



**International Indian Treaty Council**  
*Consejo Internacional de Tratados Indios*

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**21<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)**

**April 25 – May 6, 2022**

**Agenda Item 5 (f): Thematic dialogue: International Decade of Indigenous Languages**

**Intervention by the International Indian Treaty Council presented by Christopher Honahnie**

Thank you, Kwa'kwah, Mr. Chairman, Kwa'kwah nu'pitu nu halaytotini yepe.

Since this is the first time our organization takes the floor in this session, we want to congratulate you on your election as chair.

We are hopeful that the International Decade of Indigenous Languages will play a critical role in encouraging Indigenous youth to learn their Indigenous Languages. This will allow them to ensure the resiliency of their Peoples and traditional ways of life.

At the 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow, Scotland, the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform organized the participation of 28 Indigenous knowledge holders from all 7 regions. The LCIPP requested that at least 1 youth knowledge holder be invited from each region, and I was honored to be chosen by the North America region as a young Hopi farmer. The youth knowledge holders who participated in the dialogue strongly emphasized the urgent need to protect and revitalize their languages in order to preserve our food systems and traditional knowledge in the face of climate change.

In the final summary of this dialogue which was presented to the state parties during the COP, the 3 co-leads summarized the views of the youth knowledge holders as follows: "The protection, practice and revitalization of our Indigenous languages are essential for maintaining our ways of life, ways of knowing, food systems, Indigenous identities and the relationships and responsibilities we have to the natural world. These understandings, based on the ongoing use of our Indigenous languages, must be transferred to our younger generations through formal and informal education and outreach initiatives including on climate change."

Therefore, we present the following recommendations to the UN Permanent Forum:

1. The Permanent Forum calls upon UNESCO in its coordination of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages to prioritize the vital role of Indigenous languages in preserving our traditional food and knowledge systems to enable us to adapt to climate change.
2. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNESCO prioritize the role of Indigenous youth, in particular knowledge holders, practitioners, and food producers in the Plan of Action for the International Decade of Indigenous languages.

We request that these recommendations are included in the final report for this session regarding this agenda item.

Kwa'kwah, Thank you Mr. Chairman.

*Working for the Rights and Recognition of Indigenous Peoples*  
*Trabajando por el reconocimiento y los derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas*