



Ассоциация «Оленеводы Мира»
Association of World Reindeer Herders



PRESS RELEASE:

"Jokkmokk has a lot to show the world's reindeer herders"

The 6th World Reindeer Herders Congress launches

***Jáhkámáhkke-Jokkmokk
16-20 August 2017***

- Reindeer husbandry is run by over 20 different indigenous peoples in the Arctic and sub-arctic areas, so what we might consider as a local, marginal industry here in Sweden is actually one of the most important indigenous industries in the circumpolar areas, in a global perspective, explains Helena Omma, Vice-Chair of the Association of World Reindeer Herders.

During the week, representatives from Russia, China, Mongolia, Scotland, Canada and, of course, also gather the Sami territories to Jokkmokk for the 6th World Reindeer Herders Congress. This congress is held every fourth year and is, in addition to that, the most important meeting place between the indigenous peoples who have the purity as a basis for their existence, an exchange of knowledge and experience and the highest decision-making body of the Association of World Reindeer Herders (WRH).

- During the congress, a declaration defines the world's reindeer herders common political goals and forms the basis for the issues the organization is going to work with. Says Mikhail Pogodaev, chairman of WRH.

The previous congress was organized in China, Auloguya, in July 2013. There a group of Evenki reindeer herders in China received the world's reindeer herders, and during the congress it was decided that Sweden should be a host nation for this congress. Together with the Swedish Sami Association, Sáminuorra, Renägarförbundet and Jokkmokk municipality, the Association of World Reindeer Herders now invites the world's reindeer herders to Jokkmokk, where the 20th anniversary of WRH, founded in 1997, will be highlighted.

In addition to the congress itself, the week will consist of seminar days, in Jokkmokk during Thursday and in Naturum in Stora Sjöfallet / Stuor Muorkke, during the Friday. Central themes during the congress include the health of cleaners and reindeers, food and culinary traditions, research and education, as well as biodiversity and protected areas.

- Among other things, in Russia and Mongolia, we are very interested in the management of Lapponia, which is a leading example of how indigenous peoples can be included in management and decision making, instead of being excluded from the area, as happens in some reindeer habits, explains Mikhail Pogodaev.

New to this congress is an extra day dedicated to reporting on the status of reindeer husbandry in the different regions. Here too, Jokkmokk and Sweden are regions, especially in focus.

-The world's reindeer herders are interested in learning how the reindeer husbandry has been developing in Sweden, both in terms of economics, processing and sales of products and education related to Sami culture and industry," said WRH General Secretary Johan Mathis Turi. "At the same time, he continues, Scandinavia is most exposed to the world in terms of fragmentation of reindeer land, and it appears that the loss of grazing land will continue at an even faster pace in the future as a result of the time of global changes we are living in now.

During the World Reindeer Herders Congress, which this time is expected to gather up to 400 participants, cultures also meet. During the days, a solid cultural program will be prepared, including duodji exhibitions, concerts with music from the various reindeer husbandry areas and an exhibition of children's drawings. Even the world championships in lasso throwing will be arranged on Saturday evening at Arctic Camp. As food culture is one of the themes of the congress, the congress participants will also taste food from the various reindeer cultures made on locally sourced products, which of course are reindeer and fish.

Congress is open to the public and the organizers hope that both the Jokkmokk's residents and the guests will have a pleasant stay during this intense August week. The Eastern School Sports Hall serves as a convention hall, but activities will also be held at the Sami Educational Center and Ájtte. Mikhail Pogodaev, concludes:

- We are an organization founded by very common reindeer herders, for reindeer herders, to make our voices heard in a globalized world. We wish all those interested welcome to attend the congress and experience a unique people-to-people meeting in the middle of Jokkmokk.

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