



*For Immediate Release, May 17, 2021*

## **The International Indian Treaty Council Calls on Israel, the Biden Administration and the World Community to Support the Rights of the Palestinian People**



Palestinian supporters fly their flag in Yelamu, Ohlone Territory (San Francisco California), on Alcatraz Island at IITC's Indigenous Peoples Day Sunrise Gathering, October 2019. IITC Photo

**Minneapolis, Minnesota:** The International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) is an organization of Indigenous Peoples from North, Central, South America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific working for the Sovereignty and Self Determination of Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and protection of Indigenous Rights, Treaties, Traditional Cultures, and Sacred Lands.

IITC has a longstanding history of support for the Palestinian People. We consider the ongoing and current violence occurring in Israel and occupied Palestine to be a direct result of the rights of Palestinians not being respected and protected, in particular their right to self-determination under international law, including the continued proliferation of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. IITC condemns the recent threat of forced displacement of Palestinian residents of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and the violent raid by Israeli security forces on the Al Aqsa Mosque in occupied East Jerusalem are the most recent examples, sparking the current wave of violence including an unprecedented level of Israeli aerial, naval and ground attacks on Gaza, claiming the lives of at least 192 Palestinians, including 58 children. 10 people have been killed in Israel, including 2 children, by Palestinian armed groups' missiles launched from Gaza.



IITC Board member Lisa Bellanger, Leech Lake Ojibwe/Dakota, expressed her outrage and concern for the victims of the violence from her home in Minneapolis, Minnesota. “As a mother and grandmother, I am horrified to see weapons of war killing innocent children, babies, while those who have the greatest powers in the world watch and do nothing.”

“The world is watching the continuing forced and violent dispossession of Palestinians by Israel,” said international human rights lawyer and Adalah Justice Project Board Chair Jamil Dakwar. Reiterating the long-standing solidarity between Indigenous Peoples of North America and the Palestinian People in light of the current crisis, Dakwar added: “We remain steadfast and stand in gratitude and solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island and around the globe to demand justice and decolonization of our lands”. As Director of the American Civil Liberties Union’s Human Rights Program, Dakwar participated in human rights hearings organized by the IITC on the Standing Rock Reservation in January 2017 with Pavel Sulyandziga, then Chairman of the United Nations Working Group on the issue of Human Rights, Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises. He also co-organized an emergency hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in March 2017 where IITC was invited to present this critical situation.

IITC calls upon Israel and all States to fully implement their international human rights and humanitarian law obligations, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ affirmation that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world”. IITC calls on Israel to respect its obligations under the Geneva Convention including the prohibition against the targeting of civilians, and on the Biden Administration in the United States to take serious measures to hold Israel accountable for its human rights violations. We also call on the U.S. Administration and Congress to support the United Nations resolution for an immediate cease-fire and to suspend sending any military aid or equipment to Israel that is being used to violate the human rights of the Palestinian People, their families, and children.

IITC was founded in 1974 as a voice for Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations. In 1977, IITC became the first Indigenous Peoples’ organization to be recognized as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with Consultative Status to the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council. In 2011, IITC was the first to be upgraded to General Consultative Status in recognition of its active participation in a wide range of international bodies and processes to defend the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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