

Dr.Massimiliano Verde, President of Accademia Napoletana

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IYIL 2019 profile: masverde

Naples, 22/01/2019

**Ms.Audrey Azoulay,
Director General UNESCO
7 place Fontenoy
75007 Paris, France**

Ref. 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages: Neapolitan Language.

Dear Ms.Azoulay,

Please receive a note by the Accademia Napoletana about Neapolitan Language and Cultural Heritage for the *International Year of Indigenous Languages*.

Accademia Napoletana is a scientific group internationally recognized to preserve, teaching and promote Neapolitan linguistic and socio-cultural heritage especially for youngest generations. We work to preserve and promote linguistic minorities, the principles of cultural and linguistic diversity and peaceful cooperation.

In accordance with the above principles as responsible of the Accademia Napoletana I am working for a cultural and socio-linguistic project named "NUJE" (we/us, in English) in cooperation with academicians and associations, in Europe and abroad for any Neapolitan and Italian communities.

This work is to endorse Europe's cultural heritage and promote cultural rights as human rights everywhere.

My best regards,

**Massimiliano Verde,
President Accademia Napoletana**

Note for the UNESCO: Neapolitan and IYIL 2019

Recognizing that the **United Nations** has, in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as *language*;

Recognizing that the art.55 c) of the **Chart of United Nations** promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction also like *language* to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples;

Considering the Article 22 of the **Declaration of Human Rights of UN**: “everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and *cultural rights* indispensable for his **dignity** and the free development of his personality”;

Recognized that the General Conference of the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**, at its **33rd meeting**, held in Paris from 3 to 21 October 2005, recalls that *linguistic diversity* is a fundamental element of *cultural diversity*, and reaffirms the fundamental role that education plays in the protection and promotion of cultural expressions, also inviting the States to adopt measures to protect the diversity of cultural expressions and their contents, especially in situations where cultural expressions may run danger of extinction or serious impairment;

Recognizing the importance to promote the dissemination of mother tongues not only to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education but also to develop fuller awareness of *linguistic* and *cultural traditions* throughout the world and to inspire solidarity based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue;

Considering that the 40 percent of the estimated 6,700 languages spoken around the world were in danger of disappearing;

Considering that Indigenous languages matter for sustainable development, peace building and reconciliation and that in 2016, the **United Nations** General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2019 as the **International Year of Indigenous Languages**, based on a recommendation by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues;

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Considering the first -CEFR- **Course of Neapolitan Language** (and Culture) so realized by Massimiliano Verde and recognized by the City of Naples, according the studies and with the cooperation of Prof.Carlo Iandolo and Mr.Raffaele Bracale;

Considering Prof. Miryam Yataco's introduction of Massimiliano Verde's work to preserve Neapolitan Language and Heritage on April 21, 2018 during the conference: **“Language Diversity and Language Rights: A global perspective”** for the “Global Justice for Indigenous Languages: A Symposium” at the Jerome Greene Annex, Columbia University so organized by the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society and the **Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program** at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights in collaboration with **UNESCO**, the *Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)*, and the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations, New York;

Considering Verde's note on the actual sociolinguistic situation of Neapolitan mother tongue speakers and the Accademia Napoletana's work to preserve this heritage, sent to the **UNESCO** for the *International Mother Language Day*, on 21th February 2018 as receipted by Ms.Andriamiseza Ingarao Noro and Ms.Guint Margaux;

Recognizing the information request - on 2th March 2018 - sent to Verde by Ms.Guint Margaux for **UNESCO's Section of Global Citizenship and Peace Education**, about the activities organized to celebrate that event and considering also Verde's report to Ms.Guint on the 3th March 2018;

Considering Verde's requests to realize initiatives into the scholar system in favour of the Neapolitan language and cultural heritage as sent to the Neapolitan authorities on 12th March 2018, 13th June 2018 and more. Considering the Institut d'Estudis Valencians support on Verde's request;

Considering the note sent by Verde to Ms.Rosa D'Amato on 6th April 2018 to inform **European Parliament** about the Accademia Napoletana project to safeguard Neapolitan Language and Heritage and to support any possible initiative to save this Language and European Cultural Heritage;

Considering Verde's work to teach and preserve Neapolitan Language and Cultural Heritage, linguistic minorities and cultural diversity, in cooperation also with:

- ❖ the Accademia della Lingua Siciliana (Academy of the Sicilian Language, Italy);
- ❖ the URCA (Universidade Regional do Cariri, Brazil);
- ❖ the Organisation for the Dissemination of the Hellenic (Greek) Language;
- ❖ Prof.Miryam Yataco expert in Intercultural Bilingual Education and trained sociolinguist, responsible for the *“Language Rights, Derechos Lingüísticos, Lenguas en riesgo”* Group (U.S.A., Europe, Latin America,etc.);

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- ❖ Prof.Stanislaio Pugliese, Distinguished Professor of Italian and Italian American Studies at Hofstra University (U.S.A.);
- ❖ Cav.J.Maietta, President of the AIAE (Association of Italian American Educators, U.S.A.);
- ❖ Mr.Ciro Ridolfini, actor and poet (Italy);
- ❖ Mr.Gianni Mattioli, journalist and writer (Italy);
- ❖ Mr.Alfredo di Costanzo, lawyer and journalist (Italy);
- ❖ Prof. S.Bekakos– Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – Greece- Department of Italian Language and Literature and Prof.Anna Lazou of Philosophical Anthropology, Department of Philosophy – Athens;
- ❖ Prof.Ivan De Oliveira Durães, Distinguished Doctor in Law, (Brazil);
- ❖ Prof.Pietro Nardella Dellova, Doctor in Civil Law, Human Rights and Jewish Law at the University of St. Francis and Fluminense Federal University, Rio de Janeiro, Researcher at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (Brazil), Member of the Martin Buber Group for the dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians (Rome, Italy);
- ❖ Prof.Leopoldo Peñarroja Torrejón, Distinguished member of the Royal Valencian Academy of Culture (R.A.C.V.), Spain;
- ❖ Mr.Voro López director of the Department of Language and Literature of the R.A.C.V., Spain;
- ❖ Mr.José Vicente Gómez Bayarri, doctor en Historia, Académico de Número de la R.A.C.V., Spain;
- ❖ Mr.Oscar Rueda vice-president of the “Lo Rat Penat” Association, Spain;
- ❖ Mr.Ferran Ribes, president of the Institut d’Estudis Valencians of Valencia (Spain);
- ❖ Prof. Beatriz Garrido Ramos, General Director of ArtyHum, Revista de Artes y Humanidades (Spain);

Considering Verde’s scientific research with Prof. Ivan Oliveira Durães and Prof.Hélcio Ribeiro by **FAC of São Paulo**, to preserve the socio-cultural and linguistic neapolitan heritage in that country, considering also the absence of the Neapolitan Language into brazilian linguistic policies, although Neapolitan community in Brazil being the most relevant, outside Italy;

Considering Verde’s work with Prof. S.Bekakos to preserve both Greek and Neapolitan cultural and socio-linguistic heritage, in Italy and internationally as recently performed with a video-documentary in Neapolitan and Classic Greek Language also posted into **IYIL 2019** website (International Year of Indigenous Languages website);

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Considering the *intangible heritage* as means, practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (**Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Paris, 2003**);

Considering that to foster sustainable development, learners must have access to education in their mother tongue and in other languages cause is through the mastery of the first language or mother tongue that the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are acquired;

Considering that *local languages*, especially minority and indigenous, transmit cultures, values and traditional knowledge, thus playing an important role in promoting sustainable futures.

Considering the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development, as underscored in the **UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore** of 1989, in the **UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity** of 2001, and in the Istanbul Declaration of 2002 adopted by the Third Round Table of Ministers of Culture;

Considering *language* as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage and languages as the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage; remarked the deep-seated interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage;

Considering the status of *Vulnerable Language* for Neapolitan - ISO 639-3 code(s)nap - so declared by the **UNESCO**; the inscription of the “art of *Neapolitan Pizzaiuolo*” on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Decision of the Intergovernmental Committee 12.COM 11 B.17) and the inscription of the *Historic Centre of Naples* in the **World Heritage List**, also according the Criterion II (Outstanding Universal Value);

In this way, considering Neapolitan Language transmitted as mother tongue and a strong way to preserve the Neapolitan cultural heritage not only in Naples and Campania, but also everywhere thanks for example to the classic Neapolitan song, the Opera Buffa, folklore and religious traditions, enogastronomy (Mediterranean Diet), literature and theatre, etc., as also mentioned into the above Verde’s note to the **UNESCO** for the *International Mother Language Day*;

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Considering Verde's work as president of the Accademia Napoletana to promote Neapolitan Song and the Pulcinella Mask as Intangible Cultural Heritage;

Considering Neapolitan Language as a peaceful way to transmit a common Mediterranean heritage thanks for example to the linguistic and cultural contribute to Neapolitan by ancient Greek, Arabe, French, Spanish and also considering the necessity to save Neapolitan to preserve the ancient greek vocalism still today present in this language;

Considering Verde's work as president of the Accademia Napoletana, to preserve vernacular expressions and traditions, **indigenous toponymy of Naples** such as for the first *map in Neapolitan for the III° District of the City of Naples*, video-documentaries, exhibitions, (about Giovan Battista Basile, author of the modern Cinderella; Neapolitan Nativity, etc.) conferences, radio-programmes, documents and publications in Neapolitan (both in Valencian and Spanish too : *Lengua Napulitana Patremmonio 'e 'na cultura auniverzale 'mpericulo*” edited by the Institut d'Estudis Valencians);

Recognizing the 29th Article of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** that declares that "*States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed particularly to: (c) the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values...*" and the 30th Article "*in those States in which exist linguistic minorities.... shall not be denied the right, in community with other members...to enjoy own culture and language*", also recognized into the Verde's note for the **UNESCO**;

Considering the absence of Neapolitan Language teaching in the italian scholar programs and often on the contrary, the inadequate and bad representation of the Neapolitan socio-linguistic and cultural heritage in Italy, overall about Neapolitan children speakers, also as mentioned in the above Verde's note for **UNESCO** on the 21/02/2018;

Recognizing the resolution adopted by the **General Assembly on 16 May 2007** that invites Member States, the United Nations system and all other relevant stakeholders to develop, support and intensify activities aimed at fostering respect for and the promotion and protection of all *languages*, in particular endangered *languages*, *linguistic diversity* and *multilingualism*;

Considering the above resolution that recalls *linguistic diversity* as an important element of cultural diversity, and noted the entry into force on 18 March 2007 of the **Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**, also mentioned into Verde's note for the UNESCO;

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Referring to existing international human rights instruments, in particular to the **Universal Declaration on Human Rights** of 1948, the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** of 1966, and the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** of 1966 also as mentioned in the above note for the UNESCO;

Referring to the following principles of the **Italian Constitution** as also mentioned by Verde in the above note for **UNESCO** (21/02/2018):

- Art.2: *“The Republic recognises and guarantees the inviolable rights of the person, both as an individual and in the social groups where human personality is expressed;*
- Art.3: *“All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinion, personal and social conditions. It is the duty of the Republic to remove those obstacles of an economic or social nature which constrain the freedom and equality of citizens...”*
- Art. 6: *“The Republic safeguards linguistic minorities by means of appropriate measures”;*
- Art. 9: *“The Republic promotes the development of culture and of scientific and technical research. It safeguards natural landscape and the historical and artistic heritage of the Nation”;*
- Art. 21: *“Anyone has the right to freely express their thoughts in speech, writing, or any other form of communication”;*
- art.33: *“The Republic guarantees the freedom of the arts and sciences, which may be freely taught”.*

Considering that the respect for linguistic diversity is a fundamental value of the EU, as are respect for the person and openness towards other culture as incorporated into the preamble to the **Treaty on European Union**, which refers to “drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe” and ‘confirming [the] attachment to the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights’;

Considering the Article 2 of the **Treaty on European Union** (TEU) where great importance is given to respect for human rights and non-discrimination, while Article 3 states that the EU “shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity” and fully respecting cultural and linguistic diversity (Article 165(1) **TFEU**);

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Considering that the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU**, adopted in 2000 and made legally binding by the Treaty of Lisbon, prohibits discrimination on grounds of language (Article 21) and places an obligation on the Union to respect linguistic diversity (Article 22);

Considering the **European Parliament resolution of 7 February 2018** on protection and non-discrimination with regard to minorities in the EU Member States that encourages the Member States to ensure that the right to use a minority language is upheld and to protect *linguistic diversity* within the Union in accordance with the EU Treaties;

Considering that the above Resolution acknowledges the important role of the Member States in the protection of autochthonous, national or linguistic minorities; recalls that the protection of national minorities and the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of language and membership of a national minority are enshrined in the Treaties and the EUCFR; calls on the Commission to strengthen the promotion of the teaching and use of regional and minority languages, as a potential way of tackling language discrimination in the EU;

Considering that **European Parliament resolution of 24 March 2009 on Multilingualism**: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment, encourages and supports the introduction of mother-tongue minority, local and foreign languages on a non-compulsory basis within school programmes and/or in the context of extracurricular activities open to the community;

Considering that the above Resolution reiterates its longstanding commitment to the promotion of language learning, *multilingualism and linguistic diversity* in the European Union, including *regional and minority languages*, as these are cultural assets that must be *safeguarded and nurtured*; considers that multilingualism is essential for effective communication and represents a means of facilitating comprehension between individuals and hence acceptance of diversity and of minorities;

As president of the "Neapolitan Academy" - Accademia Napoletana - internationally recognized for Neapolitan Language and Culture preservation and teaching, I wish to inform the **UNESCO- IYIL 2019** and the other organizers and partners of **IYL 2019** about the *ongoing lack of preservation of the Neapolitan Language in Italy*, especially for Neapolitan mother tongue children, prompted to consider their language or accent as something of incorrect and *socially unsuitable*.

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I wish to inform **UNESCO** about the international project of “Accademia Napoletana” “*Nuje*” (we/us in English) to teach, preserve and transmit Neapolitan as cultural and socio-linguistic heritage. This work is following in Italy and abroad for any Neapolitan and Italian community to endorse their heritage and cultural roots.

Also, this projet regards teaching activities, such as conferences, video-documentaries, publications, masterclass, exhibitions and any sort of event for Neapolitan and Italian communities all around the world, incluse Neapolitan music, art and sport, such as the cooperation with the Club Napoli Udine, Club Napoli Zurigo, Club Napoli Lussemburgo and italian and foreign tenors and sopranos. More: it is overall aimed to youngest generations of Neapolitans, to favour cultural projects and professional promotion of their territory.

The “NUJE” project wish to transmit and preserve Neapolitan Linguistic and Cultural heritage also as Italian and European heritage, in accordance with the principles of cultural and linguistic diversity, to favorize the peaceful cooperation and democracy between peoples, sustainability and human rights especially for new generations.

Therefore and finally I would invite **UNESCO** to raise awareness to the italian authorities for any possible action to preserve and promote Neapolitan Linguistic and Cultural Heritage in this way to permit Accademia Napoletana’s activities into the italian scholar system.

Best regards,

Massimiliano Verde

Dr. Accademia Napoletana