

23rd Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII23)

15–26 April 2024

Statement from Indigenous Nationalities Commission of Nepal on

Item: 4 Discussion on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum (economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights), with reference to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

I am Dr. Min Bahadur Shris, member of the Indigenous Nationalities Commission.

On behalf of the Indigenous Nationalities Commission of Nepal, we present our statement to 23rd session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues with regard to the session's special theme.

Nepal recognizes the inherent rights of the Indigenous Peoples as enshrined in the UNDRIP and is committed to ensuring their rights to self-determination.

We emphasize the importance of genuine participation, consultation, and consent of Indigenous communities in decision-making processes.

Nepal has ratified ILO convention No. 169 and adopted the UNDRIP in 2007, and Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2010. Articles 31 and 32 of the Constitution of Nepal, 2015 have provision of rights to get education in one's mother language, and right to preserve and promote their language, script, culture, cultural civilization and heritage. Provincial and local governments have taking initiation to adopt Indigenous Peoples' languages as their official language in the context of the Article 7(2) of the Constitution. With reference to the Articles 31(5), and 32(3) of the Constitution, the Indigenous Nationalities Commission has recommended to the government of Nepal to embed indigenous cultures, knowledge system, history and languages in the curricula of education systems. The Commission has recommended a draft of the "Indigenous Rights and Sustainable Development Agenda" to the government that, based on ILO 169 and UNDRIP. Nepal government has implementing FPIC in hydro-electric projects that are launched in Indigenous Peoples' areas.

We recommend the UN-PFII to provide technical support to Nepal to strengthen Indigenous Peoples' customary self-governing institutions and recognizing the importance of indigenous cultures and, in particular, the contributions made by indigenous knowledge systems to sustainable development.

Together, let us strive towards a future where Indigenous Peoples' voices are heard, rights are respected and cultures flourish in making inclusive and equitable societies.

Thank you.