



**INTERNATIONAL INDIAN TREATY COUNCIL  
42<sup>nd</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> – 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2016  
Pu'uhonua Village, Waimanalo, Oahu Hawaii**

**Resolution on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Sacred Connection to Water**

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

1. **IITC reaffirms** the Treaty Conference “Resolution on the Protection of the Environmental and Biodiversity: Climate Change, Mining, Oil, Water and Natural Resources: Toxics and Pesticides and the Protection of Sacred Sites and Forests” adopted in Ustupu Panama in 2009; the “Resolution on Land, Territories and Natural Resources, Treaties, Support for Traditional Governments and Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” also adopted in Ustupu Panama in 2009; and the “Resolution on Environmental Toxics, Women’s Reproductive Health and Extractive Industries: Acknowledging Indigenous Peoples Sacred Connection to Water” adopted at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Treaty Conference at Okemah Oklahoma in September 2014.
2. **IITC further reaffirms and emphasizes** that as Indigenous Peoples our relationship with land, water, plants, birds, insects and animals is the fundamental physical, cultural and spiritual basis for our existence. Our relationship to our Mother Earth requires us to be active stewards for the benefit of all fresh water and oceans to ensure the survival of present and future generations of all living things. We assert our role as caretakers of Water and our rights to defend and ensure its protection, availability and quality.
3. **IITC further reaffirms** our inherent responsibility as human beings to ensure the best quality of water for the survival of all living things on this Earth, and stand united to follow and implement our knowledge and traditional laws, and exercise our right of self-determination to protect the waters rights, thereby protecting human and all life that is dependent on water for their existence.
4. **IITC denounces** the ongoing violation, desecration and destruction of water ways, sacred sites, places of cultural and spiritual significance, including traditional food gathering and production areas, resulting from urbanization, extractive industries, proliferation of persistent organic pollutants, pesticides, mercury contamination, GMO seeds and other forms of unsustainable development;
5. **IITC commits** to explore avenues of advocacy within the United Nations regarding the protection of sacred Water including seas, oceans, rivers, springs and other bodies of water, including all water within the

earth and throughout the atmosphere as an entity of sacred, cultural and spiritual significance to Indigenous Peoples.

6. **IITC recognizes** that traditional food sources such as wild rice for the Anishinaabeg are inextricably linked to water and the integrity of this living being is persistently compromised by coal-fired power plant emissions, sulfide and iron-ore mining, natural gas fracking and other extractive industries. We are especially concerned that tens of thousands of old and abandoned mines spill toxic wastes contaminated with heavy metals into the rivers, streams and ground water systems upon which Indigenous Peoples, and the plants and animals that sustain them, depend.

7. **IITC confirms** that reclamation of these old mines is complicated by State policies and archaic mining legislation like the US General Mining Act of 1872 which continue to allow mining companies to extract minerals with no consideration for damage to Mother Earth, violate human rights and be free of liability for negative impacts.

8. **IITC opposed** the privatization, commodification, leasing, degradation of water quality and use and wide-spread appropriation of water without the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous People affected by these actions and violations to their right to water such as corporations like Nestle' who have stolen and sold water;

9. **IITC further opposes** State policies and legal systems that favor privatization and or/industrialize the use of water over subsistence and ceremonial use by Indigenous Peoples, limit access and control to traditional lands, territories and natural resources including water, and violate the Treaty Right to Water as well as inherent beliefs affirming that Water is a living being;

10. **IITC commits** to continue defending the collective and Treaty rights of Indigenous Peoples including the right to water and supports the protection, defense and fulfillment of rights established in Treaties and agreements between the Indigenous Peoples and States regarding the quantity and percentages of non-controlled water designated to them as reinforced by Article 37 on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Article 24 of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

11. **IITC finally recognizes** that water is a cross cutting issue integral to all of its work for and on behalf of Indigenous Peoples **and therefore commits** to move water forward as a priority and to continue its inclusion in all areas of its program work.

**Adopted by consensus September 11<sup>th</sup> 2016,  
Waimanalo, Hawaii**