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**Statement delivered by Mr. Uttam K. Shahi, Counsellor Permanent Mission of  
Nepal**

**Annual panel discussion on Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

**Theme: The protection of indigenous human rights defenders**

**45th session of the Human Rights Council**

**Geneva, 23 September 2020**

Time: 2 minutes, Words: 268

Mr. Vice President,

We appreciate the holding of the annual panel discussion on Rights of Indigenous Peoples and we thank all the panelists for their insights.

Rights of Indigenous Peoples have been guaranteed in the Constitution of Nepal including the right to participate in the State bodies on the basis of principle of proportional inclusion.

Right to social justice has been recognized as a fundamental right. Indigenous citizens and citizens of the communities on the verge of extinction shall have the right to get special opportunities and benefits in education, health, housing, employment, food and social security for their protection, upliftment, empowerment and development.

Policy measures have been undertaken to ensure participation of indigenous nationalities in decision-making on issues of their concerns, interests, and welfare.



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A separate constitutional commission, the Indigenous Nationalities Commission, has been constituted, and the Indigenous Nationalities Commission Act, 2017 has been enacted for the Commission's functioning.

In addition, an autonomous National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) has been working for the overall development of the indigenous nationalities including preservation and promotion of indigenous knowledge, skills and technology, among others.

Mr. Vice President,

Nepal remains committed to multilateral efforts for the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. Nepal supported the adoption of UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. And, we have ratified the Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (The ILO Convention No. 169).

The strong presence of the National Human Rights Commission, vibrant media and the civil society have greatly contributed to the promotion and protection of human rights, including rights of indigenous peoples in the country.

Thank you.