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**Statement by the delegation of Nepal at the 5<sup>th</sup> session of Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, July 10, 2012**

**Agenda Item 5:** *Role of languages and culture in the promotion and protection of the rights and identity of indigenous peoples*

Mr. Chairman,

As I am taking the floor for the first time in the session, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election as the Chairman/Rapporteur of the Expert Mechanism.

My delegation is pleased to participate in this important annual session. *We appreciate the work of the Exp. Mechanism*  
Defined by the Interim Constitution as a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and *multi-cultural* country, Nepal recognizes the diversity of language and culture as an asset to national development. The Government of Nepal has undertaken important measures to protect, conserve and develop languages and dialects spoken by indigenous people in Nepal. *and their culture*

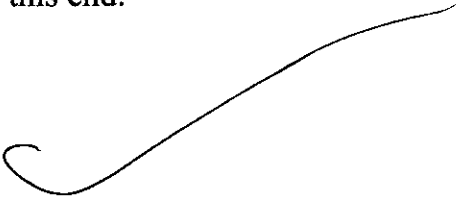
The Interim Constitution of Nepal defines that all the languages spoken as mother tongues in Nepal are the languages *of* nation and guarantees the rights of all communities to preserve and promote their language, scripts, culture, artifacts and cultural heritage. The right to impart basic education in mother tongue of all communities has been recognized. The provision enunciated in the Interim Constitution has been put into implementation through the reforms in legislation (amendment in the Education Act, Local Self Government Act and related regulations) and through the formulation of related policy instruments, such as National Curriculum Frameworks, School Reform Programs, Education for All- National Plan of Action and the periodic national development plans.

Preparations of curriculum, text books and reference materials in languages spoken by indigenous people have been undertaken. The course books in several ethnic languages have been prepared. Similarly, research is underway towards the preparation of dictionaries in the languages of various indigenous nationalities. Production of teachers for these languages has remained a priority. This is an ongoing program that will continue to progress and develop.

Foundation for Upliftment of Indigenous People has been established as a statutory body to focus on the upliftment of indigenous people. Its objectives are, among others, to preserve and promote the language, script, culture, literature, arts and history as well as the traditional knowledge, skill, technology and special knowledge of the indigenous people. The Foundation has been mandated to study and research <sup>on</sup> the language, script, literature, history, arts, tradition and culture; develop them; publish the history and literature; publish the dictionary of the languages; establish archives and museum that give identity of the language, culture, history, tradition of the indigenous people; establish ~~a~~ school, that teaches their languages at least up to primary level; make arrangements for broadcasting notice, news and ~~miscellaneous~~ <sup>various</sup> programmes in the languages of indigenous people.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, as a least developed country with attendant challenges of resource and capacity constraints, Nepal faces overall developmental challenges. Despite resource constraints, the Government of Nepal remains committed to promoting language and culture of all indigenous people in the country. Our progress on economic and social development will lead to greater efforts towards this end.

Thank you.



Speaker;  
Kam Bhattarai, Minister of Nepal