

## **RESOLUTION FOR THE ENACTMENT OF MEASURES TO PREVENT THE DEATH OF THE KAPAMPANGAN LANGUAGE**

**Whereas** more than 50% of the 7,000 languages spoken in the world may disappear in this century as less than a quarter of those languages are currently used in schools and in cyberspace, and most are used only sporadically.

**Whereas** the deterioration of Kapampangan, Waray, Pangasinan, Cebuano, Hiligaynon and other Philippine languages has been around since the term of President Quezon with the creation of a national language. This sad situation was further aggravated during the time of President Marcos, with the replacement of the mother tongue as medium of instruction in Grades I and II by the national language in addition to its already having a subject for itself in the curriculum.

**Whereas** these two factors contribute greatly to their deterioration, prompting people to think that they have been virtually sentenced to **DEATH** by a state that wishes to have just one unified nation devoid of ethnic diversity. In 1985, a prominent Kapampangan civic leader and author predicted that Kapampangan would be dead in a hundred years. Based on observations among the youngest schoolchildren in preschools and elementary schools, pupils who speak Kapampangan are now increasingly a minority. And their children will almost certainly be Tagalog. The death of Kapampangan may be much closer than we realize.

**Whereas** cultural diversity is closely linked to linguistic diversity, as indicated in the **UNESCO** Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and its action plan (2001), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).

**Whereas** Kapampangans, the seventh largest ethnolinguistic voting bloc in the country, are an independent and major political force in the country who have produced two presidents, while a third is a widow of an ethnic Kapampangan who was made an adopted daughter of Pampanga. Kapampangans have voted independently of their neighbors in Central Luzon and have been crucial in the close election of Presidents Aquino, Ramos and Macapagal-Arroyo. That this political force is intimately linked with language, and that language change and the loss of Kapampangan will inevitably change and perhaps undermine Philippine politics and democratic choice is attested to by the results of the 2004 presidential elections in Bataan, in formerly Kapampangan areas which have switched to Tagalog.

**Whereas** we remain optimistic and imbued with "hope" and we believe that **Kapampangan LANGUAGE DEATH** can be prevented if something is done now. If it is in itself a disease, it is not a terminal illness but something that can be treated with the proper medicine. This medicine is a combination of better laws, amended provisions in the Constitution, and stronger regionalistic attitude (love and pride) among our political leaders and indigenous language speakers themselves.

**Whereas** we need local political leaders whose consciousness includes a desire to preserve their culture, not those that just take culture for granted and are just Kapampangan (or Cebuano, Waray, etc.) in name only. We need to teach our lingua franca to our students from Grade One to Six, and then through high school and college. This is the only way, the youth of today will be able to write, read, and appreciate what our erstwhile and future writers, poets, essayists, etc. have written and what they will write in the future. This conforms to what has long been known by educators, that the mother tongue is the best medium of beginning schooling.

**Whereas** by encouraging and developing language policies that enable each linguistic community to use its first language, or mother tongue, as widely and as often as possible, including in education, while also mastering a national or regional language and an international language; also by encouraging speakers of a dominant language to master another national or regional language and one or two international languages. Only if multilingualism is fully accepted can all languages find their place in our globalized world.

**NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved,** that the Province of Pampanga take all necessary steps to prevent the further erosion of the Kapampangan language and save it from extinction while this is still possible.

**In particular, the following steps are to be taken:**

1. The Province of Pampanga can have a head start by enjoining the use of the Kapampangan Language in the Provincial Capitol by employees. Signs in the capitol and around the towns and cities of Pampanga must be in Kapampangan first, then in the two official languages of the country, English and Filipino-Tagalog. Example: **Malaus Ko Pu**, Welcome, then all the signs in City Hall or Capitol should be: **Piluban, Pilualan**, Entrance, Exit, Pasukan, Labasan Etc...Perhaps they can adopt this phrase: **This is Pampanga...Kapampangan is the Native Language, English is Spoken, Tagalog is Understood.**

2. The Provincial Board should pass a resolution for all the sales persons and other employees of SM, Robinsons, Marquee and all other shopping malls, restaurants like McDonalds, Jollibee, Chow King, KFC, Shakey's etc., banks, and department stores to speak to their customers in Kapampangan (if the customers answer in Tagalog, then that is the time they can speak to them in Tagalog).

3. Kapampangan should be taught as the main medium of instruction in elementary school, and as a subject in high school and college. Currently, separate bills have been filed in the Senate and the House of Representatives introducing the mother tongue into the curriculum:

The Provincial Board can express support for their advocacy of the mother tongue, while urging a stronger bill that will provide better protection for the endangered indigenous languages.

4. The Provincial Government can create a body or assign someone to monitor the state of the Kapampangan language, especially among the most vulnerable areas, sectors and age groups, in order to accurately assess the effectiveness of efforts to save the language.

**Submitted by:**

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