

Seventeenth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
April 22 – May 3, 2019 – United Nations Headquarters, New York, NY

Intervention of Hawai‘i’s Mokuola Honua: Global Center for Indigenous Languages
Item 5: Discussion on the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages

Endorsed by:

‘Aha Pūnana Leo (Hawaiian Language NGO)

Ka Haka ‘Ula o Ke‘elikōlani Hawaiian Language College, of the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo
National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs

Monday, April 22, 2018

Statements by Amy Kalili of Hawai‘i’s Mokuola Honua: Global Center for Indigenous Language Excellence

Iā ‘oe e ka Luna Ho‘omalua a me nā lālā a pau o kēia ‘Aha ‘Ōiwi o Nā Aupuni Hui Pū ‘Ia, a pēia pū iā ‘oukou e ko‘u mau hoa kāko‘o ‘ōiwi a puni ka honua, aloha nui kākou!

‘O au ‘o Amy Kalili, he koa kūpa‘a o ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i e kū ‘elelele ana i mua o kēia ‘aha me kēia mau mana‘o a noi a mākou, ‘o ia ho‘i nā limahana lawelawe i ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i a me nā ‘ōlelo ‘ōiwi o nā ‘āina like ‘ole e ‘ākoakoa ana ma lalo o Mokuola Honua.

To you Madame Chair, members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and all of you my indigenous ‘ohana from around the world, aloha.

My name is Amy Kalili and I humbly sit here before you all as a steadfast advocate not only for the Hawaiian language but for those indigenous languages of my comrades who are working together via Hawai‘i’s Mokuola Honua: Global Center for Indigenous Language Excellence.

Thanks to the resolute efforts of several who are in this room today who decided to come together 35 years ago to ensure that our Hawaiian language would survive, I along with these young Hawaiians by my side, are sitting here as fluent speakers, who are now staunch advocates in their own ways for our ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and others indigenous languages around the world.

As we are in the IYIL, the statements about the immense value of our languages to our people, place and planet, are being reiterated over and over and resounding throughout our communities and beyond.

Mokuola Honua applauds the UNPFII for making the recommendation to the General Assembly to declare international year and seeing it through to fruition. We also commend the efforts of UNESCO as the lead organization coordinating the IY. I am honored to be a part of the Steering Committee as one of the representatives of the Pacific Region and to see the global effort being put forth because of our shared aloha for our indigenous languages.

Given the progress that has been made during this IY as a means to advance the use, acquisition and promotion of our languages, **Mokuola Honua humbl recommends** that the United Nations declare an International Decade of Indigenous Languages that would allow exponential impacts of the efforts puts for in the IYIL.

Mokuola Honua also recommends that a periodic report be completed during the decade that assess the progress made towards the recommendations that will come forth from IY's Strategic Outcome Document. This proactive call for this report is a means to not only substantiate and ensure that the Outcome Document, but also helps to keep this critical issue of the revitalization of our indigenous languages top of mind for us here at the Forum.

A no laila e ko kēia 'Aha 'Ōiwi o Nā Aupuni Hui Pū 'Ia, me kēlā nō au e waiho ai i kēia mau noi ha'aha'a i mua o 'oukou me ka hō'ike akuwale pū aku i ko mākou mākaukau e kōkua ma ka pa'u like i ka ho'okō e like me ka hiki; ma ke kū a hahai i ke ala i ho'omoe 'ia e nā kūpuna no ka pono o kēia hanauna hou e kū nei me a'u a no nā hanauna ma hope aku kekahi.

So I leave these requests and recommendations before you today as well as our commitment as a global center for to work collectively towards the implementation in the best ways we can; following in the path set for us by our ancestors for the benefit of this next generation of our speakers for the many generations to come aftert them. Mahalo for the opportunity to address you all today. Aloha.