



## **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*

December 10, 2021



*IITC's Annual Indigenous Peoples Day Sunrise Gathering on Alcatraz Island, October 11, 2021*

Respectful greetings to our friends, supporters, and allies,

We at the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) first wish to first acknowledge the importance of today as International Human Rights Day! We also want to thank you for being human rights advocates, defenders, and supporters. This past year, although remaining a challenge due to the pandemic, has shown us the resiliency of our Peoples. We continued to respond to the ongoing call to action and justice, delivering vital information to our Peoples and bringing them together to strengthen and empower our collective work both in-person and virtually. We hope that you can join us in partnership to support our efforts.

Here are some of the highlights of this past year's achievements:

- We were excited to be able to support unity, cultural sharing, and truth in history through our two Annual Sunrise Gatherings on Alcatraz Island in October and November with over 5,000 total participants, especially after COVID precautions severely limited community attendance in 2020.



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- IITC also appreciated the opportunity to send a delegation to the 26th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), joining the global Indigenous movement's call for the rights of Indigenous Peoples to be recognized in this process. Although we shared the disappointment of other Indigenous delegations when the Countries' commitments still fell short of what is required to adequately address the climate crisis, we also saw some signs of progress. Perhaps the most historic achievement at COP 26 was the formal participation of 28 traditional Indigenous knowledge holders, including elders, youth, women, food producers, and cultural practitioners from around the world. They shared knowledge and experiences with each other in a closed session, and then met with the State Parties (governments) to present their recommendations and solutions. Chris Honahnie, a traditional Hopi farmer and IITC's Food Sovereignty Program Co-coordinator was selected to participate as a youth knowledge holder from North America. I was also very honored to be one of the 3 co-leads for this activity in my role as the Indigenous representative from North America on the Facilitative working group for the UNFCCC's Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform.
  
- In 2020, IITC reaffirmed its commitment to addressing the ongoing impacts of mercury. After recently updating the award-winning documentary "Gold, Greed & Genocide: 20 Years Later", IITC began laying the groundwork to organize a multi-regional Mercury Symposium to bring together Indigenous Peoples from mercury impacted communities. In November, IITC hosted the 1st of a 3-part webinar series, titled "What is Mercury?". In 2022, IITC will launch an Indigenous Peoples' Mercury Project to work for the reduction and eventual elimination of exposure to mercury for Indigenous Peoples, communities, and families, raise awareness about its harmful health impacts, advocate for clean-up of contaminated sites, and build alliances for to advance effective participation at all levels.
  
- IITC's Food Sovereignty program continued to deepen its alliance with traditional farmers from the Tohono O'odham, Yaqui, Hopi, and Dine (Navajo) Nations in Arizona and Northern Mexico to repatriate/repatriate and share Native seeds, including over 20 varieties of traditional corn, beans, and squash, to build and strengthen Indigenous community resilience, seed sovereignty, and food independence in response to both climate change and the ongoing pandemic. We were also able to support youth farming projects and seed repositories to ensure sustainability and continuity of this work into the future.



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In 2022 we look forward to continuing to build on our local, national, and international advances to ensure that Indigenous Peoples are able to speak for and represent themselves in key areas including Food Sovereignty, Treaty Rights, Climate Change, protection of biodiversity, repatriation of sacred items, and the reduction and elimination of harmful environmental toxins.

We respectfully ask you to partner with us by making a year-end tax-deductible donation to IITC. You can make a secure online contribution via the “Donate” button at <http://www.iitc.org/support-our-work/> or mail a check to IITC, 100 E. Ajo Way, Tucson, Arizona 85713. All contributions – large or small – are greatly appreciated! Please share this appeal with all who may want to support IITC’s work to defend the rights, cultures, and ways of life of Indigenous Peoples.

On behalf of the IITC, we are all very grateful for your support and wish you and your family good health and many blessings for the coming year.

*Andrea Carmen*

Andrea Carmen, Executive Director,  
International Indian Treaty Council



*Youth Indigenous youth knowledge-holders roundtable at COP 26*