



International Indian Treaty Council

Working for the Rights and Recognition of Indigenous Peoples

Consejo Internacional de Tratados Indios

Trabajando por el reconocimiento y los derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas

50th Anniversary Conference of the International Indian Treaty Council June 21-24, 2024

Standing Rock Reserve, Oceti Sakowin Treaty Territory

CONFERENCE RESOLUTION ON LANDS, TERRITORIES, NATURAL RESOURCES AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS.

*Affiliates of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), representing over 300 Indigenous Peoples and Nations from North, Central and South America, the Arctic, the Pacific and the Caribbean, participated in IITC's 50th Anniversary Conference in IITC's birthplace, the Standing Rock Nation, Oceti Sakowin Treaty Territory. We came together to defend with one voice our inherent rights as affirmed in the Treaties we concluded with the colonizing settler governments. We reaffirmed and endorsed IITC's founding document adopted in June 1974, "The "**Declaration of Continuing Independence**" which recognized the binding, inviolate international relationship affirmed by these Nation-to-Nation Treaties. Further, we adopted by consensus the following resolution to defend the inherent rights and ways of life of Indigenous Peoples and support the continuity of life for our future generations:*

Taking into consideration the existence of international instruments on Indigenous Peoples' Rights such as ILO Convention 169, the United Nations Declaration and the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which recognize the rights to self-determination, autonomy, self-government, as well as the collective right to lands, territories and natural resources, among others;

Considering that, despite the fact that in several countries of the Americas, many Indigenous Peoples have historical, collective and communal property treaties or titles, as well as other forms of tenure, use and conservation recognized by the colonizing States, their historical titles of possession are constantly violated, and other peoples do not have property titles due to the legal uncertainty in most countries. These violations are committed by municipal and national governments, as well as by national and transnational companies who dispossess, steal and usurp these lands and territories;

In view of the foregoing, IITC and its affiliates from five regions resolve as follows:

- 1) IITC reaffirms our support for the resolution on "Human Rights, Treaty and Environmental Defenders" adopted by consensus at the 44th Anniversary International Treaty Conference in June 2018 in Mato Paha (Bear Butte), South Dakota.
- 2) IITC expresses our indignation, concern and condemnation of the systematic policy

of criminalization of Indigenous Peoples, their organizations and leaders through imprisonment without trial, constant intimidation, assassinations and other types of violence by State agents and police of private companies in several countries around the world, especially in the Americas, for defending their land, territories and natural resources.

- 3) IITC rejects the militarization policy of governments and the use of public force in Indigenous Peoples' territories, under the pretext of facilitating the implementation of megaprojects, land and territory concessions, as well as the operation of extractive and mining companies in Indigenous territories.
- 4) IITC condemns the violations of Indigenous Peoples rights resulting from the imposition of "protected areas" imposed on Indigenous Peoples' territories. These include Ramsar sites, those promoted by the "30x30" Policy of the Convention on Biological Diversity and UNESCO's "World Heritage Sites" program, which violate Indigenous Peoples access to their lands and waters, prohibit their free transit, deny access to their natural resources, destroy their food systems and invalidate their rights to use ceremonial centers and cultural practices, among other violations.
- 5) IITC condemns the policies of States that create "protected areas" as measures of dispossession, theft, usurpation and displacement of Indigenous Peoples in order to grant concessions to private companies for exploration, "green energy" projects, carbon trading, mining including of "transition minerals", establishment of large monoculture planting for economic development such as African Oil Palms or avocado farms. We also recognize that these areas are being used as safe havens for by drug trafficking or other illicit activities, to the great detriment of the Indigenous Peoples. IITC demands that the States comply with the contents of international instruments on the rights of Indigenous Peoples related to these "protected areas".
- 6) IITC reaffirms that Indigenous Peoples are the legitimate and rightful owners and ancestral caretakers of their lands, territories, natural resources. Therefore we demand respect and legal recognition for the collective, historical property titles as well as other forms of property rights, tenure and land use that Indigenous Peoples have legitimately held and practiced for millennia.
- 7) IITC demands compliance by the States with the legal resolutions issued by public institutions regarding indigenous lands and territories, as well as the return of goods, properties, lands, territories and natural resources in accordance with historical property titles.
- 8) IITC demands the return/repatriation/restoration of the persons or human remains of our abducted family members. We demand accountability at all levels of government for the ongoing destruction of Mother Earth that is directly related to the ongoing violence carried out against our Women, children and transgender family members who are missing and murdered.
- 9) IITC demands a halt to repression against Indigenous community members who cross borders to join their families or to carry out their ceremonial practices.
- 10) IITC rejects the racist and discriminatory policies of governments that evade their

responsibility to carry out fair, participatory and legitimate consultations to obtain and ensure the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples. Therefore, we demand the immediate cessation of the operations of extractive and mining companies implemented without consent on Indigenous Peoples lands and territories because they threaten the life and integrity of Indigenous Peoples, in addition to destroying the life of Mother Earth.

- 11) IITC demands that States as well as regional and international human rights mechanisms cease and halt the culture of impunity and take effective measures to protect the rights, freedom and lives of Indigenous defenders and protectors suffering reprisals and repression for asserting their inherent rights to their lands, territories, waters and natural resources.
- 12) IITC also calls for the protection of the rights of Indigenous migrants and refugees, especially children and women who have been forced to leave their homelands due to dispossession and contamination, as well as the effects of the climate crisis.
- 13) IITC calls for the immediate release of indigenous political prisoners who are unjustly denied their freedom. IITC calls for access to justice, including cultural and religious freedom rights, for Indigenous prisoners worldwide.
- 14) IITC demands that the international banking system be required to refrain from financing investments that undermine the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 15) IITC recommends that the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders be encouraged to consider preparing a study dedicated to defenders of the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 16) IITC demands that the States take the best measures to ensure that all forms of media, including social media, stop distributing racist, hateful and violent messages targeting and disparaging Indigenous Peoples.
- 17) IITC welcomes the recent observations and recommendations made to the United States by UNCERD in 2023 in relation to the right to freedom of assembly, to "take all necessary measures to ensure the exercise of the right to peaceful assembly without discrimination on the basis of race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin", and to "investigate allegations of excessive use of force during peaceful protests and of harassment, surveillance and threats against human rights defenders by law enforcement officials," and to develop and adopt legislation and strengthen its measures to protect human rights defenders."
- 18) IITC continues to demand the immediate release by the United States of the world's oldest political prisoner, Leonard Peltier, given his deteriorating health, advanced age and the numerous human rights violations he has suffered during his incarceration, including chronic confinement. At a minimum, he should be transferred to a low security facility near his homeland where he can receive family visits and adequate medical care.
- 19) IITC continues to demand that perpetrators of enforced disappearances, kidnappings and killings, including those committed by traffickers, cartels, private companies and their militia, and organizations linked to governments, be prosecuted and that international oversight be exercised to put an end to these activities.

20)IITC supports the 2019 submission to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (UNWGEID), addressing how the U.S. has never acknowledged, accepted responsibility, nor shown accountability for the many children who did not return home from federal Indian boarding schools.

Adopted by consensus of the participants at the 50th IITC International Conference, Standing Rock, Wakpala, South Dakota, June 24, 2024