



“It’s my language, it’s my life!”



A review of progress in the UK and worldwide

**The Foundation for Endangered Languages
and
Westminster United Nations Association
Wednesday 19 June, 1pm to 5pm
Brunei Gallery, SOAS
Thornhaugh Street, London WC1H 0XG**

The meeting will review the challenges facing isolated communities determined to preserve their culture and show how the United Nations and its agencies, together with international organisations are seeking to protect them. Films will be screened from 1pm to 2pm and all are invited to enjoy their own refreshments as they watch. From 2pm, three sessions, some using film, will address different aspects of the international strategy. A detailed programme will be posted on the FEL events webpage.

The UN Action Plan This will focus global attention on the critical risks confronting indigenous languages, targeting steps which will lead to improved quality of life, and reaffirming cultural and linguistic continuity. It intends to access and promote indigenous languages around the world in accordance with the legitimate rights of indigenous peoples, preserve their languages, improve access to education, information and knowledge in and about indigenous languages for indigenous children, young people and adults, sharing information in and about indigenous languages, using language technology and other communication and information mechanisms.

Why is this important? 40 per cent of the estimated 6,700 languages spoken around the world were in danger of disappearing. The fact that most of these are indigenous languages puts the cultures and knowledge systems to which they belong at risk. Also, indigenous peoples are often isolated both politically and socially in the countries they live in, by the geographical location of their communities, their separate histories, cultures, languages and traditions. And yet, they are not only leaders in protecting the environment as their languages represent complex systems of knowledge and communication and should be recognized as a strategic national resource for development, peace building and reconciliation. They also foster and promote unique local cultures, customs and values enduring over thousands of years. Indigenous languages add to the rich tapestry of global cultural diversity and without them, the world would be a poorer place.

The event is open to all, free of charge but all must [register here](#)