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Organización
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para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

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STRATEGIC OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE 2019 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

OUTLINE

Source: United Nations General Assembly resolution 71/178.

Background: By its resolution 71/178 on the rights of indigenous peoples, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages, and invited UNESCO to serve as the United Nations lead agency for this International Year.

Purpose: The present document refers to the Strategic Outcome Document of the International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL2019) and intends to inform Member States of the progress achieved in follow up to the abovementioned UNGA resolution and in the implementation of the Action Plan for organizing the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (205 EX/4.I.INF.2). The document also summarizes the outcomes of the consultative process launched by UNESCO and the Steering Committee for the organization of the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Pursuant to 202 EX/Decision 9, and in the context of programme implementation related to UNESCO's policy on engaging with indigenous peoples, the present document also informs on UNESCO's role and specific contribution with regard to the organization of the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Decision required: Paragraph 9.



Job: 201913732

1. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages to raise awareness of the critical situation of indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for coordinated action around the world to preserve, revitalize and promote them.
2. As the lead United Nations agency for the organization of the International Year, UNESCO facilitated dialogue, shared information, engaged with a range of stakeholders, in particular with Indigenous peoples, and strengthened international cooperation and partnerships through a range of initiatives around the world. The Organization also monitored progress made and provided technical assistance to the Member States and other key actors involved in the process.
3. UNESCO facilitated the development of the Action Plan for organizing the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (205 EX/4.I.INF.2 and document [E/C.19/2018/8](#)) through thorough open consultations with representatives of interested Member States, indigenous peoples, United Nations entities, research specialists, civil society organizations and other public and private bodies. The Action Plan was welcomed and supported by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (16-27 April 2018; Report E/2018/43 paragraph 33) and the Human Rights Council Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) at its 11th session (Ref.: [A/HRC/39/68](#)). The Action Plan provides a coherent approach for joint collaborative action by all stakeholders to achieve maximal positive impact and social change with regard to indigenous languages and their users.
4. Multistakeholderism was identified as one of the key principles to foster synergies, adequate responses and leadership during the consultative process for the preparation of the above-mentioned Action Plan. In order to ensure that this principle is duly respected, UNESCO established a Steering Committee which consists of the representatives and alternates (18 in total) of: Member States representing each electoral group of UNESCO (including two co-chairs); leaders and representatives of indigenous peoples and institutions from seven sociocultural regions (including two indigenous co-chairs); designated members from United Nations mechanisms, namely representatives of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and UNESCO and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).
5. For the preparation of the Strategic Outcome document, and building on the strength of the Action Plan, several important consultations were also held. These include the following international and regional events organized in cooperation with Member States, indigenous peoples, academic organizations, United Nations system entities and other public and private bodies:
 - International Symposium entitled “Realization of international commitments for the empowerment of local languages speakers, communities and nations”, 3-5 July 2018, Asuncion, Paraguay;
 - The International Conference “Role of linguistic diversity in building a global community with shared future: protection, access and promotion of language resources”, 19-21 September 2018, Changsha, China;
 - Fourth Andean Meeting of Peace. The contribution of Indigenous languages from education to peacebuilding. Conclusions and Recommendations. 3-4 July 2019, Quito, Ecuador;
 - The North American and the Arctic Regional meeting on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, on the margins of the International Conference HELISET TÆ SKÁL – “Let the Languages Live”, 23-26 June 2019, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada;
 - The African Regional meeting on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, organized in cooperation with the African Union and the Academy of African Languages, and the Regional Outcome Document, 30-31 July 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;

- Regional Congress on the Indigenous Languages for Latin America and the Caribbean, in commemoration of the “International Year of Indigenous Languages”, in cooperation with the Government of Peru, 25-27 September 2019, Cusco, Peru.

6. More than 800 activities taking place around the world have been registered on the online platform dedicated to the International Year. The global calendar includes awareness raising campaigns, capacity-building workshops, academic conferences, intergovernmental meetings, theatrical, musical and artistic performances, hackathons and online events, as well as celebrations of international days, international award ceremonies etc. IYIL2019 has enjoyed important visibility through the dedicated website (<https://en.iyil2019.org/>), and has been widely covered by international media. The United Nations mechanisms, UNPFII (Ref.: [E/2019/43-E/C.19/2019/10](#)) and EMRIP (Ref.: EMRIP [Statement](#), 28 January 2019; Annual report of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples submitted to the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council, 2019, [A/HRC/42/55](#)), as well as the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples (Ref.: [A/HRC/42/37](#)) have already outlined actions and measures taken by different stakeholders, as well as urged to consider linguistic rights, within a broader range of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as equally necessary for the full enjoyment of other rights and freedoms, such as the right to education, freedom of expression and access to information, the right to health, access to justice, employment, culture, science, and freedom from discrimination and gender equality.

7. The preparation of the Strategic Outcome document benefited from the editorial expertise of members of the Open-ended Drafting Group established by UNESCO and the Steering Committee. It was further enriched by meetings organized during the 18th session of the UNPFII (22 April-3 May 2019), the 12th session of the EMRIP (15-19 July 2019) and its [statement](#) on IYIL2019 (28 January 2019), as well as online consultations organized by UNESCO in August and September 2019, and the contributions received from a large group of indigenous peoples, intergovernmental, research, national and regional organizations, and individual experts. The outcomes of the international and regional consultative meetings organized in cooperation with Member States, Indigenous peoples and other stakeholders also contributed to the preparation of this document.

8. The Strategic Outcome document (available at [UNESDOC](#)) is therefore the result of extensive collaborative deliberations setting up the direction for future actions.

Proposed draft resolution

9. After examining the document, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

Recalling resolution 71/178 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) contained in document E/2019/43-E/C.19/2019/10, and United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 42/19,

Having examined document 40 C/68,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Director-General for the leadership of UNESCO in the overall organization and coordination of International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019);
2. *Thanks* the members of the Steering Committee for their active involvement and guidance provided in the organization of International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019), as well as the permanent observers;
3. *Commends* all the Member States which have been involved in and provided generous support to International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019);

4. *Also commends* the Council of Europe, African Union (AU), Human Rights Council (HRC), Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), United Nations Secretariat, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and other United Nations-system entities, the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), Latin Union, Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC), and other indigenous peoples' organizations around the world, as well as other academic, public and private bodies, for hosting and providing in-kind support for the organization of the international and regional consultations;
5. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Director-General for the preparation of the strategic outcome document of International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019) and *thanks* the members of the Steering Committee as well as the members of the open-ended drafting group for their substantial contribution;
6. *Takes note of* the strategic outcome document of the International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019);
7. *Acknowledges* the support expressed by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) to the proclamation of an international decade of indigenous languages; *encourages* the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim such an international decade from 2022 to 2032, and *invites* it to consider the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to serve as the lead United Nations agency for the decade, in collaboration with other relevant United Nations-system agencies, and a range of partners;
8. *Invites* the Director-General:
 - (a) to ensure an appropriate follow-up to the outcomes of International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019), taking into account the results and lessons learnt of the Year;
 - (b) to make additional efforts to seek extrabudgetary resources, including by examining the feasibility of establishing a multi-donor financial mechanism for the implementation of language-related initiatives and concrete projects, including in follow-up to International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019);
 - (c) to present a detailed report on the implementation of the International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019) to the Executive Board at its 210th session.

ANNEX



2019 | INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
Indigenous Languages

**Strategic Outcome Document
of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages**

DISCLAIMER

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the endorsement or expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The preparation of this document benefited greatly from the editorial expertise of members of the Open-ended Drafting Group established by UNESCO and the Steering Committee for the organization of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages. Furthermore, the document reflects the outcomes of the discussions held during the international and regional meetings organized within the context of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages.

The analysis, recommendations and statements of this [document](#) (UNESDOC/48223) do not necessarily reflect the views of UNESCO and the Steering Committee for the organization of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages. The document is an independent document commissioned by UNESCO and the Steering Committee when organizing the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages on behalf of the international community and for implementing the Action Plan for the organization of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languagesⁱ, and other relevant United Nations documents.

It is the product of a collaborative effort involving many indigenous peoples, experts, researchers, agencies, institutions, and governments.

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Rationale for the Strategic Outcome Document

With this Strategic Outcome Document, the indigenous peoples and stakeholders involved in the organization of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL2019)ⁱⁱ, aim to:

- (i) Recognize and acknowledge the range, diversity and global value of languages as well as the critical and endangered status of many individual languages around the world, the vast majority of them being indigenous languages,
- (ii) Highlight the importance of the application of the full spectrum of human rights, indigenous peoples' rights and fundamental freedoms which involve taking urgent steps to eliminate any discrimination directed at users of indigenous languages,
- (iii) Highlight an urgent need to promote, strengthen and mainstream indigenous languages across social, cultural, economic, environmental, political, scientific and technological domains, and to acknowledge their importance for peace-building, sustainable development, biodiversity, the mitigation, and adaptation of climate change, and reconciliation processes in society, and
- (iv) Urge the taking of concrete, long-term and sustainable measures hand-in-hand with indigenous peoples at every level to revitalize, strengthen, promote, protect and provide access to indigenous languages, and especially to support the efforts of all users of indigenous languages around the world.

Through this Strategic Outcome Document, all stakeholders, including Member States and national governments, indigenous peoples, the UN-system and other intergovernmental organizations, academia and language communities, libraries, archives, information and cultural memory organizations, business and public institutions, youth and indigenous women organizations, as well as other public and private partners (hereafter referred to as stakeholders), reassert their commitment to:

- (i) Support the principle of the protection, support, maintenance and revitalization of languages including indigenous languages,
- (ii) Promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism, and strengthen access to indigenous languages in education, science, culture, communication and information, technological, and economic and political development, and other domains,
- (iii) Develop appropriate language resources and tools, as well as improve service provision in indigenous languages,
- (iv) Mainstream – within broader socio-cultural, public, ecological, economic, political, legal and ethical domains – the knowledge systems and values of indigenous peoples alongside their distinctive worldviews and way of life, as well as the vital role of the languages themselves.

This Strategic Outcome Document, building on insights from the global consultations, as well as collaborative activities and events during the IYIL2019, and drawing key conclusions, will provide a strategic direction and specific recommendations for future global actions.

The Strategic Outcome Document accordingly is the product of the information provided through the collective collaboration initiated by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In addition to UNESCO, contributors included members of the Steering Committee for the organization of the IYIL2019, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), other UN-system organizations, members of the Open-ended Drafting Group for the preparation of the Strategic Outcome Document, and all stakeholders involved in the international and regional meetingsⁱⁱⁱ arranged to facilitate dialogue, alongside all the other partners who have contributed with their comments and recommendations through extensive online consultations.

Insights from the IYIL2019

The critical situation of indigenous languages carries a special and wider significance for all of us because of their role and relevance in peace building, good governance, sustainable development and reconciliation within our societies.

We live in societies comprised of differing languages, cultures, ethnicities, religions, and social systems, rendering it a mutually inclusive community. Language is one of the fundamental preconditions of human development, dialogue, reconciliation, tolerance, cultural and linguistic diversity, and the peaceful existence of human society. People, of course, need language to communicate with one another and also transmit from generation to generation knowledge, ideas, beliefs and traditions, which are essential for their recognition, well-being, evolution and peaceful co-existence.

We are reminded that language is best taught to each generation as children early in their lives. Therefore multilingual education based primarily on the mother tongue (s) and/or respective indigenous languages in the early years of schooling plays a key role in fostering respect for diversity and a sense of interconnectedness between countries and populations, which are core values at the heart of global citizenship. Language is essentially a means of communication between different people, nations and cultures, through exchange and sharing. Language inherently implies such mutual respect by which no language is perceived as diminishing the value and significance of any other. Ideally, languages functioning within any given society should complement each other in a collaborative manner. Language is one of the main carriers for safeguarding, documenting and passing on the unique culture and livelihood of a group of people, region or indeed the global community itself. Furthermore, language encodes traditional knowledge gathered over centuries; it amounts to a stored resource underpinning human development and encapsulating humankind's capacity to modify, adapt and make necessary adjustments to its changing natural ecology.

All stakeholders involved in the organization of the IYIL2019 and in the open consultative process on the preparation of the Strategic Outcome Document acknowledged an urgent need to protect, support, revitalize and promote indigenous languages around the world and recognized their wider and deeper role in peace building, good governance, sustainable development and reconciliation processes in society, based on the following key observations:

- Languages around the world continue to disappear at alarming rates, and many of those are indigenous peoples' languages. They represent complex systems of knowledge developed and accumulated over thousands of years reflecting distinctive worldviews and perspectives.
- A person's freedom to use his or her language is a prerequisite to freedom of thought, freedom of opinion and expression, as well as access to education, health and information, cultural expression, and other rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Indigenous peoples' languages and their users - in particular women and young girls, children, persons with disabilities, displaced persons and older persons - face diverse challenges which require a multifaceted and integrated approach. This will be the way to attribute significant value to indigenous languages in political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, institutional, health-related, educational, communication and information contexts; thereby full advantage will be taken of the latest scientific and technological developments.
- There is a need to enhance the understanding and assessment of indigenous languages in the context of decolonization, paying particular attention to specific regional or local contexts in order to provide an adequate response to local realities and conditions on the ground. This affects the issue of divergent terminology which various language users may face in their daily lives.
- Collaboration in policy development and continuity of action are essential for promoting, protecting and strengthening indigenous languages as well as empowering those who use them. This approach

implies capitalizing on the full range of international, regional, national and local normative instruments and existing tools (See Annex I: List and references to the available normative instruments and tools) as well as on the outcomes of the IYIL2019 itself.

- Working with indigenous peoples on matters concerning their languages underpins all efforts to preserve, maintain and promote indigenous languages.

Key conclusions

After (i) evaluating the current situation, (ii) seeking to build on the existing framework of normative instruments and tools, which can be leveraged to support indigenous languages, (iii) applying a human rights-based approach, (iv) analyzing available research findings and (v) taking into account international, regional and open online consultations with indigenous peoples and many other relevant stakeholders, **the following conclusions are drawn and recommendations made**, as the minimum standards to be achieved in preserving, supporting and providing access to indigenous languages and their users:

- Conclusion I. The protection, support and promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingualism is crucial for peace, development, good governance and reconciliation in our societies, as well as for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and implementation of other strategic development frameworks, strategies and programmes consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development **(DEVELOPMENT)**.
- Conclusion II. Indigenous peoples' languages are an integral part of their identity and inseparable from internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. The vitality and sustainability of indigenous languages are only possible by applying all rights and freedoms. Recognition and respect for indigenous languages are essential to life, well-being, and participation in all socio-cultural, educational, political, economic, environmental, and other domains **(HUMAN RIGHTS)**.
- Conclusion III. Existing sustainable development mechanisms do not adequately reflect the needs of indigenous language users, who are at risk of being left behind or even excluded. Additional and urgent actions are required in recognition of the importance of indigenous languages within the effort to deliver on the SDGs and other strategic frameworks^{iv} **(STRATEGIES)**.
- Conclusion IV. It is evident that, historically, intervention measures have tended to leave indigenous language users behind and that it is now urgently necessary to secure equality. Time is now pressing and only ten years remain to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its crucial goals. In future, successful and effective support for indigenous languages will require substantially and measurably enhanced involvement of indigenous peoples themselves, particularly indigenous women and youth, through their own governance structures and representative bodies. This approach will mean duly respecting multiculturalism, ethical standards and integrating the values of indigenous peoples into all levels of response **(EMPOWERMENT)**.
- Conclusion V. Digital technologies, in particular language technology, content development and dissemination, play a growing role in influencing societal development and contributing to the intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages from older to younger generations, rather than fostering their disappearance in today's world. In this context, policy and decision makers, language technology developers, media and information providers, and other relevant public and private stakeholders should be alert and sensitive to barriers that impede the availability of new technology, content and services to indigenous language users. Provisions should take account of consent considerations and should, where possible, encourage the application of solutions whose delivery is based on open standards including in particular emerging technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and others **(PROGRESS)**.
- Conclusion VI. Considering that language, as a cross-cutting issue, embraces and transcends all spheres of life, it is crucial to guarantee a free and varied flow of information, conveyed in indigenous languages in accordance with ethical standards, across a wide range of disciplines and domains,

thereby generating new knowledge, enhancing distribution and ensuring the broadest accessibility of dedicated resources for indigenous language users **(SYNERGY)**.

Conclusion VII. Any review of the IYIL2019, in terms of evaluating its impact as international cooperation and awareness-raising mechanism, will also need carefully to assess its potential as a launch-pad for a new longer-term sustainable response designed with specific goals, actions, and timelines. This review should provide input to the preparations of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032), including appropriate monitoring mechanisms commencing on 1 January 2022 **(SUSTAINABILITY)**.

Future steps for a way ahead

The following set of conclusions, defined goals and suggested recommendations provide a solid basis for an action-oriented response at global, regional and national levels, which could successfully be attained in partnership with indigenous peoples and other relevant stakeholders:

Conclusion I. **The protection, support and promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingualism is crucial for peace, development, good governance and reconciliation in our societies, as well as for the achievement of the SDGs and implementation of other strategic development frameworks, strategies and programmes consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (DEVELOPMENT).**

Goal (I) By 2030, acknowledge and recognize indigenous languages' role in peace-building, their importance for the attainment of the development goals, good governance and reconciliation processes in our societies, including the importance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as in contributing overall to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and otherwise in line with internationally, regionally and nationally agreed strategic development frameworks.

Recommendations:

- 1.1. ***Measures to protect and promote linguistic diversity and multilingualism should be focused on Sustainable Development. "Leaving no one behind" is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development***, encompassing equal opportunities for quality education, employment, health care, safe environment, justice, media and information, amounting to the full inclusion and participation of indigenous language users in society. These measures should be targeted at eliminating such injustices as illiteracy, poverty, unemployment and discrimination as well as at mitigating the negative effects of climate change and contributing to achieving specific SDGs such as No Poverty, Zero Hunger, and Good Health and Well-Being.
- 1.2. ***Proposed actions should also take into account the connection between linguistic diversity and multilingualism on the one hand and biodiversity and the natural ecological environment on the other. This will have an increasingly beneficial impact on indigenous language users' way of life among both rural and urban populations.*** The actions will contribute to the achievement of SDGs related to Clean Water and Climate Action. Planned initiatives should also consider the specific relevance of multi-faceted, multilingual education to economic growth, innovation and the future of Sustainable Cities and Communities, helping to make high-quality jobs available to the entire workforce regardless of language, race, abilities or gender.
- 1.3. ***Measures should also be directed, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to empower Indigenous language users.*** This includes building confidence in early life in the use of their mother tongues, along with ensuring access to language learning and training resources, and providing quality and inclusive education in indigenous languages, including via the internet, thereby reducing the disadvantages and inequality experienced by persons with disabilities including those using sign languages and braille. These actions will support the broader thrust of the SDGs towards, for example, Quality Education, Gender Equality and Reduction of Inequalities overall.
- 1.4. ***Protection and promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingualism help to reinforce economic development.*** Linguistic diversity favors equal rights being enjoyed by different language users in their education, social life and the workplace; it improves the prospects for equal employment rights as well

as for decent working conditions for indigenous language users. All these measures together should contribute to long-term economic progress and the attainment of those SDGs related to Decent Work, Economic Growth, Innovation, and Sustainable Cities and Communities.

- 1.5. ***Plans should encompass the full range of human rights and fundamental freedoms while promoting linguistic diversity and multilingualism with the wider aim of improving social inclusion and partnerships.*** Measures to safeguard indigenous languages should have an empowering effect on the decision-making ability of indigenous language users and greatly facilitate their social inclusion, fair treatment in court, access to education, gender equality as well as enriching their cultural life. All this will benefit the preservation of their intangible cultural heritage - oral traditions, the performing arts, and other collective activities. This approach contributes to the widest sense to the creation of a more peaceful, just and inclusive society reflecting the attainment of those SDGs related to Justice, Peace and Sustainable Institutions.

Suggested actions (I):

- a) ***Raise awareness about the critical situation of many indigenous languages, stimulate dialogue on the topic, support reconciliation processes, commit adequate resources and strengthen international cooperation by establishing networks*** among rights holders, duty-bearers and other stakeholders through coordinated and cross-sector advocacy and awareness-raising programmes, along with the formulation of language policies focused on indigenous languages support, access and promotion: all actions targeted towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- b) ***Acknowledge the circumstances and profound trauma caused among many indigenous peoples by the loss or severe deterioration of their languages, as well as the consequent impact*** on peace-building, sustainable development, good governance and reconciliation processes within societies.
- c) Integrate indigenous peoples' languages in United Nations Country Teams' programming, where relevant. Request Resident Coordinators to include in their UN Sustainable Development Frameworks activities focused on collecting data on indigenous peoples' languages, as well promoting projects to preserve and strengthen indigenous languages at the local and national levels in consultation and direct participation of indigenous peoples.
- d) ***Adopt normative instruments, language action plans, and policies, and establish institutions to address indigenous peoples concerns at international, regional and national levels,*** which provide protection and access as well as promoting linguistic diversity and multilingualism and also assist in improving the human potential and local initiatives of indigenous language users.
- e) ***Develop and deploy sustainable, innovative and inclusive solutions,*** making available the necessary human, financial and other resources, as well as protecting the environment, intensifying social inclusion, building constructive partnerships and establishing mechanisms, through national statistics institutions, to gather relevant and robust language data conducive to informed decision making.

Conclusion II. Indigenous peoples' languages are an integral part of their identity and inseparable from internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. The vitality and sustainability of indigenous languages are only possible by applying all rights and freedoms. Recognition and respect for indigenous languages are essential to life, well-being, and participation in all socio-cultural, educational, political, economic, environmental, and other domains (HUMAN RIGHTS).

Goal (II) To encourage an accountable and irreversible commitment of rights holders, duty bearers and other stakeholders to address the pressing need to secure indigenous languages users rights to freedom of expression, as well as access to education and information, health care, social

welfare and employment, justice, science and technology alongside guaranteeing the right to freely participate in cultural life and enjoyment of the arts. To contribute to the reconciliation processes by adopting a human rights-based approach which emphasizes non-discrimination, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights with special attention to indigenous women and young girls, youth, children, persons with disabilities, displaced and the elderly.

Recommendations:

- 2.1. It is essential to ***adopt a human rights-based approach towards indigenous language issues*** that applies the principles of gender equality, respect for cultural diversity, and disability inclusiveness in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other relevant normative instruments.
- 2.2. All stakeholders, in collaboration with indigenous peoples and other language communities, should be encouraged to ***mainstream linguistic diversity and multilingualism within national development plans*** and work together in creating favorable conditions that specifically respond to the concerns and needs of indigenous language users.

Suggested actions (II):

- a) **Take an inclusive approach in planning and implementing measures** to realize indigenous language users' rights, respecting their entitlement to participate in legislation, administration, and justice with full regard for the principle of free, prior, and informed consent^v.
- b) Frame and implement **evidence-based legislation, policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks**, including those related to the recovery and preservation of cultural and ceremonial objects.
- c) Provide **access to relevant documentary resources**, at sub-regional, national and international levels, in collaboration with those indigenous peoples involved, using appropriate sharing protocols and mechanisms.
- d) Ensure that concerns about **the importance of truth, the need for apology and for forgiveness** are integrated into reconciliation processes and frameworks.

Conclusion III. Existing sustainable development mechanisms do not adequately reflect the needs of indigenous language users, who are at risk of being left behind or even excluded. Additional and urgent actions are required in recognition of the importance of indigenous languages within the effort to deliver on the SDGs and other strategic frameworks (STRATEGIES).

Goal (III). By 2030, to mainstream indigenous languages by providing evidence-based data derived from all domains relevant to indigenous peoples' issues and needs; to reinforce this goal with appropriate evaluation mechanisms and the organizational capacity required to formulate and implement strategies, policies and programmes, deploying a range of actions implemented within the UN Sustainable Development Frameworks activities as well as by other intergovernmental organizations, national governmental and public institutions, in particular those responsible for indigenous peoples' issues.

Recommendations:

- 3.1. Member States, in collaboration with indigenous peoples and other relevant stakeholders, should ***formulate inclusive policies resulting in effective measures, which benefit users of all languages***, in particular indigenous languages, thereby assuring to all peoples and individuals same enjoyment of equal opportunities in every aspect of life.
- 3.2. It is essential to support the implementation of existing ***international standards*** and, if required, ***to establish new ones, so as to protect, share and develop language resources***, including technical standards for: (i) cataloguing, annotation and documentation (ii) creation and utilization of language resources on a shared mutually compatible worldwide basis (iii) agreement among international standards organizations and professional bodies (i.e. universities, relevant specialized institutes etc.), including indigenous peoples themselves, to collaborate in formulating and abiding by approved international standards.
- 3.3. ***All stakeholders should recognize and act on the basis that language is an invaluable and irreplaceable socio-cultural resource. They should acknowledge its importance*** in delivering the benefits of scientific and technological advances and that it has a unique status as an instrument of collaboration and cooperation among peoples and communities of different cultures.

Suggested actions (III):

- a) ***Continue the task of gathering evidence-based data, as an integral part of mapping and monitoring progress made around linguistic diversity and multilingualism***; doing so in an ethical manner, following relevant guidelines and standards, using the most advanced language technologies, and proactively sharing information to achieve optimally informed policy and decision making.
- b) ***Deliver joint strategies, designed through regional consultations and global gatherings***, which directly involve indigenous language users themselves.
- c) ***Facilitate interdisciplinary research*** on issues relating to indigenous languages, giving particular attention to women and young girls, children, youth, persons with disabilities, displaced and older persons – increase knowledge through the systematic elaboration and dissemination of information, through co-production initiatives for knowledge enhancement, and through increased research capacity and access to research, all of which measures will be especially beneficial to indigenous peoples in Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDC).
- d) ***Involve and train indigenous youth worldwide***, assuring their participation in various institutional structures and mechanisms concerned with indigenous issues, thereby according the youth a stronger voice when expressing their opinions and sharing their experiences and ideas about the most

appropriate future actions as well as nourishing the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous languages along with their associated world outlooks, identities, cultures, religions, spiritual beliefs, traditional knowledge and natural resource-based livelihoods.

- e) ***Use language-sensitive policies to address existing social problems, threats and risks***, thereby encountering the severe impact of domestic violence, assaults, rape, gambling, sexually transmitted diseases or infections, teen pregnancies and drug and alcohol abuse on the wellbeing and future of humanity.

Conclusion IV. It is evident that, historically, intervention measures have tended to leave Indigenous language users behind and that it is now urgently necessary to secure equality. Time is now pressing and only ten years remain to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its crucial goals. In future, successful and effective support for indigenous languages will require substantially and measurably enhanced involvement of indigenous peoples themselves, particularly indigenous women and youth, through their own governance structures and representative bodies. This approach will mean duly respecting multiculturalism, ethical standards and integrating the values of indigenous peoples into all levels of response (EMPOWERMENT).

Goal (IV) By a target date of 2030, to have constructed robust support and adequate institutional structures possessing an explicit mandate, especially at regional and national levels, to build human capacity, develop appropriate language resources and tools, including mechanisms for collection and storage of evidence-based data, with the aim of formulating and implementing effective language policies as well as, in parallel, strengthening organizations and community centers which meet the specific needs of indigenous languages and their users around the world.

Recommendations :

- 4.1. Member States and relevant stakeholders, with the full participation of language users, should ***jointly develop a coordinated strategy in their respective domains for the revitalization, reclamation, continuing maintenance and strengthening of distinct languages, including indigenous languages, through various institutions***, including commissions, research and language technology institutes, indigenous peoples' representative institutions, libraries, media, information and memory organizations, with a general mandate first to collect, archive and preserve languages and resources and secondly to support indigenous cultural institutions, traditional undertakings, as well as traditional indigenous sports and leisure activities.
- 4.2. In pursuit of the above goal, Member States and relevant stakeholders, in collaboration with indigenous peoples and other language communities, should, with the full participation of indigenous peoples, ***develop and deploy up to date tools and standards adapted to specific indigenous language requirements and local conditions***. Besides supporting the increase of language use, information and memory, library organizations and museums can serve as essential conduits for preserving, protecting, displaying and sharing indigenous language resources.
- 4.3. Member states, indigenous peoples and relevant stakeholders working together should ***encourage development and sharing of standards, good practices, optimal technical tools and languages resources*** - always respecting legal and ethical standards and, when possible, using open, inclusive and free formats developed and deployed through free, prior and informed consent, project cooperation, visits, academic exchanges, and in other ways.
- 4.4. **Indigenous peoples themselves through their own representative institutions** should take the initiative in strengthening their organizational structures and build the necessary capacity to address the needs of indigenous language users.

Suggested actions:

- a) ***Support indigenous peoples' initiatives and help to build up relevant institutional capacities***, which enhance and nourish Indigenous languages, ethically and practically, in such fields as public services, education, arts, sports, culture, sciences, communication and information, employment, health care and social inclusion, encompassing indigenous youth, young girls and women, older persons and persons with disabilities.
- b) ***Carry out comprehensive research on the reclamation and revitalization of indigenous peoples' languages*** (a topic that has traditionally been marginalized in linguistic studies, which usually confine themselves to examining preservation issues); providing funds for studies, especially those led by indigenous scholars, on methodologies and approaches to indigenous language reclamation and revitalization, as well as analyzing the relationship between language reclamation and revitalization and progress in other social, environmental and cultural spheres.
- c) Assist and support indigenous communities themselves to proactively promote revitalization of their languages by giving them better and more direct ***access to relevant resources and knowledge, in the shape of technologies*** such as speech synthesis and computer-assisted language learning tools which facilitate people's continuing exposure to language sounds and to accurate pronunciation and articulation of the language.
- d) Encourage further ethical ***collaboration, while carrying out research activities on an equal basis, between academia and indigenous peoples*** - seeking free, prior, and informed consent from the communities concerned - as well as ensuring that indigenous peoples themselves set the themes and frameworks, and give adequate access to the scientific results.
- e) Establish tailored ***training-of-trainers programmes for teachers*** able to promote sustainable development of indigenous languages, working through public or private institutions or civil society initiatives. It is important to train and supply a sufficient number of interpreters, translators and other professionals equipped with the appropriate range of socio-cultural as well as linguistic skills.

Conclusion V. Digital technologies, in particular language technology, content development and dissemination, play a growing role in influencing societal development and contributing to the intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages from older to younger generations, rather than fostering their disappearance in today's world. In this context, policy and decision makers, language technology developers, media and information providers, and other relevant public and private stakeholders should be alert and sensitive to barriers that impede the availability of new technology, content and services to indigenous language users. Provisions should take account of consent considerations and should, where possible, encourage the application of solutions whose delivery is based on open standards including in particular emerging technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and others **(PROGRESS)**.

Goal (V) Indigenous peoples should have the possibility to benefit from the full range of language technologies which help people to break through the potential barriers of the digital divide, giving them open access to, and production capability in, multilingual knowledge and educational materials, along with the benefit of available public services in their own languages.

Recommendations:

- 5.1. Member States, should draw on the best information, know-how and methodology at their disposal when ***formulating and planning how they will implement and evaluate inclusive language policies*** and should take effective measures to ensure that scientific and technological developments are leveraged for the benefit of users of each language, and that they address the situation of individual languages and their users, guaranteeing equal rights to be educated, to inherit their traditional culture, and to enjoy the service benefits and convenience of modern technological products, in whose design, development and production they should, so far as possible, be engaged.
- 5.2. Member States and other relevant stakeholders, in full collaboration with indigenous peoples, should ***use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain and other, to promote the creative transformation, innovative development and effective dissemination of language resources and seek new ways to protect and respect the indigenous traditional knowledge.***
- 5.3. Building where possible on existing work, ***a set of international standards should be developed and agreed to protect essential language resources, in cooperation with indigenous language users;*** these must cover (i) technical standards for collection, annotation and documentation and (ii) collaboration procedures in the construction, sharing and application of language resource standards globally. International standards organizations and professional bodies (universities, research institutes, individual experts and other stakeholders) have the responsibility to be engaged in language protection and preservation, to in the first instance formulate and thereafter to uphold the agreed standards.
- 5.4. Member states and other stakeholders, in close collaboration with indigenous peoples, should ***develop advanced tools for the collection and analysis of language data as well as for the transliteration and annotation of multi-modal content collections and cultural exhibitions where such do not already exist.*** This will allow the development of technologies specifically adapted to the characteristics of indigenous languages, which in turn will strengthen and underpin the status of these languages; such tools include speech recognition, synthesis systems and machine translation technology.

Suggested actions (V):

- a) ***Develop teaching facilities, techniques and devices specifically for the purpose of supporting indigenous languages***, of designing educational curricula and of supplying necessary tools for advanced translation, using Artificial Intelligence and machine learning techniques,
- b) ***Integrate and share successful language acquisition and learning techniques as well as intergenerational transmission methodologies***, including language immersion and bilingual education methods, thereby supporting quality learning environments, the principle of equal and inclusive access for all, and the training of new teachers and of those already in service,
- c) ***Provide access to funding sources for the research projects of indigenous peoples***, seeking to reconcile potentially the competing priorities of academia and indigenous peoples,
- d) ***Establish and support institutional structures for indigenous languages monitoring, evaluation and impact***, led by, and developed in collaboration with, indigenous peoples,
- e) ***Encourage collaboration between industry, the research and development sector and indigenous peoples***, focusing on the needs and interests of indigenous communities, extending and refining current language technologies as well as designing new ones, and developing necessary algorithms, applications and systems to support indigenous peoples in their own use of the internet and social media networks. The Artificial Intelligence paradigm should be rolled out within an ethical framework.

Conclusion VI. Considering that language, as a cross-cutting issue, embraces and transcends all spheres of life, it is crucial to guarantee a free and varied flow of information, conveyed in indigenous languages in accordance with ethical standards, across a wide range of disciplines and domains, thereby generating new knowledge, enhancing distribution and ensuring the broadest accessibility of dedicated resources for indigenous language users (SYNERGY).

Goal (VI) To ensure that, by the end of the decade, there is an increased number of users of indigenous languages, and that a greater volume of knowledge, produced and published in indigenous languages, is receiving wider appreciation, recognition and utilization as part of the global drive towards realizing and achieving holistic sustainable development.

Recommendations:

- 6.1. Advocate and gain public recognition for the fact that - since ***language is an important resource for economic, scientific and technological development, as well as political stability*** - the wellbeing of society as a whole is served and enhanced when indigenous peoples enjoy rights to self-expression in their own languages, both individually and collectively.
- 6.2. Establish ***a set of international standards, along with legal and policy provisions, which are conducive to the production, utilization and management of knowledge in indigenous languages***, alongside creating institutional means for the collection and analysis of knowledge in indigenous languages, adopting open, ethical and inclusive operational principles.
- 6.3. Make it an urgent priority – given that the majority of endangered languages are indigenous – to ***encourage the donor community, intergovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders towards mobilizing additional financial resources and establishing new funding mechanisms and incentives for activities and projects on indigenous language issues***, which can be crucial to their continuing protection, future revitalization and strengthening, as well as monitoring and follow up processes
- 6.4. ***Collect data and digitize resources***, especially targeting languages with fewer users - involving users as participants in research, development and the implementation of new projects, covering language technology and other relevant fields.
- 6.5. Municipalities, communities, institutions, workplaces, educational institutions and other entities where indigenous languages are used on a daily basis, are crucial for a language to thrive and develop. Such ***educational entities need support, encouragement and appropriate resources to continue their crucial role in the survival and development of indigenous languages***.

Suggested actions (VI):

- a) **Undertake awareness-raising efforts through multi-stakeholder gatherings** to highlight the need to develop knowledge production in indigenous languages, and to assemble an action plan for that purpose.
- b) **Launch a global drive for additional resourcing and partnership mechanisms** such as new funds, partnership programmes and/or an international prize, constituting a collaborative effort that brings together UN entities, governments, indigenous peoples' organizations and the donor community, including national development agencies, foundations and civil society at large. This could stimulate the supply of funds for the development and implementation of specific projects lead by indigenous peoples, and to reward excellence and innovation in the field of indigenous languages.

- c) Foster and facilitate the **development of culturally diverse, locally relevant, gender-sensitive, accessible, high-quality resources and materials**, in particular Open Educational Resources, **in indigenous languages**.

Conclusion VII. Any review of the IYIL2019, in terms of evaluating its impact as international cooperation and awareness-raising mechanism, will also need carefully to assess its potential as a launch-pad for a new longer-term sustainable response designed with specific goals, actions, and timelines. This review should provide input to the preparations of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032), including appropriate monitoring mechanisms commencing on 1 January 2022 (SUSTAINABILITY).

Goal (VII) By 2022 to ensure that there are systematic measures in place to carry forward the progress achieved in IYIL2019, to maintain the momentum of enhanced awareness around the needs and rights of indigenous language users, and to underline the commitment towards building inclusive, open, pluralistic and diverse societies in which no one is left behind.

Recommendations:

- 7.1. Carry out a ***detailed assessment of the lessons learned and progress achieved*** during the IYIL2019 – set against the desired outcomes of the Action Plan for the Year.
- 7.2. Initiate – based on that assessment – ***regional consultation processes lead by UNESCO*** for the design and development of the comprehensive Global Plan of Action for the Decade, embracing contributions from indigenous peoples as well as other stakeholders.
- 7.3. Ensure that conclusions of the assessment and the results of the regional consultations are discussed in a global consultation, within the premises of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) and are integrated into a comprehensive ***Global Plan of Action for the coming Decade*** (2022 – 2032).

Suggested actions (VII):

- a) Analyze available data and ***prepare an evidence-based report*** on the measurable deliverables and outputs achieved in 2019 around the promotion, preservation and protection of the languages of indigenous peoples and on the associated objectives and responsibilities of building peace and of promoting reconciliation and sustainable development,
- b) ***Promote the outcomes*** of the 2019 IYIL and inspire the international community to set out concrete future steps towards supporting, providing access to, and promoting Indigenous languages,
- c) Encourage the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) to include ***a session on indigenous languages during their annual sessions***,
- d) ***Encourage multi-stakeholder partnerships*** between indigenous peoples and governments, academia, research, industry, and other stakeholders, and enable participation of indigenous peoples in the decision making processes affecting them,
- e) ***Carry out consultations*** at all levels with indigenous peoples and relevant stakeholders, during the preparation period (2020 - 2021) for the decade, utilizing the data thus collected to ***prepare the Global Plan of Action for the organization of the Decade***,
- f) ***Consider setting up a World Conference on Linguistic Diversity and Multilingualism to assess progress***, which could serve as a mid-term review within the timeline of the Decade.

Call for immediate action

After having considered all the conclusions, identified the goals, objectives and recommendations for urgent and targeted action, this current Strategic Outcome Document of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL2019) **supports the proclamation of an International Decade on Indigenous Languages** (hereinafter referred to as the Decade), on which preparatory work should start immediately, so as to be ready to be implemented in detail from 1 January 2022, the starting date of the decade which will culminate in 2032. In view of the urgency and gravity of the situation in which many indigenous languages find themselves, as revealed by the intensive work carried out by many stakeholders, including governments, during the IYIL2019, the United Nations General Assembly may consider adopting a resolution to meet the ongoing emergency.

The overarching strategic objective underlying the International Decade of Indigenous languages is founded on the following factors:

- Although the IYIL2019 was a unique opportunity to stimulate international cooperation and to raise awareness on the critical situation of many indigenous languages, as well as to mobilize institutional partners and rights holders for joint action, many indigenous peoples still face complex existential challenges in terms of preserving, protecting and revitalizing their languages, many of which continue to disappear with all the inevitable negative consequences for humanity and society. In particular the world is now focusing its attention on meeting the global challenges of addressing climate change, ensuring sustainable development, bridging the digital divide, and empowering those who are most vulnerable and at risk of being left behind (**GLOBAL CHALLENGES**).
- Convinced that human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among other international frameworks, can be more fully realized when indigenous peoples are free to speak, think, and live in their own languages, and that the impacts of hundreds of years of language suppression or neglect cannot be reversed in one single year, the United Nations General Assembly, as part of a long-term strategy, proclaimed an International Decade of Indigenous Languages (**HUMAN RIGHTS**).
- During the year, a strong and united global call for precisely such a Decade was heard from a huge range of partners - governments, indigenous peoples, the UNPFII, the EMRIP, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Members of the Steering Committee established for the organization of the IYIL2019, the Human Rights Council, and the Chair of the Voluntary Fund on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, along with many other participants involved in the international and regional consultations conducted throughout the year (**MULTISTAKEHOLDERISM**).
- A period of a whole Decade, as envisaged, will provide the necessary scope and detailed Global Plan of Action for systematic and strategic efforts in all relevant areas. This extra time is calculated to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the many specific actions launched during the IYIL2019, thereby building on valuable insights and successful initiatives, including identifying the need for sustained attention to the formulation of appropriate language policies and legislative agendas, to further academic research and data collection, as well as to develop and disseminate appropriate methodologies, programmes and technological solutions such as language technologies using Artificial Intelligence; all contributing to support of an enabling environment for the revitalization of indigenous languages (**SUSTAINABILITY OF ACTIONS**).
- There is agreement on the need to reaffirm and strengthen existing national and international standards, frameworks and instruments based on the lessons learnt during the IYIL2019, in support of indigenous languages and their users, by way of maintaining their distinct status, rights, identity and contributions to humanity and future generations, all of which will require concerted and carefully planned efforts from all stakeholders over the long term (**FRAMEWORK**).

- The proclamation of the Decade will contribute to the promotion of a paradigm-shift in the way in which languages overall are approached in society, including at the institutional, governmental and international levels. Such a shift will transform the status of indigenous languages from being reserved for the cultural realm into being seen as an integral part of the human rights framework and a crucial factor in building peace, ensuring sustainable development and achieving reconciliation in our societies **(THEORY OF CHANGE)**.
- Adequate attention to indigenous languages and their users will be a key factor in implementing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* because languages are critical to peoples' ability to transfer their knowledge to succeeding generations, protect biodiversity and the environment, safeguard their natural and cultural heritage, belief systems, values, and spirituality as well as to take into account the knowledge base on indigenous peoples' connection with their lands, territories, resources, air, ice, oceans and waters, mountains and forests **(GLOBAL AGENDA)**.
- Considering that technological and scientific development already impact all spheres of life, and can significantly contribute to safeguarding intergenerational transmission of languages, it is essential to offer ample opportunities for indigenous peoples themselves to access language technologies, build new services and content, and develop accessible language resources with the benefit of evidence based data and encompassing indigenous media **(PROGRESS)**.
- An immediate start is needed to initiate the preparatory process for the Decade to commence in 2022 and to capture the momentum and knowledge base resulting from the IYIL2019. Detailed analysis of the Year's outcomes will indicate prioritization and facilitate the construction of the Global Plan for Action, which will be required to secure the commitment of key stakeholders and the necessary assured funding **(ACTION)**.

Endnotes

ⁱ The Action Plan for organizing the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (205 EX/4.I.INF.2; E/C.19/2018/8).

ⁱⁱ The United Nations General Assembly resolution on the rights of indigenous peoples (71/178).

ⁱⁱⁱ **List of the international and regional meetings which contributed to the preparation of the Strategic Outcome Document of the IYIL2019:**

- The Latin American and the Caribbean Regional Congress on Indigenous Languages, 25-27 September 2019, Cusco, Peru.
- The African Regional Meeting on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, 30-31 July 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- [The Fourth Andean Meeting of Peace. The contribution of Indigenous languages from education to peacebuilding. Conclusions and Recommendations. 3-4 July 2019, Quito, Ecuador.](#)
- [The North American and Arctic Regional Meeting on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, on the margins of the International Conference HELISET TÆ SKÁL – “Let the Languages Live”, 23-26 June 2019, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.](#)
- The International Conference “Role of linguistic diversity in building a global community with shared future: protection, access and promotion of language resources”, 19-21 September 2018, Changsha, The People’s Republic of China.
- The International Symposium “Realization of international commitments for the empowerment of local languages speakers, communities and nations”, 3-5 July 2018, Asuncion, Paraguay.

^{iv} **Key internationally recognized instruments:**

United Nations

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNGA) Resolution 217A of 10 December 1948], recognizes the rights and freedoms of all people, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other criterion.
- World Summit Outcome, UN Doc. A/RES/60/1 (16 September 2005).
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). Articles 21 and 30 recognize and support specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in UNGA Resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007^{iv} and commitments reached in the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UNGA in resolution 69/2 and the System-wide Plan of Action^{iv}, relevant studies^{iv} of the Human Rights Council Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the conclusions and recommendations of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its 2016 session (E/2016/43) on the theme “Indigenous languages: preservation and revitalization” (Articles 13, 14 and 16 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).
- General Assembly, International Labour Organization Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, UN Doc. A/RES/73/342 (16 September 2019).

UNESCO

- Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (1960), Article 5 of the normative instrument specifically recognizes “the right of the members of national minorities to carry out their own educational activities, including ... the use or the teaching of their own language”.
- Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (1976), Article 22 states that “with regard to ethnic minorities, adult education activities should enable them to express themselves freely, educate themselves and their children in their mother tongues, develop their own cultures and learn languages other than their mother tongues”.
- Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (1978) Article 9 specifically recognizes that “steps should be taken to make it possible for their children to be taught their mother tongue”.

- The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994). The document recognizes the importance of sign language as the medium of communication among people with disabilities (Article 21).
- Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy (1995). Article 29 calls on stakeholders to respect the educational rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.
- Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001). The Declaration provides the framework for a range of actions that promote cultural diversity and the preservation of endangered languages.
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) aims at safeguarding intangible heritage such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, for example.
- Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace (2003).
- Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).
- The Cali Commitment to Equity and Inclusion in Education (2019). International Forum on Inclusion and Equity in Education, Cali, Colombia.
- The draft text of the Recommendation concerning the Open Educational Resources, 2019. The documents promotes the development of effective, inclusive and equitable access to quality Open Educational Resources (OER) in Indigenous languages.

Other

- United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Document E/C.19/2018/8 of 21 February 2018 on the Action Plan for organizing the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages.
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution 71/178 of 19 December 2016, on the rights of Indigenous peoples.
- International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989). This affirms the rights of minorities to read and write in their own indigenous language or in the language most commonly used by the group to which they belong (Article 28).
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990). Articles 1, 7, 18, 16, 22 and 45 aim to ensure the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families to receive education and information services in a language they understand.
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992). The Declaration aims to ensure the rights of people belonging to minorities without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion (Article 4).
- European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992). The Charter aims to protect and promote minority languages and to maintain and develop Europe's cultural traditions and heritage. It is supervised by the Council of Europe.
- Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights – Barcelona Declaration (1996).
- Agenda 2063 (2015). Aspiration 5. "An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics".
- Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (2011).

^v Human Rights Council Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) [study](#) on the free, prior and informed consent under its mandate in resolution 33/25, which was presented to the Human Rights Council as its thirty-ninth session (September 2018).