

**17th session of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
(EMRIP)**

8th to 12 July 2024, Geneva, Switzerland

Joint Statement on

Item 7: International Decade of Indigenous Languages

Date: 11th July 2024

**A joint Statement by Cambodia Indigenous People Alliance (CIPA) to 17th Session the UN
Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)**

Sam At Rachana, on behalf of Cambodia Indigenous People Alliance (CIPA)

Sir/Madam Chairperson,

The United Nations General Assembly (Resolution A / RES / 74/135) has declared the period between 2022 and 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL 2022-2032). Global On the critical status of many indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their conservation, revival, and dissemination.

Multilingual education programs are important in achieving sustainable development goals for equitable and quality education in Cambodia. Through this program, indigenous children will have the opportunity to learn in schools effectively and understand what their teachers speak in the classroom. The National Plan for Multilingual Education is to be implemented from 2015 to 2018.

Through this National Plan on Multilingual Education, the Ministry of Education will increase the number of schools, train teachers and prepare teaching materials for multilingual programs in the northeastern provinces of Cambodia such as Ratanakkiri, Mondulkiri, Stung Treng, Kratie and Preah Vihear. The Ministry will increase in multilingual kindergartens from 64 to 108 schools by 2018.

However, these teachings are not all indigenous languages, as only five languages are currently in operation, and the remaining 17 languages are not yet developed and taught in indigenous languages. This multilingual teaching is not yet up to the standards of true indigenous peoples, such as historical values and spirituality.

We recommend EMRIP to urge the Cambodian Government, UNESCO, and other international stakeholders to:

- Preserve and promote indigenous languages, cultures, and histories through education and media.
- Implement multilingual education in indigenous areas, including formal and non-formal learning as well as increase indigenous representation in the education system, from teachers to policy-makers.

- Establish multilingual education centers in indigenous areas throughout the country, as well as national budgets to implement this work.
- Examination programs in the national education program funded by indigenous language teachers in each village
- States, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, must take effective measures to ensure that indigenous individuals, especially children, and those outside the community have the right to education in their own culture. And to provide that education in their language, if possible.
- States must take effective action to ensure that state media truly reflects the cultural diversity of indigenous peoples. In order to ensure full freedom of expression, states should encourage privately owned media to fully respond to the diversity of indigenous cultures.