

# Intercontinental Indigenous Peoples' Delegation

*Inaugural Women's Assembly at the 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions*

Inaugural Women's Assembly  
Parliament of the World's Religions  
October 14-19, 2015  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Greetings,

The members of this delegation convey our gratitude to the Parliament of the World's Religions and all of the volunteers dedicated to this Inaugural Women's Assembly and related programming at the 2015 Parliament. We are looking forward to engaging with the other indigenous delegates and sharing our traditional ways with all participants. This feminine confluence will become a sacred space for listening and dialogue in which thousands of diverse faith based people will share their knowledge, remember their common values and pledge to live in harmony with the Web of Life<sup>1</sup>. Our message to the Parliament:

*We, the Human Beings, have been given the Original Instructions (guiding principles<sup>2</sup>) on how to live in harmony with the Natural Law. To reclaim the heart of our humanity we must change our values<sup>3</sup> and shift our consciousness and embrace The Web of Life, the sacred interconnectedness of Creator's gifts - all Life on Earth. All systems and actions are interdependent; the world's diverse Indigenous Peoples have lived in harmony and in stewardship of our Mother Earth for millennia, in our traditional ways Life and Spirit are not separate. We understand that Creator is present in every aspect of the world that surrounds us; we are bound by the laws of Nature.<sup>4</sup> It is all about sharing and responsibility; we understand that we must give thanks, enjoy life and take only what we need. We acknowledge the responsibility for today's decisions on behalf of the 7<sup>th</sup> generation coming; only then will we ourselves have peace. Through the power of good minds, humanity has the power to modify what is happening in this world before it is too late.<sup>5</sup>*

As Pope Francis stated in his recent Eco-Encyclical, "...it is essential to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions...We require a new and universal solidarity...everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation. All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."<sup>6</sup> Bound by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,<sup>7</sup> the Indigenous Peoples have a long history with the Parliament.<sup>8,9</sup> Peace is dynamic and requires great effort of spirit and mind to attain unity. Leaders of peace must step forward and set the groundwork for a paradigm change in the way the human species approaches its relationship with the Earth.<sup>10</sup> Now is the time for us to pull together, as real human beings, in harmony with all Life.

All our relations.

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<sup>1</sup> Summary from conversations with Ilarion Mercurieff, Aleut messenger.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix A. "Indigenous Delegation Guiding Principles" by Milt Markewitz.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix B. "VALUE CHANGE FOR SURVIVAL." The Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth

<sup>4</sup> Summary from conversations with Ilarion Mercurieff, Aleut messenger.

<sup>5</sup> Comments by Oren Lyons borrowed from this video: <http://tinyurl.com/oatd9cw>

<sup>6</sup> Appendix C. POPE FRANCIS, Eco-Encyclical. <http://tinyurl.com/o6sowft>

<sup>7</sup> Appendix D. UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

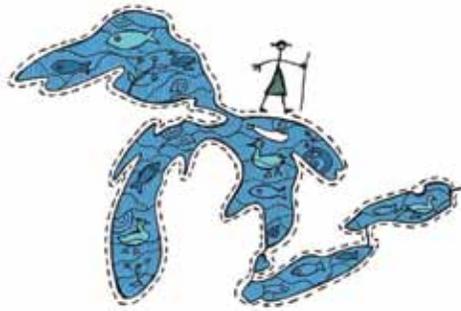
<sup>8</sup> Appendix E. Indigenous Peoples' DECLARATION OF VISION. Parliament of the World's Religions. Chicago 1993

<sup>9</sup> Appendix F. Parliament of World Religions, Melbourne 2009. Indigenous Peoples Statement

<sup>10</sup> Appendix G. Communiqué #20. Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth. [www.twocircles.org](http://www.twocircles.org)

### Josephine Mandamin “The Water Walker”, Anishinaabekwe. Ontario

With a copper pail of water in one hand and a staff in the other, Josephine Mandamin, an Anishinaabekwe grandmother from Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada led a sacred walk, traversing over 10,900 miles around all five Great Lakes and beyond;



she is known as a “water walker.” We have a duty,” she says. “The world has a duty to protect our Mother Earth and her life blood – our life blood – the water.” Discussion is taking place on how best to honor and protect the sacred source of all life, water, at the Parliament of World Religions Conference 2015.



### Be'sha Blondin, Sahtu Dene. Northwest Territories

Sahtu Dene elder, medicine woman and healer. Northwest Territories-Yukon, Canada

Founder of Northern ICE and ICE ([www.ice-network.ca](http://www.ice-network.ca)), Be'sha Blondin is a recognized medicine woman from the NWT. From an early age, she learned about the Dene Way of life and developed her gifts through the teachings of the Elders and her parents on the east arm of Great Bear Lake. She became an environmentalist of the land, water, air and animals. As a medicine woman, she worked in the health, social and justice systems. Be'sha has helped people experience growth by changing people's attitude about themselves and the world around them by offering seminars, presentations, workshops, counselling and training in the NWT, Yukon, across Canada and around the world. Northern ICE, PO Box 362, Yellowknife, NT X1A2N3 (867) 873-2092 [northern+ice@northwestel.net](mailto:northern+ice@northwestel.net) <http://www.northernicenwt.org/>

### Geraldine Ann Patrick Encina, Otomi-Hñahñu, Mexico

Geraldine is a Scholars in Residence at the Center for Earth Ethics: Union Theological Seminary, New York City, NY She is a member of the Otomi-Hñahñu Regional Council in Mexico. She is an in-depth researcher into the ancestral ways of conceiving cycles and measuring time in Mesoamerica. Geraldine brings extensive knowledge of astronomical implications that led the Otomi and Maya to pick 2012-2013 as the time for the closing and opening of great cycles. Geraldine Patrick is a Doctor in Social Sciences, specialized in Ethnoecology by El Colegio Mexiquense, and is currently doing a Postdoctoral Research on Mesoamerican Astronomy and Calendrics at UNAM. She is a four-year Member of the 'Seminar of Archaeoastronomy' at ENAH-UNAM, a Founding Member of the 'Seminar of Mesoamerican Astronomy' at the Institute of Astronomy at UNAM, and is also a Founding Member of CONACYT Network "Ethnoecology and Biocultural Heritage".



### Alberta Iron Cloud Miller, Crow-Oglala Lakota. Porcupine, SD

Alberta Iron Cloud Miller is a devoted grandmother to her extended family, community leader and sister-friend to all who know her. Her passion is to utilize her education and experience as an advocate for the improvement of community health and wellness and to create safety in Native American communities for children and families utilizing a cultural approach shared by indigenous communities. She has provided strong management and consultant skills to Native American communities, reservation schools, private non-profit organizations and tribal justice agencies. Alberta earned her Master's Degree in Adult, Community and Higher Education at MSU Bozeman and has completed all but her dissertation for her Ed.D. in Education. Through a western educational process and education in the traditional native ways, she has developed strong skills in participatory strategic planning; grant writing; pro-

gram development and planning; qualitative research methodologies; conflict resolution and critical thinking for reflective decision making. Alberta has 16 combined years of program management and leadership and an extensive legal background. In 2009 she served on Attorney General Eric Holder's panel to address tribal justice initiatives in Indian Country representing the Sioux Tribes. Alberta Iron Cloud Miller is the former Attorney General Oglala Sioux Tribe, Pine Ridge, S.D. and is currently the coordinator for the Tawacin Ohokila Substance Abuse Prevention, Oglala Sioux Tribe at Pine Ridge, S.D.; she lives a lifestyle that is drug and alcohol free and maintains positive physical, mental and emotional health.

Alberta and her husband Jim Miller, a Lakota Spiritual Leader and Vietnam veteran, reside with their family in Porcupine, South Dakota. In 1994, Jim began the Dakota 38+2 Memorial Ride to honor all of the ancestors who suffered horribly as a result of the genocidal policies of the federal government and other organizations. The inspiration for the award winning documentary, *Dakota 38*, considered a sacred ceremony is freely shared online at <http://smoothfeather.org/dakota38/>.



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**Josette Peltier, Lakota/Dakota. Flandreau, SD**

Josette has dedicated her life to her family and Native youth. As a grandmother and former police officer who worked the streets of urban and rural communities, she is now a Home Living Assistant at the Flandreau Indian School. Josette is the resident mother to students who need special nurturing and guidance at the off-reservation Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school serving students in grades 9-12. Anchored in her traditional Lakota ways, Josette is known for her kindness, wisdom and resilience, one who always listens deeply to anyone regardless of the external circumstances; she instills confidence in the Native youth who are emerging as leaders of their people. Josette and many other tribal leaders are demonstrating that though they have experienced generations of genocide and trauma, those experiences do not define who they are; each individual retains the dignity, wisdom and resilience of their ancestors

who guide them in their lives today.

Since 1994, Josette has been instrumental in the continuing success of the 300 mile long Dakota 38+2 Memorial Ride, inspired by her brother Jim Miller, to honor all of the ancestors who suffered horribly as a result of the genocidal policies of the federal government and other organizations. The award winning documentary *Dakota 38* continues to spread the message of reconciliation through love with people around the world. <http://smoothfeather.org/dakota38/>



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**Lisa Pewenofkit-Powers, Numunu (Comanche),  
Tulalip, Washington, USA**

Lisa is Numunu - traditional name for the Comanche Nation and of Irish decent. She has participated in the Traditional Elder and Youth Circle gatherings since the 1970's; the longest lived Native Elder and Youth organization in the country. Through prophecy they work with the younger generation to help them become more proactive and better prepared to face this future. It is imperative that Indigenous knowledge is shared with non-Natives to help us awaken from the nightmare before it's too late. "Water is life!" <http://tinyurl.com/ptekxy8>

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**Arleen Adams, Salish Kootenai, Montana, USA**

Salish Elder, Arlee, Montana

Arleen Adams, aka Thunder Sparks, is Salish Kootenai from the Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes of Montana and a teacher in the Nkwusm Salish Language Institute in Arlee. She is a member of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth. Arleen is a grandmother, respected Salish culture expert and mentor to her people, and an environmental activist protecting Creator's sacred gifts and earned the first Native American Studies degree from the University of Montana. As the Board Chair of the International Traditional Games Society she carries her educational and cultural knowledge gained in life deep in her heart. Arleen speaks around the country to bring awareness to the Indigenous Peoples' timeless ways of knowing and living in harmony with Nature and why it is important to accept guidance from our ancient relatives as we face the realities of climate change.



**Bibiana Ancheta, Tulalip, Tulalip, Washington, USA**

Bibiana grew up listening and learning from the elders in the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth and is actively engaged in cultural traditions with her mother Lisa Pewenofkit-Powers and sister Darkfeather Ancheta. Bibiana was a participant in the 2008 North America Region Indigenous Peoples Caucus Preparatory Meeting for the Seventh Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in Vancouver, B.C. and continues to work with that group. In 2011 she joined Josephine Mandamin on the Mother Earth Water Walk, helping carry water on the Pacific coast at Olympia to Montana leg of the journey. This walk continues to inspire many similar spiritual events to take action and bring attention to the condition

of the water and to help heal it. Bibiana assisted her friend Matika Wilbur with her "Project 562" of photographing citizens of each federally recognized tribe in the United States. (There are now 566 tribes).



**Pauline Matt, Blackfeet, Browning, Montana**

Pauline Matt dreamed that the water was dying and that she had the power to stop it. Her dream was not far from the truth, with fracking arriving on the Blackfeet Indian Nation and adjacent to Glacier National Park in Montana. Instead of allowing the dream to paralyze her, she kept herself moving – literally – by organizing the six-day, 80-mile Chief Mountain Water Walk to help focus the eyes of the nation on this corner of Montana. Perhaps most importantly, Pauline knew that walking from Chief Mountain to Heart Butte, two sacred sites of her Blackfeet Indian Nation, would forever change the way she and her fellow walkers look at the earth. Hers was a journey to connect to a sacred landscape, and to reconnect an entire culture, one deliberate step at a

time. Carrying a rawhide bag of water from a spring at Heart Butte, Pauline and her fellow walkers greeted each morning by burning sweetgrass and offering prayers to the dawn. The days felt much the same – an unremitting rhythm of feet on sun-scorched pavement that unfolded at a ceaseless 3 m.p.h. Osprey, bears, bald eagles, moose, elk, and other creatures appeared along the way, and the ever-shifting views were always awe-inspiring. The walkers marched their 80 miles in six August days, but that week represents only the beginning of their journey. The ongoing debate over fracking is one that is playing out across the most cherished sites of our entire country. (<http://parkadvocate.org/walking-to-protect-glaciers-water/>) Pauline is an entrepreneur, owner of Red Root Herbs, offering traditional foods, herbal teas, salves, soaps and various remedies for health and healing. Documentary filmmaker Drew Heskett featured Pauline in the film "We Are The Land" available at <http://www.drewheskett.com/>

### **Alaina Buffalo Spirit, Northern Cheyenne. Montana**

Alaina Buffalo Spirit is from the So'taa'ee band of the Northern Cheyenne Nation and grew up in a traditional family near Birney, Montana; she continues to participate in her traditional culture with her family and grandchildren.

A distinguished artist, Alaina's artwork honors the women that made a difference in her life. Among the women who most influenced her work are her mother, the late Ellen Kaline; her grandmother, the late Annie Medicine Bull; and her aunt, the late Katie Medicine Bull. She was raised by her parents, Burt and Ellen (Kaline) Medicine Bull, along the banks of the beautiful Tongue River valley near Birney, Montana. Alaina has chosen to use the name "Buffalo Spirit, the correct interpretation of her grandfather's last name.

Alaina Buffalo Spirit's artwork is based on the traditional ledger art, originated by Indian warriors incarcerated during the 1800s. Using the materials that were available to them, these warrior artists recorded their stories through heraldic images made on the ledger paper issued by the government for tallying and record-keeping. Their images depicted life on the Plains, both before and during the times of conflict. Inspired by these earlier artists, Ms. Buffalo Spirit uses ledger paper made during this period in much of her work, which portrays the role of women in Cheyenne society. <http://tinyurl.com/p4h4j5n>

A well-known advocate for her people, Alaina is fully committed and engaged in efforts to protect her homelands and all the water and Life on Mother Earth. She has joined other members of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, local ranchers, and communities all along the rail route to the Pacific coast, in opposing the Tongue River Railroad and others proposing new coal mines and coal ports in the Northwest. The proposed Tongue River Railroad would slither near her family's land in its 89-mile long track along the Tongue River Valley to haul coal bound for China.



### **Ta'Kaiya Blaney, Sliammon First Nation. British Columbia**

Ta'kaiya Blaney (Tla'amin) is a singer, songwriter, actor and Native Children's Survival (NCS) Youth Ambassador.

At the young age of 10, Ta'kaiya's first music release and music video *Shallow Waters* brought her national acclaim and earned her multiple awards and cultural honors. Ta'kaiya starred in several award-winning short films depicting the role of a First Nations child taken from her traditional home and put into governmental residential schools run by the church. Ta'kaiya has received two Leo Award nominations for best actress by the British Columbia film and television industry.

Over the past few years Ta'kaiya has performed and spoken at grass-roots Indigenous gatherings and rallies, and at United Nations forums across the globe, including the TUNZA United Nations Children and Youth Conference on the Environment in Bandung, Indonesia in 2011, the United Nations Rio+20 Conference on the Environment in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2012, and the United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues, New York City, New York in 2013. In 2014, at the age of 13, on behalf of NCS Ta'kaiya presented an intervention establishing the NCS "Indigenous Children's Fund" at United Nations Headquarters in New York City. Ta'kaiya was also the youngest keynote speaker for Powershift at Pittsburg and Powershift at Victoria in 2014. Ta'kaiya has been featured in several television programs, including the 2015 HBO Documentary series **Saving My Tomorrow**. Her latest single and music video *Earth Revolution* will have its premier during COP21 - The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, France in December of 2015.

*"I advocate changing not only the human condition, but also in the condition of our planet. In my culture it's a fact, and an understanding of life, that everything is connected, and we were put on this earth to be stewards and caretakers of the environment."* - Tak'aiya Blaney

For more information: [www.takaiyablaney.com](http://www.takaiyablaney.com)



### **Mindhahi Crescencio Bastida Muñoz, Otomi, Mexico**

Mindhahi is a Scholars in Residence at the Center for Earth Ethics: Union Theological Seminary, New York City, NY. He is General Coordinator of the Otomi Alto Lerma Regional Council in Mexico, advisor to the Provost of UAM-Unidad Lerma, President of the Mexican Council on Sustainable Development and General Coordinator of the Otomi del Alto Lerma Regional Council. He was official Delegate of Mexico to the World Summit of Johannesburg and Indigenous Peoples Delegate at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Mindahi has written extensively on the relationship between the State and Indigenous Peoples, intercultural education, intellectual property rights, and associated traditional knowledge, among other topics. In 2013, he was elected as Steering

Committee member of the IPCC (Indigenous Peoples' Biocultural Climate Change Assessment Initiative).

### **Mama Luis, Kogi and son Jorge Luis Dib DiazGranados, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in Colombia**

The Kogi are descendants of the Tiarona culture, an advanced ancient civilization which flourished before the times of the Spanish conquest. They continue to live much the same as the Tiarona did long ago. Mama Luis and Jorge will share their urgent messages from Mother Earth. "We are now living outside of the laws of nature where nature is now turning against man and becoming the enemy. Climate change is the consequence of the fact that man is operating outside the laws of life and laws of nature, law of the balance of the world. And doing so will destroy the balance." --Kogi



### **Ilarion Mercurieff, Aleut. Alaska, USA**

Aleut elder Ilarion Mercurieff is an indigenous messenger and teacher. Indigenous wisdom keepers throughout the western hemisphere and other parts of the world have shared their wisdom, knowledge and prophecies with him, asking him to share their words with others. Issues related to cultural and community wellness, traditional ways of living, elder wisdom, and the environment are close to his heart. He recently chaired the Indigenous knowledge sessions at the Global Summit of Indigenous Peoples on Climate Change, attended by indigenous representatives from 80 nations. He has almost four decades of experience serving his people, the Aleuts of the Pribilof Islands and other Alaska Native peoples in a number of capacities. Mercurieff is co-founder and former chairman of the Alaska Indigenous Council on Marine Mammals; former chairman of the Nature Conservancy, Alaska chapter; former co-director of the Native American Fish and



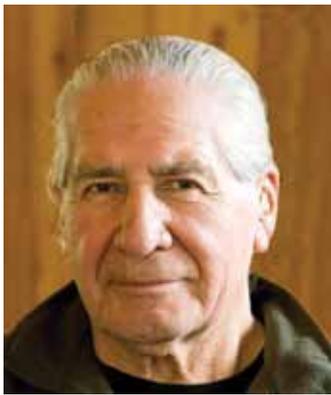
Wildlife Society, Alaska chapter; as well as co-founder of the International Bering Sea Forum, the Alaska Forum on the Environment, and the Alaska Oceans Network. He served as chairperson for the Alaska Sanitation Taskforce and co-chair of the Federal/State Taskforce on Rural Sanitation to bring support for running water and flush toilets to over one hundred Alaska Native communities. He served on the National Research Council Committee on the Bering Sea Ecosystem and was one of four Native Americans to present at the White House Conference on the Oceans during the Clinton administration. Mercurieff was selected by Aleut leaders to be part of a one-hour Discovery Channel documentary about the history and spiritual aspects of Aleuts, which aired in 2001.

### **Francois Paulette, Dene Suline. Alberta & Northwest Territories**

Francois Paulette, a Dene Suline elder and member of the Smith's Landing Treaty 8 First Nation, lives 200 miles downstream from the tar sands mining industry site in Alberta, Canada. Francois Paulette survived the residential school system before going on to become the youngest Chief in the NWT Indian Brotherhood in 1971. In 1972, along with sixteen other chiefs from the Mackenzie Valley, he challenged the Crown to recognize treaty and aboriginal rights and title to over 450,000 square miles of land in the historic Paulette case. He remains a passionate and outspoken advocate of treaty and aboriginal rights in all matters affecting his people, and is recognized in the courts as an expert witness on historic treaties. Francois is currently the Dene Nation Elder Representative to the Assembly of First Nations representing 630 First Nations across Canada. Francois travels the world educating about the Tar Sands impact on climate change, the Mackenzie River-Arctic Ocean watershed and Peoples of Northern Canada. Francois most recent keynote addresses were at the IASC International Association for the Study of the Commons 2015 Conference in Edmonton, AB and the 16th International Congress on Circumpolar Health, Focus on Future Health and Wellbeing, held in Oulu and Rooka, Finland June 2015.



Francois lives a traditional Dene life and is a fluent speaker of his ancient Dene language and shares the traditional knowledge derived from his close relationship with the land. He was a founding member and Chairman of the Dene Cultural Institute, and continues to serve as an interpreter of traditional knowledge and a facilitator of cross-cultural understanding. As a collaborator on a number of Canadian and international documentary films, he has helped to increase public understanding of the Dene way of life (Dene Ch'anie), and has participated in ecumenical forums, including the Parliament of World Religions, to promote understanding of the spiritual world of the Dene. Francois lives along the great Slave River on the border of Alberta and Northwest Territories with wife Lesley Paulette founder of the Fort Smith Health and Social Services Midwifery Program, lovingly referred to as the 'Grandmother of the Northwest Territories. More Information: <http://dechinta.ca/><http://tinyurl.com/pkyjc2z>.



### **Oren Lyons, Haudenosaunee. Six Nations. New York**

Joagquisho, Traditional Faithkeeper of the Turtle Clan, and a member of the Onondaga Nation Council of Chiefs of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy (the Haudenosaunee).

Oren is a clear, persistent and respected voice for Indigenous peoples throughout the world. His perspective is known and valued by business leaders, environmentalists, artists, academics, politicians, spiritual leaders, entertainers, and athletes from around the world. He is equally well known to traditional leaders among numerous Indigenous communities. His message of peace proclaims that human beings can no longer afford to act irresponsibly toward Creation; nor can peoples of the modern world continue to disregard the messages emanating from Indigenous Peoples.

Oren is an elder of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth.

Please learn more from videos with Oren sponsored by the 7th Generation Fund, Green Cross Sweden, Bill Moyers and the Sacred Land Film Project:

Message from the Indigenous Peoples of the World - <https://goo.gl/wWBDQl>

Message to Indian friends and Indian Nations - <https://goo.gl/TRss5g>

Oren at the United Nations in 2007 speaking on climate change - <https://goo.gl/MestMu>

Water if Life - <https://goo.gl/U5ZqtO>

On the Doctrine of Discovery - <https://goo.gl/ppNYfg>

"We Are Part of The Earth" - <https://goo.gl/mdRqVW0>

Change Your Enemy: "On the Wizard of Oz" and Mother Nature - <https://goo.gl/2LAedj>

Interview with Bill Moyers: <https://vimeo.com/63824649>

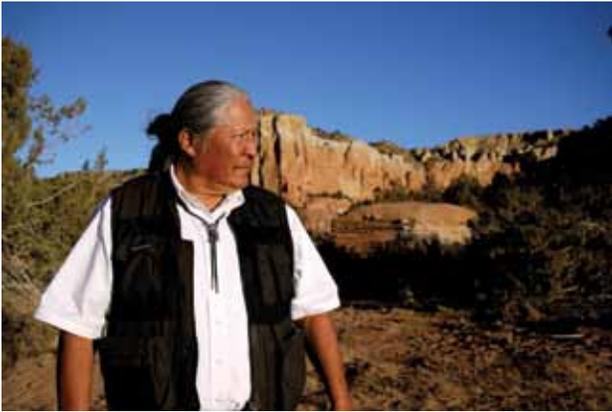


Photo by Dana Gluckstein

### **Danny Blackgoat, Diné. Arizona, USA**

Big Mountain Dine (Navaho) elder. Big Mountain, Arizona.

Danny is a linguist, Dine (Navaho) language educator, community organizer, and a life-long resister of forced relocation and member of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth. Since 1974, federal relocation policy has forced 14,000 Dine' (Navaho) people from their ancestral homeland in Arizona. This genocidal policy was crafted by government agents and energy company representatives in order to gain access to the mineral resources of Black Mesa - billions of tons of coal, uranium and natural gas.

For over 30 years, traditional Dine' at Black Mesa

have lived in resistance, steadfastly refusing to relocate as strip-mines rip apart their sacred lands and power generation plants poison the desert air.

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### **Arnold Thomas, Shoshone-Paiute. Utah**

Suicide may still be a hush-hush topic for many Indian people, but it's not for Arnold Thomas, Shoshone-Paiute. Thomas, who tried to commit suicide in 1988, when he was 18—and miraculously survived—has plenty to say about it. In fact, that is what he has done for most of the past 25 years. Through his Salt Lake City-based firm, White Buffalo Knife Consulting, he has traveled to dozens of tribal communities in the United States and Canada to speak about his attempted suicide, how it disfigured him and left him blind, and his healing journey, anchored by his traditional cultural ways. Arnold shares his inspirational story to some 20,000 to 30,000 people every year, hoping to encourage more open communication of a problem that touches too many Indian youths. Arnold is ordained as the first chaplain from the Native faith traditions with the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, and he is a chaplain for the Veterans Administration where he helps veterans find their way back from war. He is also engaged in protecting the Natural World, the world's water and shares knowledge about his Shoshone-Paiute traditional ways.



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### **Chief Arvol Looking Horse, Lakota, South Dakota, USA, Confirmed as a speaker at PWR 2015.**

Arvol Looking Horse is the 19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Cafe Pipe Bundle and holds the responsibility of spiritual leader among the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota People. He is a member of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth and a tireless advocate of maintaining traditional spiritual practices, Chief Looking Horse is the founder of Big Foot Riders which memorializes the massacre of Big Foot's band at Wounded Knee in 1890. Chief Looking Horse's prayers have opened numerous sessions of the United Nations and his many awards include the

Juliet Hollister Award from the Temple of Understanding, a non-governmental organization with consultation status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and the Wolf Award of Canada for his work dedicated to peace. He is the co-founder of World Peace And Prayer Day/Honoring Sacred Sites Day, an international celebration joining worldwide communities of all faiths, nations, races, ages and genders who share concern for the welfare of humanity and the Earth to share in One Prayer. Arvol's home is at Green Grass on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota.

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**Matt Black Eagle Man, Dakota.  
Kentucky, USA**

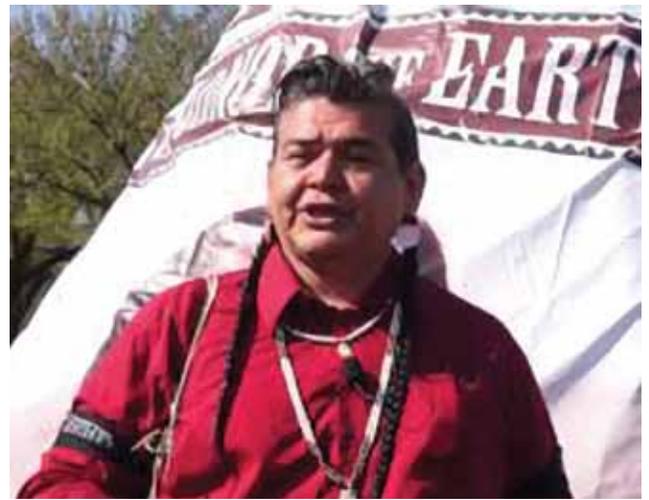
Matt is a grandfather, Spiritual leader, motivational speaker, & Peace Warrior, born October 12, 1968, on Long Plain First Nation Indian Reserve just outside Manitoba, Canada. He represents his people in a traditional manner and is the recipient of the 'May Peace Prevail on Earth Award' from Northeastern University. Matt and his wife Lynny Prince founded of Red Road Awareness, a Native owned non-profit organization, to assist Natives in crisis in the Kentucky/Indiana area and to educate the general public about the true history of the Indigenous Peoples through their Living Village program. He is proud to be a part of the Dakota 38 +2 Ride for Reconciliation,

a yearly 330 mile horseback ride from Lower Brule, South Dakota to Mankato, Minnesota that takes place every December.

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**Brooklyn Baptiste, Nimiipuu. Idaho  
Nation, Lapwai, Idaho,**

Brooklyn fiercely protects the Nimiipuu – “The People”, their culture, and treaty rights. Historically, his nomadic Nimiipuu People traveled with the seasons from buffalo hunting in the Great Plains to salmon fishing at Celilo Falls. 17 million acres in what is now Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Montana and parts of British Columbia made up the tribe’s homeland. Today Brooklyn and others, grounded in tradition, stand in solidarity with many peoples to protect Mother Earth; they are committed to sustainable social and economic transitions in balance with all Creation. His actions include protecting the northwest rivers and the salmon fisheries, stopping the coal export proposals, restoring lands poisoned by the Hanford Nuclear facility, and stopping the MegaLoads from crossing their homeland and the pipelines originating from the tars sands mining in Canada.



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**Laidman “JR” Fox, Jr. , Dakota. North Dakota  
Mni Wakan Dakota, elder and spiritual leader, Spirit Lake, North  
Dakota, USA**

JR is the father of 9 children and 20 grandchildren and is continuing his family’s timeless Dakota traditions. From infancy he was raised by his elders in the traditional way, and is a healer and medicine man to his people. An enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Dakota Tribe, he is a fluent Dakota speaker and possesses the ancient spiritual knowledge passed down through generations; his medicine includes the Yuwipi ceremony. JR and wife Rebekah Jarvey are the founders of Thunder Medicine Lodge and inspire many people to continue or to return to their traditional culture, to learn the language and turn away from the destructive influences prevalent in their communities.

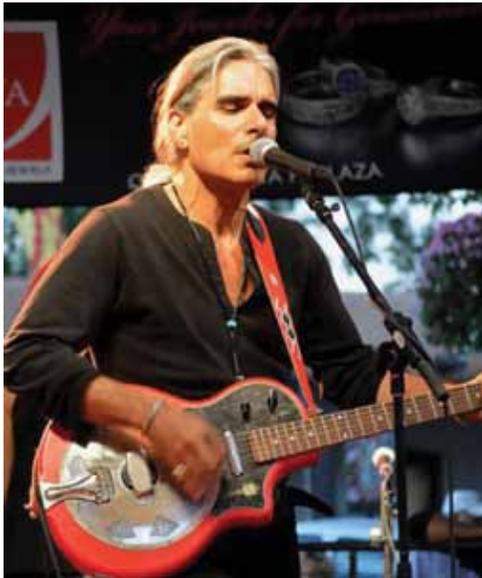
<http://www.thundermedicinelodge.com/>

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**Rebekah “Carries Sweet Grass Woman” Jarvey Chippewa, Cree and Blackfoot.**

**North Dakota and Montana**

Rebekah “Carries Sweet grass Woman” Jarvey is from Chief Rocky Boy and Chief Little Bear’s People located in Box Elder, Montana. Her current focus is Thunder Medicine Lodge, a non-profit organization dedicated to cultural preservation and helping many different tribes across the United States and Canada. Although Rebekah has a Bachelor of Science in both Business Administration and Psychology, she relies on her years of Sundance and cultural upbringing to lead her through life. Rebekah is a mother to a 10 year old son, Royce, whom she home schools, not only in western education, but also in her family’s traditional ways and in other first nation cultures.



**Robby Romero, Indé**

Robby Romero is the founder of Native Children’s Survival and the founder and leader of the acclaimed Native Rock band Red Thunder. Romero rose to prominence with the launch of **All The Missing Children** and **Is It Too Late**, music pictures that were produced and broadcast in collaboration with The National Congress Of American Indians, The National Center for Exploited & Abused Children, Island records and the Foundation for Global Broadcasting. These endeavors earned Robby the title of United Nations Ambassador of Youth for the Environment and a Certificate of Appreciation Award from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) signed by Executive Director, Mostafa K. Tolba. Robby’s Native American stereotype-breaking **Free Your Mind** public services announcements and music pictures, broadcast on MTV and VH1 introduced Native Rock music to the music television generation.

From the heart of Indian Country to the main street of the world, Robby has shared the stage with multiplatinum musical artists, from Buffy Sainte-Marie and Carlos Santana to Bonnie Raitt and Cat Stevens, to name a few. Robby’s spiritual and environmentally themed rockumentary films (including, **Who’s Gonna Save You**, **America’s Last Frontier**, **Hidden Medicine** and **Makoce Wakan**) broadcast nationally and internationally, catapulted him into an arena of his own making.

The Los Angeles Times Magazine speaks of Robby’s work as, “*changing the world and the world of music.*”. The Encyclopedia of North American Indians Past to Present says “*Red Thunder has commanded the largest audience of any contemporary Indian music group.*”.

For more information: [www.robbyromero.com](http://www.robbyromero.com)

## Special Guests:



### **Dr. Merle Lefkoff, Center for Emergent Diplomacy**

Merle is an international mediator, facilitator and social change entrepreneur who applies nonlinear complex-systems thinking to whole-system change. She trains women leaders and grassroots activists to use complexity thinking to allow a space for creativity, innovation, and equity to emerge. Merle is a member of the Lindesfarne Fellowship. She has worked in the White House as well as many other war zones around the world.

Dr. Lefkoff is Founder and CEO of the non-governmental social-profit organization Center for Emergent Diplomacy, <http://www.emergentdiplomacy.org/> an action research network of social innovators who facilitate the space for new ideas and potential solutions to emerge. The Center is coordinating Bretton Woods 3.0, a conference in 2016 to convene and connect the most innovative thinkers and courageous activists and spiritual teachers in the world who are leading non-violent campaigns to change the global economic paradigm and slow down global climate change. The core of BW3.0: the Indigenous Peoples' timeless example of thriving in harmony with all life on Earth.

A frequent speaker on the need for holistic and sustainable innovation to save our planet, recent venues include five different panels at the University of Colorado, Conference on World Affairs; Princeton University, Middle East Society; the Conference on Spirituality, Emergent Creativity and Reconciliation at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada; San Juan Island National Recreation Area, Lopez Island, Washington. Merle was elected a Lindisfarne Fellow; is a member of the Global Advisory Board of the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network begun at Columbia University in New York; and serves as Senior Advisor to The Indigenous Education Institute. She also advises the on-line literary journal, Wild River Review.

Merle has seven grandchildren and has lived for 33 years in La Cienega, a traditional farming village south of Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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### **Lars Larsson, Timeless Knowledge. Dala Jarna, Sweden**

Lars is a mechanical engineer as well as a researcher of ancestral traditions shared with him by diverse cultures thriving in ecosystems all over the world. Knowledgeable in many areas, Lars integrates this timeless knowledge with new techniques and modern technology to create the systematic transformations necessary to restore the environment and ensure social and economic well-being for all people.

The Dalai Lama is now collaborating with Lars to build a Timeless Knowledge school in India. Their pilot projects have focused on subjects critically important to the Himalayan countries such as: topsoil creation and preservation, water conservation, energy development and the conservation of forests and the most efficient use of firewood. All people regardless of their economic status, or education level are benefiting from Lars' practical and inspiring education models; biodiversity, biomimicry, physics, mathematics, engineering are just some of the sciences incorporated into this experience based education system.



### **Annika Dopping, Stockholm, Sweden**

is a distinguished journalist, author and documentary filmmaker in Sweden. Annika is a messenger for environmental concerns, human issues and leadership, all of which she incorporates into television productions, films, books, articles, seminars and communication strategies. Annika often moderates conferences focusing on sustainability and leadership issues of all kinds.

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## PWR Indigenous Delegation Guiding Principles

Milt Markewitz – June 6, 2015

The essence of the Indigenous Delegation's message to the Parliament of the World's Religions lies in speaking many truths that are based on the wisdom and resulting consciousness of living for millennia with the *guiding principles* necessary to be in balance and harmony with the Earth. These *guiding principles* are often called, *Original Instructions*, as they flow directly from Creation and inform us of the mutual dependencies and responsibilities that perpetuate life. It is through embodying these principles as the prime determinant in all our daily decisions that we ensure our children and all the generations that follow will be blessed by an Earth that always provides as it was for our ancestors.

These truths and guiding principles are all based on having Nature as a mentor and a model and are imbedded in our language, our science, our relational ways of being, and our deep appreciation for all life. From this way of being emerges ecological and social harmony as well as complementary economic systems.

We deal with generational problems by implementing generational solutions. Thus the warring Iroquois Tribes were able to establish peace processes more than three centuries ago that ultimately transformed their governance and birthed a concept of democracy that was gifted to the Founders of the United States.

It is unfortunate that the U.S. democracy had some inherent obstacles – slavery, imbalance between men and women, and ownership of resources intended to be included in the Commons – that severely impact the current democratic processes. Each of these obstacles is rooted in hierarchy, the primary organizing paradigm of the 'developed' nations. It is these hierarchical cultures that believe in *Manifest Destiny*, the belief that drives colonization and ultimately institutionalized an unsustainable world.

From Nature we know that hierarchical and relational ways of being must be blended and that being relational is the stronger of these paradigms. This is our truth, and is necessary not only to re-achieve balance and harmony on the planet, but also to know how to create a social order necessary for living through the very harsh circumstances we've created for now current and future generations.

# VALUE CHANGE FOR SURVIVAL

By Oren Lyons, Faith Keeper, Onondaga Nation

We are living in the time of the prophecies. My grandson always asks me, "What's going to happen to me?" The prophecies are here, they are happening now. We look around and say, that's happened and that's happened. The prophecies are being fulfilled before our eyes.

It's our job to change people's minds, to change the direction of their thinking. Values Have To Change!!! There is no mercy in Nature – none – only the law. If we don't change we will suffer the results. We will be judged by what we do and how we live.

In 1950, there were only 2.5 billion people on the earth. In 2007, there are 6.5 billion people living on the earth. It only took 57 years to increase our population by 4 billion people. Every 5 seconds there are 5 more babies born. More people needing water and food, wanting more of the earth's resources.

Think about how we use/waste water even in taking a bath or a shower. The people of the desert can take a bath in a cup of water, they have to. We have to become more aware, become more responsible and think of how we use the precious resources of the earth. We have to be careful about who you raise as a leader. You have to stand by your leaders. Leaders are judged by the people.

In our traditions we have these principles:

- 1) Principle of Peace – with peace comes health
- 2) Justice & Equity – with fairness comes justice
- 3) Power – there is power in being united, having a good mind, having One Mind. Indigenous people can put their minds together and bring the rains, like the Hopi. There is power in Unity.

I have been working with an international group, the Global Environmental group called the 'Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders', many high ranking officials and Spiritual leaders meeting to discuss Global Warming. After many meetings a question was posed to ask what we had learned from all our meetings. This was their message in 4 words: **VALUE CHANGE FOR SURVIVAL!!!**

We have to either change our (the world's) values or we won't survive. Nature has no mercy, so we have to abide by the laws of Nature or suffer the consequences. Business as usual is OVER! Carbon is OVER! Oil is OVER! We'd better find alternatives for our future. There will no longer be \$200 billion to support war because we will be spending all our money dealing with the extreme damages caused by the devastating environmental issues that are coming! These issues will create havoc for the economies of the world.

It is up to you to get into the face of your leaders, in your community, with your family and friends to help them to change. For the youth, when the young people ask the Elders for our help, we'd better be there. One important lesson of our people is to 'never take hope from the people.' Hope is good leadership, leaders who are out front fighting the big fights for our future.

The one country that has to change the most is US because we are the worst offenders. We are going to go through bad times; we'll be going back to raising our own foods, drying corn and beans, and going back to the time of our grandparents. Get ready!



United Nations

United Nations  
**DECLARATION**  
on the **RIGHTS**  
of **INDIGENOUS**  
**PEOPLES**



United Nations

United Nations Declaration  
on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples





## **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly**

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/61/L.67 and Add.1)*]

### **61/295. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

*The General Assembly,*

*Taking note* of the recommendation of the Human Rights Council contained in its resolution 1/2 of 29 June 2006,<sup>1</sup> by which the Council adopted the text of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

*Recalling* its resolution 61/178 of 20 December 2006, by which it decided to defer consideration of and action on the Declaration to allow time for further consultations thereon, and also decided to conclude its consideration before the end of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly,

*Adopts* the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as contained in the annex to the present resolution.

*107th plenary meeting  
13 September 2007*

#### **Annex**

### **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

*The General Assembly,*

*Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and good faith in the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States in accordance with the Charter,

*Affirming* that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such,

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<sup>1</sup>See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 53 (A/61/53)*, part one, chap. II, sect. A.

*Affirming also* that all peoples contribute to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind,

*Affirming further* that all doctrines, policies and practices based on or advocating superiority of peoples or individuals on the basis of national origin or racial, religious, ethnic or cultural differences are racist, scientifically false, legally invalid, morally condemnable and socially unjust,

*Reaffirming* that indigenous peoples, in the exercise of their rights, should be free from discrimination of any kind,

*Concerned* that indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests,

*Recognizing* the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources,

*Recognizing also* the urgent need to respect and promote the rights of indigenous peoples affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with States,

*Welcoming* the fact that indigenous peoples are organizing themselves for political, economic, social and cultural enhancement and in order to bring to an end all forms of discrimination and oppression wherever they occur,

*Convinced* that control by indigenous peoples over developments affecting them and their lands, territories and resources will enable them to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures and traditions, and to promote their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs,

*Recognizing* that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment,

*Emphasizing* the contribution of the demilitarization of the lands and territories of indigenous peoples to peace, economic and social

progress and development, understanding and friendly relations among nations and peoples of the world,

*Recognizing in particular* the right of indigenous families and communities to retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education and well-being of their children, consistent with the rights of the child,

*Considering* that the rights affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous peoples are, in some situations, matters of international concern, interest, responsibility and character,

*Considering also* that treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements, and the relationship they represent, are the basis for a strengthened partnership between indigenous peoples and States,

*Acknowledging* that the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>2</sup> and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>2</sup> as well as the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,<sup>3</sup> affirm the fundamental importance of the right to self-determination of all peoples, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development,

*Bearing in mind* that nothing in this Declaration may be used to deny any peoples their right to self-determination, exercised in conformity with international law,

*Convinced* that the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples in this Declaration will enhance harmonious and cooperative relations between the State and indigenous peoples, based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination and good faith,

*Encouraging* States to comply with and effectively implement all their obligations as they apply to indigenous peoples under international instruments, in particular those related to human rights, in consultation and cooperation with the peoples concerned,

*Emphasizing* that the United Nations has an important and continuing role to play in promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples,

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<sup>2</sup>See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

<sup>3</sup>A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

*Believing* that this Declaration is a further important step forward for the recognition, promotion and protection of the rights and freedoms of indigenous peoples and in the development of relevant activities of the United Nations system in this field,

*Recognizing and reaffirming* that indigenous individuals are entitled without discrimination to all human rights recognized in international law, and that indigenous peoples possess collective rights which are indispensable for their existence, well-being and integral development as peoples,

*Recognizing* that the situation of indigenous peoples varies from region to region and from country to country and that the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration,

*Solemnly proclaims* the following United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect:

#### *Article 1*

Indigenous peoples have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>4</sup> and international human rights law.

#### *Article 2*

Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity.

#### *Article 3*

Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

#### *Article 4*

Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to

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<sup>4</sup>Resolution 217 A (III).

their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.

*Article 5*

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

*Article 6*

Every indigenous individual has the right to a nationality.

*Article 7*

1. Indigenous individuals have the rights to life, physical and mental integrity, liberty and security of person.
2. Indigenous peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.

*Article 8*

1. Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.
2. States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for:
  - (a) Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities;
  - (b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources;
  - (c) Any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights;
  - (d) Any form of forced assimilation or integration;
  - (e) Any form of propaganda designed to promote or incite racial or ethnic discrimination directed against them.

*Article 9*

Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right.

*Article 10*

Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return.

*Article 11*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

2. States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

*Article 12*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practise, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.

2. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned.

### *Article 13*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

### *Article 14*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

### *Article 15*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.
2. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

### *Article 16*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.

2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.

*Article 17*

1. Indigenous individuals and peoples have the right to enjoy fully all rights established under applicable international and domestic labour law.

2. States shall in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples take specific measures to protect indigenous children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, taking into account their special vulnerability and the importance of education for their empowerment.

3. Indigenous individuals have the right not to be subjected to any discriminatory conditions of labour and, inter alia, employment or salary.

*Article 18*

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

*Article 19*

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

*Article 20*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.

2. Indigenous peoples deprived of their means of subsistence and development are entitled to just and fair redress.

*Article 21*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.

*Article 22*

1. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this Declaration.

2. States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

*Article 23*

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

*Article 24*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.

2. Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.

*Article 25*

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

*Article 26*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

*Article 27*

States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process.

*Article 28*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.
2. Unless otherwise freely agreed upon by the peoples concerned, compensation shall take the form of lands, territories and resources

equal in quality, size and legal status or of monetary compensation or other appropriate redress.

*Article 29*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.
2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.
3. States shall also take effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of indigenous peoples, as developed and implemented by the peoples affected by such materials, are duly implemented.

*Article 30*

1. Military activities shall not take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples, unless justified by a relevant public interest or otherwise freely agreed with or requested by the indigenous peoples concerned.
2. States shall undertake effective consultations with the indigenous peoples concerned, through appropriate procedures and in particular through their representative institutions, prior to using their lands or territories for military activities.

*Article 31*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

2. In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.

*Article 32*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

3. States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities, and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact.

*Article 33*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions. This does not impair the right of indigenous individuals to obtain citizenship of the States in which they live.

2. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the structures and to select the membership of their institutions in accordance with their own procedures.

*Article 34*

Indigenous peoples have the right to promote, develop and maintain their institutional structures and their distinctive customs, spirituality, traditions, procedures, practices and, in the cases where they exist, juridical systems or customs, in accordance with international human rights standards.

*Article 35*

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the responsibilities of individuals to their communities.

*Article 36*

1. Indigenous peoples, in particular those divided by international borders, have the right to maintain and develop contacts, relations and cooperation, including activities for spiritual, cultural, political, economic and social purposes, with their own members as well as other peoples across borders.

2. States, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, shall take effective measures to facilitate the exercise and ensure the implementation of this right.

*Article 37*

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded with States or their successors and to have States honour and respect such treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.

2. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as diminishing or eliminating the rights of indigenous peoples contained in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.

*Article 38*

States, in consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples, shall take the appropriate measures, including legislative measures, to achieve the ends of this Declaration.

*Article 39*

Indigenous peoples have the right to have access to financial and technical assistance from States and through international cooperation, for the enjoyment of the rights contained in this Declaration.

*Article 40*

Indigenous peoples have the right to access to and prompt decision through just and fair procedures for the resolution of conflicts and disputes with States or other parties, as well as to effective remedies for all infringements of their individual and collective rights. Such a decision shall give due consideration to the customs, traditions, rules and legal systems of the indigenous peoples concerned and international human rights.

*Article 41*

The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations shall contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through the mobilization, inter alia, of financial cooperation and technical assistance. Ways and means of ensuring participation of indigenous peoples on issues affecting them shall be established.

*Article 42*

The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.

*Article 43*

The rights recognized herein constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.

*Article 44*

All the rights and freedoms recognized herein are equally guaranteed to male and female indigenous individuals.

*Article 45*

Nothing in this Declaration may be construed as diminishing or extinguishing the rights indigenous peoples have now or may acquire in the future.

*Article 46*

1. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States.

2. In the exercise of the rights enunciated in the present Declaration, human rights and fundamental freedoms of all shall be respected. The exercise of the rights set forth in this Declaration shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law

and in accordance with international human rights obligations. Any such limitations shall be non-discriminatory and strictly necessary solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for meeting the just and most compelling requirements of a democratic society.

3. The provisions set forth in this Declaration shall be interpreted in accordance with the principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, equality, non-discrimination, good governance and good faith.

## Revoke the Inter Cetera Bull

by Valerie Taliman

Newcomb and Birgil Kills Straight, an Oglala Lakota from Kyle, S.D., represented the Indigenous Law Institute and spoke on a panel called "Voices of the Dispossessed." They were joined by Julio Revolorio, a Mayan from Guatemala, and Tupac Amaro Indi, Quiche from the Amazon, who shared their views on loss of indigenous lands.

Newcomb and Kills Straight's presentation was the first time that many people heard about the relationship between the theft of Native lands and the Catholic Church's ancient doctrines. Those doctrines, called papal bulls, still stand after more than 500 years and are the basis for ongoing patterns of subjugation that have been incorporated into federal Indian laws.

In an open letter, the Indigenous Law Institute is calling to Pope John Paul II to formally revoke these documents in order "to demonstrate solidarity with indigenous nations and to show willingness to honor and respect (Native) inherent lights to liberty, justice, and peace."

The two primary documents Newcomb discussed included a 1452 decree issued by Pope Nicholas V which called upon Portugese King Alfonso "to invade, search out, capture, vanquish and subdue all Saracens and pagans,... and other enemies of Christ." Pope Nicholas also directed that the land and possessions of these people be taken away and that non-Christians be "reduced to perpetual slavery."

Newcomb explained that this document was followed by a second doctrine, the 1493 Inter Cetera papal bull, issued by Pope Alexander VI which decreed the pope's desire that "barbarous nations be overthrown" and those nations "discovered" be subjugated and reduced to the Catholic faith "to propogate the Christian religion." These decrees set the stage for 500 years of advocating warfare, rather than peace, against Native peoples and made it impossible for the Christian world to respect Native Nations of the Western hemisphere, he said.

Newcomb, who has spent 10 years researching the origins of federal Indian law, said these ancient doctrines serve as the foundation of federal Indian policy that denies Indian people their rights to ancestral homelands because they were not Christians when the Europeans first arrived. "These ancient laws of Christendom were incorporated into an 1823 Supreme Court decision, Johnson v. McIntosh, which made a distinction between Christians and heathens," Newcomb said. The term "heathen," he noted, was applied to persons whose religions were neither Christian, Jewish, or Moslem, which, of course, meant virtually all Native peoples.

"Why this is so critically important to Native people in the U.S., and to indigenous peoples (everywhere), is that in Johnson v. McIntosh, the reasoning of the court was based upon a distinction between Christians and heathens, and the Doctrine of Discovery was formally written into the laws of the United States by the Supreme Court," he said.

"It said that the first Christian nation to 'discover' a land of heathens and infidels (beasts of prey) had the ultimate domination over those lands and that heathens only have right of occupancy."

He stressed the importance of the word "dominion," derived from the Latin word "domo," which means "to subjugate, subdue, tame, domesticate, place into subservience and colonize."

Newcomb also noted that according to Christian international law, lands which had no Christian owners were considered to be vacant lands, even though inhabited by non-Christians. "So the lands that Columbus and other conquerors took into possession were considered as belonging to nobody because they were not the property of any Christian nation," Newcomb wrote in a paper called "Pagans in the Promised Land."

In the *Johnson v. McIntosh* decision, Chief Justice John Marshall cited various charters of England to document acceptance of the Doctrines of Discovery and said European nations making such discoveries only had a legal obligation to recognize the "prior title of any Christian people who may have made a previous discovery," according to Newcomb's research.

"In short, Christians had title, heathens only had occupancy," he said. "Few people realize that the U.S. Supreme Court's Christian/heathen distinction is still the Supreme Law of the land today."

"On that basis, the U.S. continues to deny that Indian people have a true right of property in their own ancestral homelands and that they have rights to complete sovereignty as independent nations."

Kills Straight drew the link between the industrialized world's view of the earth and the subsequent destruction that has occurred by manmade laws based on capitalistic economies and domination over nature.

"In 500 years, more than 96 million indigenous peoples have been lost to this destruction," he said, along with much of the traditional knowledge they carried. He said that Native people's understanding of natural laws and Mother Earth as a spiritual entity is critically important to share in these times when many species are being devastated.

"It's good to see spirituality coming back strong in our communities," he said. "Some kind of shift needs to occur or life on this Earth will cease. The rest of the world used to assume that they had nothing to learn from Native people of this land but that's changing."

"By revoking the *Inter Cetera* bull of 1493, the Pope can show support of Native people in his actions, not just words," Newcomb said. "It will symbolically call for an end to this tradition of subjugation that we have lived with for 500 years."

"So this is a spiritual effort we are undertaking and it's not just about the Pope or the Catholic Church - it's about the lack of honor and compassion and caring that is so indicative of this industrial world," he said.

"This is a first step toward the Church and the rest of the Christian world coming to terms with the first indigenous principle: Respect the Earth as our Mother and have a sacred regard for all living things. And that means our women and our children and our future generations."

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**Author's Note:** During the parliament, the 60 Native delegates developed a "[Declaration of Vision](#)" that included a call to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy to revoke the 1493 Inter Cetera Papal Bull. The Declaration of Vision was presented to the World Parliament general assembly by Charlotte Black Elk and was endorsed by resolution in a near unanimous vote. However, Dr. David Ramage, Jr., Chairman of the Council Parliament, later overruled the vote at a post-parliament meeting, saying that all resolutions passed during the general assembly had no standing since the assembly was intended "only to exchange insights, not to take group actions." It is unclear what action will be taken to address the declaration.

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**DOCUMENT SOURCE:** Taliman, Valerie. "Revoke the Inter Cetera Bull." *Turtle Quarterly*. Fall-Winter 1994, p. 7-8.

Turtle Quarterly Magazine  
25 Rainbow Mall  
Niagra Falls, NY 14303

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Original web page design by [Jeanne Ley](#).

## **DECLARATION OF VISION: Toward The Next 500 Years**

### **From The Gathering Of The 1003 United Indigenous Peoples At The Parliament Of The World's Religions, Chicago, Illinois**

"We are indigenous people and Native Nations, honoring our ancestors and for our future generations, do hereby declare our present and continuing survival within our sacred homelands in the Western Hemisphere.

Since time immemorial, we have lived in a spiritual way in keeping with our sacred laws, principles and values given to us by the Creator. Our ways of life are based on respect for Mother Earth, a sacred regard for all relations and the survival of our languages, cultures and traditions.

In the Year of Indigenous Peoples, while the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is still being prepared, we ask for solidarity in our cause from the religions of the world.

We call upon the people of conscience in the Roman Catholic hierarchy to persuade Pope John II to formally revoke the Inter Cetera Bull of May 4, 1493, which will restore our fundamental human rights. That Papal document called for our Nations and Peoples to be subjugated so the Christian Empire and its doctrines would be propagated. The U.S. Supreme Court ruling *Johnson v. McIntosh* 8 Wheat 543 (in 1823) adopted the same principle of subjugation expressed in the Inter Cetera Bull. This Papal Bull has been, and continues to be, devastating to our religions, our cultures, and the survival of our populations.

We call upon the people of conscience in the many other organized religions whose historical actions have participated in the dehumanization of our Indigenous Nations to help us put an end to the violation of our people's human rights. We call for an end to the deafening silence of religious denominations and groups regarding the violations of our peoples' human rights, because this silence implies complicity and tolerance of the effects.

One hundred years ago during the 1893 Parliament of World Religions, the profoundly religious original (Native) peoples of the Western hemisphere were not invited. We are still here and still struggling to be heard for the sake of our Mother Earth and our children. As our spiritual and physical survival continues to be threatened all over the hemisphere, we feel compelled to ask you to join us in restoring the balance of humanity and Mother Earth in these ways:

- A. Acknowledgement of the myriad of messengers of the Creator, the Great Mystery, to the peoples of the Western hemisphere.
- B. Support in promoting, preserving and maintaining our Indigenous languages and cultures.
- C. Involvement in the world outcry against the continuing genocide of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas by taking direct action in support of the International Conventions prohibiting genocide in their various countries.
- D. Protection and return of the sacred sites and traditional lands of Indigenous Peoples.
- E. Reversal of environmental degradation that endangers our traditional lifeways and threatens our very existence.
- F. Repatriation of our ancestors and sacred objects from the museums and holdings of the world.

**WITH RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE, WE THANK YOU.**

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**DOCUMENT SOURCE:** "Declaration of Vision." *Turtle Quarterly*. Fall-Winter 1994, p. 8.

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**An Indigenous Peoples' Statement to the World  
Delivered at The Parliament of the World's Religions  
Convened at Melbourne, Australia  
on the Traditional Lands  
of the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation**

**December 9, 2009**

PREAMBLE

**In keeping with the theme of this year's Parliament: "Make a World of Difference: Hearing each other, Healing the earth," We, the Indigenous Peoples participating in this Parliament hereby issue this statement:**

We are Indigenous Peoples and Nations who honor our ancestors and care for our future generations by preserving our lands and cultures. For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have maintained a fundamental and sacred relationship with Mother Earth. As peoples of the land, we declare our inherent rights to our present and continuing survival within our sacred homelands and territories throughout the world;

We commend the Australian government's recent support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We call on all governments to support and implement the provisions of the UN Declaration.

Since time immemorial we have lived in keeping with our sacred laws, principles, and spiritual values, given by the Creator. Our ways of life are based on thousands of years of accumulated ecological knowledge, a great respect for our Mother Earth, a reverence and respect for all our Natural World relations and the survival of our languages, cultures, and traditions.

The Indigenous instructions of sharing and the responsibility of leadership to future generations are wise and enduring. As the traditional nations of our lands we affirm the right to educate our children in our earth-based education systems in order to maintain our indigenous knowledge systems and cultures. These have also contributed to our spiritual, physical and mental health;

Indigenous peoples concept of health and survival is holistic, collective and individual. It encompasses the spiritual, the intellectual, the physical and the emotional. Expressions of culture relevant to health and survival of Indigenous Peoples includes relationships, families, and kinship, social institutions, traditional laws, music, dances, songs and songlines, ceremonies and dreamtime, our ritual performances and practices, games, sports, language, mythologies, names, land, sea, water, every life forms, and all documented forms and aspects of culture, including burial and sacred sites, human genetic materials, ancestral remains, so often stolen, and our artifacts;

Unfortunately, certain doctrines have been threatening to the survival of our cultures, our languages, and our peoples, and devastating to our ways of life. These are found in particular colonizing documents such as the Inter Caetera papal bull of 1493, which called for the

subjugation of non-Christian nations and peoples and “the propagation of the Christian empire.” This is the root of the Doctrine of Christian Discovery that is still interwoven into laws and policies today that must be changed. The principles of subjugation contained in this and other such documents, and in the religious texts and documents of other religions, have been and continue to be destructive to our ways of life (religions), cultures, and the survival of our Indigenous nations and peoples. This oppressive tradition is what led to the boarding schools, the residential schools, and the Stolen Generation, resulting in the trauma of language death and loss of family integrity from the actions of churches and governments. We call on those churches and governments to put as much time, effort, energy and money into assisting with the revitalization of our languages and cultures as they put into attempting to destroy them.

The doctrines of colonization and dominion have laid the groundwork for contemporary problems of racism and dispossession. These problems include the industrial processes of resource exploitation and extraction by governments and corporations that has consistently meant the use of imposed laws to force the removal of Indigenous peoples from our traditional territories, and to desecrate and destroy our sacred sites and places. The result is a great depletion of biodiversity and the loss of our traditional ways of life, as well as the depletion and contamination of the waters of Mother Earth from mining and colonization.

Such policies and practices do not take into account that water is the first law of life and a gift from the Creator for all beings. Clean, healthy, safe, and free water is necessary for the continuity and well being of all living things. The commercialization and poisoning of water is a crime against life.

The negative ethics of contemporary society, discovery, conquest, dominion, exploitation, extraction, and industrialization, have brought us to today’s crisis of global warming. Climate change is now our most urgent issue and affecting the lives of indigenous peoples at an alarming rate. Many of our people’s lives are in crisis due to the rapid global warming. The ice melt in the north and rapid sea rise continue to accelerate, and the time for action is brief.

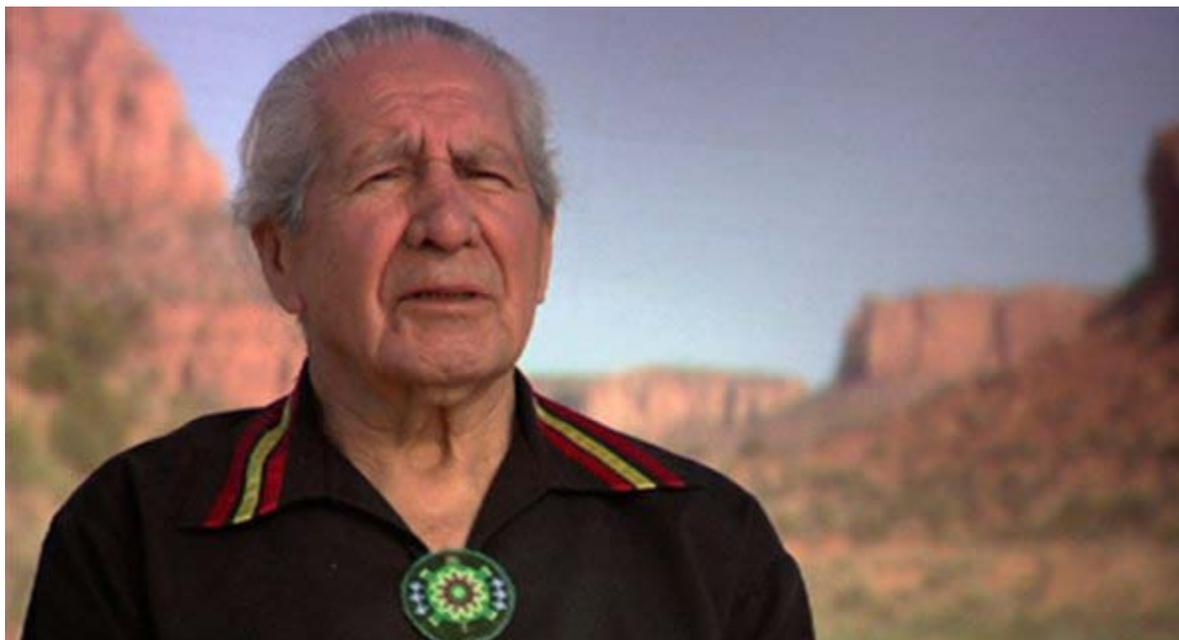
The Earth’s resources are finite and the present global consumption levels are unsustainable and continue to affect our peoples and all peoples. Therefore, we join the other members of the Parliament in calling for prompt, immediate, and effective action at Copenhagen to combat climate change;

On September 13, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In support of this historic event, the Episcopalian Church in the United States adopted a resolution at its 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention in July 2009, repudiating and disavowing the dehumanizing Doctrine of Christian Discovery. By doing so, the Church took particular note of the charter issued by King Henry VII of England to John Cabot and his sons, which authorized the colonizing of North America. It was by this ‘boss over’ tradition of Christian discovery that the British crown eventually laid claim to the traditional territories of the Aboriginal nations of the continent now called Australia, under terra nullius and terra nullus. This step by the Episcopalian Church was an act of conscience and moral leadership by one of the world’s major religions. Religious bodies of Quakers and Unitarians have taken similar supportive actions.

In Conclusion, we appeal to all people of conscience to join with us: We hereby call upon Pope Benedict XVI and the Vatican to publicly acknowledge and repudiate the papal decrees that legitimized the original activities that have evolved into the Doctrine of Christian Discovery and Dominion.

## COMMUNIQUE NO. 20

Statement reflecting the position of the Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth delivered on their behalf by Oren R. Lyons, Faith Keeper, Turtle Clan, Onondaga Nation, to the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, United Nations, New York, August 28-31, 2000.



**Traditional Circle of Indian Elders & Youth**

**COMMUNIQUE NO. 20**  
with Chief Oren Lyons

### **Leaders of the World:**

Neyaweha-scanao (Thank you for being well).

Today I bring you greetings from the Indigenous Peoples of North, Central, and South America. Indeed, I bring you greetings from the Indigenous Peoples of the world.

We are the keepers of the traditions, ceremonies, histories, and future of our nations. We are the ones who escaped from your proselytizing. We survived with the wisdom of the Old Ones.

And we are pleased to add our voices to yours in this great effort for common sense and peace among nations.

### **Leaders of the World:**

I bring you a most urgent message that was brought to our 23rd annual gathering of the Traditional Circle of Elders and Youth. This message was brought by a runner from the north, from Greenland, and he said:

### **The ice is melting in the north!**

He informed us that some 15 years ago they noticed trickles of water coming down the sheer face of Glacier Mountain. That trickle has grown to a roaring river of ice water pouring out of this mountain into the Atlantic Ocean.

He informed us that Glacier Mountain has lost 4,000 feet of ice in these past few years. And the melt continues to accelerate.

This is an alarming message that requires your absolute attention.

### **Leaders of the World:**

We are a collective voice of Indigenous Peoples. We have joined this great mission for peace. We add our presence in support of this great effort for reconciliation between peoples and nations.

We agree that there must be parity and equity between rich and poor nations, between white people and people of color, and rich people and poor people, with special attention to women, children, and indigenous peoples.

We, in our collective voices, add to this: that there must be a reconciliation between peoples and the natural world, between nation states and the forests that sustain us, between corporations and the resources they mine, the fish that they catch, and the water that they use.

### **Leaders of the World:**

Indigenous nations and peoples believe in the spiritual powers of the universe. We believe in the ultimate power and authority of a limitless energy beyond our comprehension. We believe in the order of the universe. We believe in the laws of creation and that all life is bound by these same natural laws.

We call this essence the spirit of life. This is what gives the world the energy to create and procreate, and becomes the ponderous and powerful law of regeneration – the law of the seed.

We, in our collective voices, speak to this to remind you that spirit and spiritual laws transcend generations. We know, because this has sustained us.

Religion and spirituality is vital to survival and moral law. It is a faith that has sustained our human spirit through our darkest hours. It has sustained our human spirit in times of crisis during the times we suffered through the grinding measures of inexorable persecutions that have

spanned generations and continue today. Yet here we are, today, adding our voices to this plea for sanity in leadership and responsibility to the future generations whose faces are looking up from the Earth, each awaiting their time of life here.

**Leaders of the World:**

The collective voices of indigenous people add that we are saddened by the absence of our elder brother, the Dalai Lama, in this forum. We believe that reconciliation should begin here because peace is an inclusive term, and peace and reconciliation is the purpose of this summit.

Peace is dynamic and requires great effort of spirit and mind to attain unity. Leaders of peace must step forward and take responsibility for a paradigm change in the direction of current lifestyles and materialistic societies. The human species has become the most voracious and abusive consumer of Earth's resources. We have tipped the balance of life against our children, and we imperil our future as a species.

**Leaders of the World:**

Despite all of our declarations and all of proclamations, no matter how profound they may be:

**The ice is melting in the north.**

We see the acceleration of the winds.  
We see the fires that are raging in North America.

And we see that the sun's rays that provide us with light, energy, and the very essence of life now are causing cancer in people, blinding animals, and killing the plankton and krill of the sea.

This is only the beginning and already we are helpless. We will now see the real spiritual powers that govern the Earth.

**Leaders of the World:**

There can be no peace as long as we wage war upon our *Mother* (the Earth). Responsible and courageous actions must be taken to realign ourselves with the great laws of nature. We must meet this crisis now, while we still have time. We offer these words as common peoples in support of peace, equity, justice, and reconciliation.

As we speak, **the ice continues to melt in the north.**

Dahnato (now I am finished). Neyawenha (thank you).

Oren R. Lyons, Faith Keeper, Turtle Clan  
Onondaga Nation, Haudenosaunee

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<sup>^</sup>*The Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Youth* is a spiritual circle open to all Indian people. It constitutes the continuation of an ancient practice of joint council among the most respected leaders of Indian nations. Its purpose is to nurture a grassroots renewal of traditional values and worldviews among Indian peoples, to ensure the continuity of Native wisdom, and to bring that wisdom to bear on important issues facing all peoples of the earth.

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*Published online at the [American Indian Institute](#) (2000). To learn more about the Elders Councils, visit [www.twocircles.org](http://www.twocircles.org). Image: From the video "[We Are Part of the Earth](#)" by [Sacred Land Film Project](#). Image on homepage: "[The Leadership Imperative](#)", [Orion Magazine](#).*

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