described in subsection 2, major changes are underway in the Reindeer Husbandry Act concerning the method for reducing the number of reindeer in cases where this is necessary to address problems with overgrazing.

**1. Publication of the Views of the Human Rights Committee**

The Views of the Human Rights Committee are made public through the Norwegian government's own homepage ([www.regjeringen.no](http://www.regjeringen.no)) and through Lovdata ([www.lovdata.no](http://www.lovdata.no)). The Lovdata website is the principal Internet source for legal information in Norway, and is widely used by all legal practitioners, including lawyers, civil servants and judges. During the autumn of 2024, the Views in this particular case were also referred to in Norwegian mass media.

The Views have been translated to Norwegian and Sami.

## **2. Changes in the Reindeer Husbandry Act, particularly concerning the method for reducing the number of reindeer**

The Reindeer Herding Act aims to ensure that reindeer husbandry is ecologically, economically, and culturally sustainable, based on Sami culture, tradition, and customs, benefiting both herders and society. To manage the herding district's resources sustainably, rules, such as those regarding the reduction of the number of reindeer, are in place to ensure an ecologically sustainable exploitation of the district's grazing resources.

The Norwegian government wishes to draw attention to the proposal for amendments to the Reindeer Husbandry Act, which was sent for public hearing on 1 July 2024, prior to the Committees adoption of the views. The consultation paper proposes, among other things, changes to section 60 (3) of the Reindeer Husbandry Act regarding the method for reducing the number of reindeer.

The government proposes amending the legislation to give the reindeer husbandry industry greater autonomy in determining how the reduction in reindeer herds should be carried out.

Under the current legislation, unanimity is required for a siida to adopt a reduction plan. This has made it difficult for siidas to adopt such plans. It is proposed that the siida be given more opportunities to develop a reduction plan, including allowing a majority of the siida unit leaders to decide on a uniform upper limit for their reindeer herds in the reduction process.

The government considers that the proposed reduction provision provides the siida with flexibility if the siida desires to protect the smallest siida units. A siida that desires to protect the smallest siida units can do so in several ways. For example, the siida can unanimously decide on a differentiated reindeer herd number according to section 60 a (2) which wholly or partially protects the smallest siida units. Alternatively, the majority in the siida can decide under section 60 a (3), to set a uniform upper limit that takes all or part of the necessary reduction. Whether the smallest siida units must participate in a reduction, and to what extent, depends on where the majority decides to set the upper limit.

If the siida does not reach an agreement on a reduction plan, either with a differentiated reindeer herd number or a uniform upper limit, it is proposed, as a last resort, that the authorities via the Reindeer Husbandry Board can adopt a reduction that involves a uniform reindeer number for all siida units. The proposed legislative amendment facilitates the siida's ability to decide the distribution of the reduction themselves, thus eliminating the need for the authorities to determine how the reduction should be carried out.

The Sami Parliament and the Norwegian Reindeer Herders association have been involved in the legislative change process from an early stage, in accordance with the consultation obligations following from chapter four under the Sami Act (LOV-1987-06-12-56).

The changes proposed in the public hearing are a result of the consultations with the Sami parliament and the Norwegian Reindeer Herders Association. Especially the proposed new

method for reducing the number of reindeer crystallized itself during the consultation process.

### **3. Concluding remarks**

In paragraph 12 of the statement, the Committee's majority expresses its opinion on the obligations of states under Article 2 (3) and suggests specific measures to follow up on the majority's view in the specific case. The Norwegian government respectfully submits that it does not fall within the competence of the Committee to order specific measures of reparation in cases where it takes the view that there has been a violation of the Covenant.

The government can inform the Committee that it is currently in contact with Sara's legal representatives regarding the further follow-up of the case. In continuation of this, the government would like to draw attention to the fact that it is now 10 years since the reduction order was imposed on Sara, and 7 years since the Supreme Court's decision. We would particularly like to point out that the compulsory fine imposed on Sara was waived by the authorities, and that no reindeer has been forcibly slaughtered.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have further questions or need for additional information.

Yours sincerely

Viil Søyland  
Director General

*The document is approved electronically, as such no handwritten signatures are required.*