

UNPFII, April 25 2022; 21st Session

Agenda item 5(f): Thematic dialogues: International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022–2032
Submission by the United Confederation of Taino People, presented by R. Múkaro Agüeibaná Borrero

Taigüei guaitiaono (Greetings relatives). On behalf of the United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP), we would like to extend our solidarity to the Indigenous Peoples gathered to discuss this important issue today. Back in January 2008, the Permanent Forum convened an expert group meeting on Indigenous Languages and we participated in that dialogue to highlight the issues of concerns of insular Caribbean Indigenous Peoples who often are out of the international dialogue.

With this in mind, we welcome the establishment of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, and we look forward to integrating our concerns and work within the proposed program moving forward.

While there are no significant legislative actions aimed at eliminating discrimination against the current use of indigenous languages in our region that we are aware of; I am pleased to report that the first Classic Taíno Dictionary and Grammar Guide will be published by the UCTP later this year. This is a community-based effort and the culmination of many consultations and research that will assist in raising the visibility of the descendants of the First Indigenous Peoples of the Americas to be called “Indians” as well as contribute to the strengthening of cultural competence in our region.

We also acknowledge another recently published work in the region, “A Phonetic English to Arawak Dictionary by Lokono leader Damon Corrie. Both works highlight the resiliency of Caribbean Indigenous Peoples and should be welcomed by this body as best practice efforts in revitalization of Indigenous Languages.

With this in mind, the UCTP supports an ongoing agenda item at upcoming sessions of the Permanent Forum to report on progress of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Further, we remind the Forum and UNESCO that regional reporting and follow-up action on the International Decade should not be limited to Indigenous representatives from the Caribbean coast of South and Central America but must include the full and effective participation of insular Caribbean Indigenous Peoples including those of self-governing and non-self-governing territories without discrimination.

We further recommend that Forum give special attention to insular Caribbean Indigenous Peoples, including and we stress, those of self-governing and non-self-governing territories, as well as the Diaspora when reporting on the situation of Indigenous Peoples languages around the world.

In closing, we congratulate you Mr. Chair on your appointment and we say hahom guaitiaono (Thank you relatives).