



Permanent Mission of
Bangladesh to the UN



Permanent Mission of
Nigeria to the UN



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



Observance of the International Mother Language Day (IMLD) 21 February 2022, 1315-1500 hrs (virtual)

Concept Note

Language is the most powerful tool to expand the vision of human beings and broaden their faculties and help people understand the value of social contract. Language inspires people to come closer irrespective of their natural, social, economic and cultural differences. Different societies have different languages but the power of language is universal. Each year, on 21 February, International Mother Language Day (IMLD) comes as a reminder of the power of language in preserving the uniqueness of human societies and promoting their distinct values.

The theme of this year's IMLD, 'Using technology for multilingual learning: Challenges and opportunities', aims to promote potential role of technology to advance multilingual education and support the development of quality teaching and learning for all.

Technology can play instrumental role in addressing some of the greatest challenges in multilingual education today. According to UNESCO, close to half of the world's students have been affected by partial or full school closures during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While advanced economies employed technology to maintain continuity of learning, lower income countries lag behind, where, majority of the students are using traditional broadcast media such as television and radio to support their education during COVID-19. Lack of skills, insufficient resources and lack of preparedness for using distance teaching methods among teachers and students contributed to this fall back. Reducing technology gap can accelerate efforts towards ensuring equitable and inclusive lifelong learning opportunities for all.

IMLD is being observed globally since 2000, following a proclamation by the UNESCO General Conference in 1999, declaring 21st of February as the International Mother Language Day (IMLD). The initiative was taken by Bangladesh in honor of the 'Language Martyrs,' who made supreme sacrifices to uphold the dignity of their mother tongue 'Bangla' in 1952. UNESCO's proclamation was subsequently welcomed by UN General Assembly in its multiple consensus resolutions. By observing the International Mother Language Day each year, the UN aims to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingualism and highlights the importance of fraternity of languages and cultures in building a peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive world.

To observe IMLD this year, the Permanent Missions of **Bangladesh, El Salvador, Nigeria, Portugal, Slovakia, to the United Nations** in collaboration with the **UN Secretariat and the UNESCO** would be organizing a virtual event at 1315 -1500 hrs on the 21st of February 2022. The event will provide a forum to renew our commitments to multilingualism within and beyond UN. In addition to the co-sponsoring member States, the New York based NGO Committee on Language and Languages, a subsidiary of 'The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations' (CoNGO) will also participate in the discussion.

The discussion will be followed by multilingual cultural performances.