

Introduction to the INDIPO Seminar in Moscow, Russia on April 18, 2008

Initially, the seminar with the tentative title “Murmansk Initiatives 20 Years Later: Political Aspects of Indigenous Research and Activities in Russia” has been scheduled for October 3, 2007 to mark the 20th anniversary of the speech by Mikhail Gorbachev in Murmansk that outlined a set of new policy initiatives for the Arctic region. This speech was since 1987 often referred as an impressive attempt to put an end of the Cold War and to propose the new directions for the development of the international relations. One of the outcomes of this speech was the establishment of non-governmental organizations of the indigenous peoples in the circumpolar region, and specifically in the then Soviet Union. The seminar organization therefore was planned in close cooperation with the Gorbachev Foundation, Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Russian Research Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage named after Dmitry Likhachev (Heritage Institute). All these institutions were established in early 90ies, and their history and development is closely related to the ‘perestroika’ process.

The preliminary negotiations in May 2007 with all parties re-scheduled the seminar – it was postponed till early 2008 on mutual agreement. The further negotiations with the RAIPON set a date of mid-April 2008 as the optional period for all organizations involved. Gorbachev Foundation and the RAIPON made inputs into the seminar through the participation of the experts and members in the event’ s planning, presentations and follow up discussions. Heritage Institute agreed to coordinate the seminar organization with the funding from the INDIPO project. The preliminary agenda of the seminar included the following issues:

- history of actions and activities of the non-state actors;
- institutions and organizations involved into the Arctic policy-making;
- lessons learned in the post-Soviet period.

The main goal of the seminar was expected establishment of a network for scientific studies on Indigenous Peoples’ affairs in Russia in cooperation with the indigenous non-governmental organizations. The participants of the seminar were invited speakers, RAIPON and other indigenous organization’s leaders and activists, academia, and relevant authorities from Russia. As the seminar was organized for the Russian audience, the translation into English was not envisaged. Eventually, seminar has been to take place in the Heritage Institute premises, and the other organizations were invited to attend it. The Contract for the seminar organization specifying the tasks of the parties, between the Heritage Institute and the Lapland University, has been signed in October 2007.

In February 2008 the preliminary agenda was adopted and main contributors to the seminar have been invited. In cooperation with the RAIPON the invitation letters and information on the seminar widely disseminated. In early April the program for the seminar was agreed upon and sent to the tentative audience (see **Program in Russian or English**). On April 18, 2008 the seminar has been held in the Heritage Institute and audio recorded. Proceedings have been transcribed for further publication at the INDIPO

project website. In early May the draft record has been emailed to the presenters for the revision and after technical editing is published herewith (see **Transcript** in Russian). The invitation to submit the materials (see **Papers and Presentations**) for publication in Russian and English has been emailed to all participants of the seminar (see **List of Participants** in Russian) and also to the scientists and activists who are working on indigenous issues and comprise the network for the indigenous policy research in Russia (see **Network List** in **Russian** and **English**). The summary in English has been produced by the seminar coordinator in Heritage Institute (see **Summary**).

We would be grateful for your comments and any proposals for joint research both in English (Professor Monica Tennberg mtennberg@ulapland.fi) and in Russian (Senior Researcher Tamara Semenova tams@bk.ru).