



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

## The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #SAC-21-023

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### NCAI HEADQUARTERS

1516 P Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.466.7767  
202.466.7797 fax  
www.ncai.org

### **TITLE: Calling on the United States to Take Action to Achieve the Objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, NCAI has been actively involved in advancing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) for many years; and

**WHEREAS**, UNDRIP is an historic recognition of inherent rights intended to guard against the genocide, the theft of lands and resources, the discrimination, and the political exclusion that Tribal Nations and many other Indigenous Peoples have suffered—and too often continue to suffer today; and

**WHEREAS**, UNDRIP contains the “minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world”; and

**WHEREAS**, NCAI believes that implementation of UNDRIP is critical for protecting and furthering the rights of Indigenous Peoples both domestically and internationally; and

**WHEREAS**, members of NCAI, as Indigenous Nations and individuals, will greatly benefit if the principles of UNDRIP are implemented by the United States, the individual states, and other governments; and

**WHEREAS**, the United Nations General Assembly adopted UNDRIP in 2007, the United States formally endorsed UNDRIP in 2010, President Obama announced US Support of UNDRIP in the Whitehouse summit with the leaders of Tribal Nations on December 16, 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States joined unanimously with all 193 Member States of the United Nations General Assembly in support of G.A. Resolution A/RES/69/2, adopting the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples and committing “to achieve the ends of the Declaration” in 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States committed to “taking, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, appropriate measures at the national level, including legislative, policy and administrative measures, to achieve the ends of the Declaration and to promote awareness of it among all sectors of society, including members of legislatures, the judiciary and the civil service”; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States has committed “to cooperating with Indigenous Peoples, through their own representative institutions, to develop and implement national action plans, strategies or other measures, where relevant, to achieve the ends of the Declaration”; and

**WHEREAS**, much work remains to be done to achieve the ends of UNDRIP, and the United States’ leadership in human rights makes realization of these commitments an important objective in national policy and international diplomacy.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that in furtherance of the United States’ existing commitments described above, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) calls on the President of the United States to take action to achieve the ends of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in cooperation and consultation with Indigenous Peoples, as follows:

- (1) Develop a national action plan for achieving the ends of UNDRIP and apply it to US law and policy, including an immediate call for all federal departments and agencies to issue policies and internal guidance to achieve the ends of UNDRIP, and to report annually on their progress;
- (2) Appoint an Ambassador (or Special Envoy) for Global Indigenous Affairs to serve as head of mission and coordinate all international engagements by the United States in matters regarding Indigenous Affairs, including at the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy with other national governments; and
- (3) Support the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, through their own Tribal Nations, in all United Nations bodies, including but not limited to the General Assembly, Human Rights Council, UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, World Health Organization, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and other international and regional forums, including the Organization of American States; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2021 Annual Conference of the National Congress of American Indians, held October 11-14, 2021, with a quorum present.



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Fawn Sharp, President

**ATTEST:**



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Aaron A. Payment, Recording Secretary