

**Speaking Notes**

**For**

**The Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations**

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
18<sup>th</sup> Session**

***PFI Plenary Session Item 5  
Discussion on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous  
Languages***

**UN Headquarters  
New York, New York  
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**Check Against Delivery**

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**Intervention: NOTE – WORD COUNT CANNOT EXCEED 150**

Indigenous representatives, Excellencies, Elders ... It's an honour to join you today on the traditional territory of the Lenape people.

Canada welcomes the designation of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Having the ability to know one's language is a critical component of personal cultural identity - it is about who we are, and our resilience. Reclaiming and revitalizing Indigenous languages is an important part of Canada's shared journey of reconciliation. I am grateful for and inspired by the commitment and hard work of Indigenous leaders, particularly Grand Chief Edward John and Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild.

Canada is committed to preserving and promoting Indigenous languages, and we are currently working on passing Bill C-91 - *An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages* in our Parliamentary System.

In the spirit of the resolution on enhanced Indigenous participation, I will cede the remainder of my time to Kelly Fraser, and Inuk Singer.

Thank you madam chairwoman  
Kelly Fraser-ruvunga inngitiutsunga Sanikiluaq Nunavummiuruvunga,  
Upigusuppunga Inuurama inuktitut uqqarunarama annanut kisiani  
runaniqqunga assiujinijangimat.

My names Kelly Fraser, I'm a singer from Sanikiluaq, Nunavut. I am a  
proud Inuk that speaks Inuktitut despite mom going to residential school.

I've been saved by writing songs in Inuktitut and i recognize I've got a lot to  
give and more people to save.

There's a longing for our culture but a wave of pride through revitalization.  
We know we belong with every action we do as it has meaning in our  
worldviews

The way I revitalize my culture with the help of funding from my  
governments is to teach traditional drum dancing and songwriting in our  
language.

From industrialization, food is expected premade not like how my grandpa  
hunted for meat using dog sleds, sealskin boats, which were taken away  
for Canadian Sovereignty,

I recommend the permanent form to urge member states to recognizes  
Indigenous languages officially as one of their national languages  
With loss we gained resiliency, and by working with our governments, lets  
responsibly implement laws, treaties and land claims through being heard  
and together, we can save the world.

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