2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages

The International Federation of Translators (FIT) is pleased to join the United Nations and UNESCO in 2019 in celebrating the importance of indigenous languages.

To launch this important year, UNESCO held its inaugural opening of the International Year of Indigenous Languages in Paris on 28 January 2019. The United Nations also held a launch event in its New York HQ, attended by FIT Vice-President Alan Melby and FIT North America Regional Chair, Bill Rivers.
Translating and Interpreting for Indigenous Languages

Languages, and therefore translation, interpreting and terminology, underpin the human rights and fundamental freedoms crucial to sustainable development, inclusive governance, peace and social equity. Indigenous languages embody the world’s cultural diversity and are vital for us all. Indigenous languages provide intergenerational transfer of intangible cultural heritage and knowledge to assist us in facing future global challenges.

These events are just the start, there will be events all across the globe this year, celebrating indigenous language and heritage.

In celebration of 2019, UN International Year of Indigenous Languages, FIT’S International Translation Day (ITD) theme for this year is Translating and Interpreting for Indigenous Languages.

According to the UN ECOSOC Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, around 40% of the estimated 6,700 languages spoken in 2016 were at risk of extinction.

Celebrating indigenous languages, elevating their status and their use, helps to fight against their disappearance and extinction. Join us in 2019 to give support to indigenous language speakers, and the interpreters, translators and terminologist who assist them.

See details of the 2019 FIT International Translation Day Poster Competition.