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Item 8 (b) of the provisional agenda*

**Culture, heritage and language recognition: Indigenous,
minority and regional languages and multilingual issues**

Amplifying First Nations languages in Australia

Summary**

In follow-up to the International Year of Indigenous Languages, 2019, through which the General Assembly sought to raise awareness of the role that languages play in people's daily lives, the United Nations has designated the period from 2022 to 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Australia is a member of the Global Task Force for Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages as one of three States members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) from the Asia and Pacific region. First Languages Australia, the main body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australia, is also a representative of the Global Task Force as one of three Indigenous People's organizations in the Pacific.

All the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australia are under threat, and ongoing work is required for their maintenance and amplification. The approach of Australia to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages is guided by the principle of "nothing for us without us" as it undertakes a decade of activities to stop the loss of First Nations languages.

Geographical place names can play a role in maintaining, reawakening and restoring First Nations languages in places across Australia. The role that languages play in empowering and supporting self-determination using First Nations languages in place names can be seen first-hand.

* [GEGN.2/2025/1](#).

** The full report was prepared by Rafe Benli (Australia), Place Names Working Group, Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping. The report will be available at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/, in the language of submission only, as document GEGN.2/2025/69/CRP.69.



The report is focused on the work being undertaken in Australia in support of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names is invited to express its views on the report and discuss the work of supporting language revitalization.
