



**International Indian Treaty Council**  
***Consejo Internacional de Tratados Indios***  
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**INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL**  
**38<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
**SANTO DOMINGO TOMALTEPEC, MEXICO**  
**OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> – 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2012**  
***“GUENDARO STINU, NGA GUENDANABANINU”***  
***“OUR FOOD IS OUR LIFE”***

**Resolution on Indigenous Women, Girls and Children**

**The delegates at this conference representing Indigenous Peoples from North, Central, and South America, the Caribbean and the Pacific, adopt by consensus the following resolution to defend the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:**

1. IITC adopts this resolution recognizing the integral and fundamental importance of traditional cultural and spiritual roles, responsibilities and respect for Indigenous women, girls and children, as well as the need for restoration of balance within our Indigenous kinship, family and social systems and our communities as a whole.
2. We affirm that as Indigenous Peoples we are born into the world with gifts, including our gender, language, forms of identity such as clan systems, and free will. We remind ourselves of teachings that have been lost. From our Indigenous perspective, our identity, cultures and languages are foundational.
3. We affirm that Indigenous children have a right to know their history, spirituality, culture, language and the traditional governance systems of their peoples.
4. We endorse all past IITC resolutions regarding the rights, protection and participation of Indigenous women, youth, girls and children.
5. IITC congratulates the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for their work on combatting violence against women and girls, as well as their recognition of environmental violence a form of violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls.
6. IITC endorses the Declarations from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> International Indigenous Women's Symposiums on Environmental and Reproductive Health (2010 and 2012) and calls for the full implementation of their recommendations including the need to combat environmental violence and address this form of violence within United Nations fora, processes and mechanisms.
7. IITC recognizes that Indigenous women, girls and children experience particularly significant impacts from environmental violence and toxic contaminants and calls for the full and equal participation of Indigenous women in international processes and mechanisms, which address issues related to

environmental violence. These include the processes addressing persistent organic pollutants, pesticides, GMO seeds, bio-piracy, extractive industries, and current negotiations for a globally binding treaty on mercury, among others. IITC supports implementation of Articles 18, 19 and 29 of the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in this regard.

8. IITC will continue to promote respect for and protection of traditional medicinal knowledge, birthing and healing practices of Indigenous women.
9. IITC welcomes the recent report on his recent country visit to the United States of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples James Anaya to the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva which included recognition of the testimony presented to him by participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Indigenous Women Symposium on Environmental and Reproductive Health.
10. IITC notes with appreciation the conclusion of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in his general report to the UN Human Rights Council that a holistic approach to violence against women and girls requires that their rights as Indigenous Peoples and their rights as women and girls be advanced simultaneously, and a recognition of the linkages of the rights of indigenous women and girls with other rights held by Indigenous Peoples.
11. In this regard IITC emphasizes that extractive industries are a source of environmental violence violating a range of rights of Indigenous Peoples. These include **impacts of** toxic contamination on rights to health and subsistence, forced relocation, cultural loss and estrangement, violation of free prior and informed consent and violation of Treaty rights as well as increases in sexual violence and exploitation of women and girls.
12. IITC will follow up on the recommendations from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination (“CERD”) issued on their review of the United States in 2008 and Canada in 2007 and 2012, affirming that such States are responsible for human rights violations committed by corporations they license which operate both within their own countries and in other countries and Indigenous lands and territories.
13. IITC affirms that Treaties, when fully implemented in accordance with their original spirit and intent, are a solution and a tool to ensure the rights and prevent violence against Indigenous women and girls caused by extractive industries, environmental contamination and other assaults on Mother Earth.
14. IITC recognizes with great concern the continuing crisis regarding the exponentially high numbers of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls in Canada, Mexico and other countries. IITC urges States to initiate appropriate inquiries into the disappearances and murders of Indigenous women and girls and protocols for police and justice officials to follow in such instances in particular with respect to combatting racism and discrimination faced by women, girls and their families, communities and Nations. Cases of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls must be investigated and their families supported to the appropriate standards of human rights and Article 22 of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

15. IITC urges such states to ensure full and robust participation within national and regional inquiries for Indigenous women and girls and their organizations by providing public funding to support participation, with representatives of their own choosing, including legal counsel, in any inquiries or any other related commission that may arise.
16. IITC calls upon United Nations mechanisms, including the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Special Rapporteur on Truth, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to consider undertaking a study on murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls.
17. IITC supports the call by Indigenous women of Canada to dedicate October 4<sup>th</sup> each year to holding vigils internationally to commemorate missing and murdered women and girls, demand justice and call for action by States to prevent further violence of this kind.
18. IITC urges the development of strong action plans by States to address the violence and the disadvantaged social and economic conditions of Indigenous women and girls, including poverty, inadequate housing, low educational attainment, inadequate child welfare policies and over-criminalization.
19. Further, IITC undertakes to engage in such UN mechanisms and processes which related to the human rights of women and children, as well as mechanisms and processes which impact such rights, so that our advocacy is expanded beyond the three UN mechanisms dedicated to Indigenous Peoples and issues. IITC shall seek to ensure the Indigenous women's and children's rights are mainstreamed throughout all relevant UN bodies.
20. In this regard, respecting the upcoming review of the United States at the CERD, IITC shall ensure that the issue of the continued removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities into State custody be highlighted in violation of the Indian Child Welfare Act and international law as well as a continuing legacy of Indian Boarding School Policies by the US Government.
21. IITC calls for the full implementation of Article 14 of the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* regarding Indigenous control of educational systems, which includes development of our own curricula and materials for education of our children in our languages and cultures. IITC requests that the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples continue to submit their study on education, including the Treaty right to education, to other UN processes and agencies.
22. With respect to Articles 23 and 24 of the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the health of Indigenous women and children must be ensured in a manner consistent with other articles of the Declaration, in particular with respect to the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent and Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples.
23. IITC will continue to build alliances, strengthen participation and provide opportunities for Indigenous women and girls within its affiliates and among other Indigenous Peoples.

*Adopted by Consensus October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, Santo Domingo Tomaltepec, Mexico*