



ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT FOUNDATION

112 Moo 1, Tambon Sanpranate, Amphur Sansai, Chiang Mai 50210, Thailand

Tel. No.: +66(0)53 343539; Fax no.: +66(0)53 343540

Email: aippmail@aippnet.org Website: www.aippnet.org

AIPP Statement in Solidarity with NEFIN: The Government of Nepal Must Not Dissolve Indigenous Peoples' Institutions

11 June 2026

The Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) stands in unwavering solidarity with the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN¹) in opposing the Government of Nepal's attempt to dissolve the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) under the guise of cost-saving institutional restructuring.

We are deeply alarmed by this proposal. NFDIN is only specialized state institution mandated to promote, and protect the languages, cultures, knowledge systems, and identities of Indigenous Peoples in Nepal. Rather than weakening it, the Government should strengthen the institution and resource it adequately so that it can effectively fulfill its vital mandate.

Established through the National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities Act, 2002, NFDIN has played a central role in advancing the rights and welfare of Indigenous Peoples, who make up more than 35% of Nepal's population. Its abolition would not be a mere administrative change; it would constitute a serious setback for Indigenous Peoples' rights, and undermine Nepal's commitment to inclusion, diversity and social justice.

The proposed dissolution also runs counter to Nepal's longstanding national and international commitments to Indigenous Peoples' rights. Nepal was the first country in Asia to ratify International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169, and it was among the states that supported the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007. These instruments affirm the right of Indigenous Peoples to participate in decision-making through their own representative institutions, and they require States to consult and cooperate in good faith to obtain their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) before adopting measures that may affect them. Any move to abolish NFDIN without the full and effective participation and consent of Indigenous Peoples would violate these international commitments. It would also contravene Article 33 of the ILO Convention No. 169, which obliges governments to establish the institutions and mechanisms necessary to administer programmes affecting Indigenous Peoples.

AIPP therefore calls on the Government of Nepal to:

- **Retain and strengthen NFDIN, ensuring its full mandate, autonomy, and adequate resources, and institutional capacity**

¹ NEFIN is the national umbrella organisation for Indigenous Peoples in Nepal. Founded in 1991, it represents more than 10.2 million Indigenous people. Its affiliated organisations include those of Indigenous women, youth, students, lawyers, journalists, and cultural groups.



ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT FOUNDATION

112 Moo 1, Tambon Sanpranate, Amphur Sansai, Chiang Mai 50210, Thailand

Tel. No.: +66(0)53 343539; Fax no.: +66(0)53 343540

Email: aippmail@aippnet.org Website: www.aippnet.org

- **Refrain from any restructuring or policy change that affects Indigenous Peoples without meaningful consultation and their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), given through their representative institutions;**
- **Uphold Nepal's constitutional, legal, and international obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of Indigenous Peoples, in both policy and practice.**

AIPP stands shoulder to shoulder with the Indigenous Peoples of Nepal in defending their hard-won rights, their institutions, and their aspirations for self-determination. We affirm our collective solidarity with their struggles to protect their cultures, identities, lands, and collective rights, and to ensure their meaningful participation in decisions that affect their lives and futures.

We will continue to raise this matter with the ILO, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the relevant UN Human Rights mechanisms, and regional and international bodies. Together with our members and partners across Asia and beyond, we will closely monitor developments and support the efforts of Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) and the Indigenous Peoples of Nepal until this threat is withdrawn and their rights are fully respected.

**In solidarity,
Pallab Chakma
Secretary General
Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)**