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INDIGENOUS YOUTH DECLARATION
KINDLING THE FIRE

Nicole Martin

We as Indigenous Youth have gathered on Haudenosaunee territory for four years to share our achievements and future prospects on peace and unity. We are the seventh generation and we accept the responsibility for the prosperity of the future generations and of our Mother Earth. Our Ancestors look to us to repeat the words that once fell on deaf ears and to stand strong as one. As our leaders have done before us, we as Indigenous Youth unify in order to rise to the challenge of continuing to wipe the tears of all nations. The Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island wish to reach our goals and to share with the world, peace and unity. We will continue to collectively gather all peoples to push our motion forward. The following statements call for immediate action. Our collective minds and hearts hereby declare the following a living document;

The Voices of the Youth

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for our voice to be recognized and respected as equals.

We call for effective and active participation at all gatherings and councils to network, debate and to contribute to decisions on all matters affecting us and our communities.

Education

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for historical truths to be told;

All books that are used in the education system must be rewritten to include the stories of Indigenous peoples, written from the perspective of Indigenous voice. Indigenous Peoples have the choice to provide education which serves our best interests to preserve our culture for the coming faces.

Indigenous youth must be educated in the rights we have as people

We will create educational, social and recreational programs and opportunities to promote, encourage, and maintain healthy traditional lifestyles, which nurtures our talents whether they be traditional, artistic, athletic or academic.

All programs must be supported by our communities, elders, states, and international institutions.

Protecting/Preserving Language

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for opportunities for our children to learn their native language as their original language.

We call for more high quality programs be created and that funding be allocated to revive our Indigenous Language.

We call for language programs to be made available to all Indigenous peoples whether they live off or on territories.

Treaties

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for that each and every one of our treaties be honoured.

We call for all negotiations and discussions between governments and nations be fair and respectful.

We will assert jurisdiction over our lands and resources.

Discrimination

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for the discrimination against Indigenous Peoples to not be tolerated.

We call for all government policies, acts and laws which discriminate against Indigenous Peoples be abolished immediately.

We call for all internal discrimination against youth, elders and groups of people within our communities to stop immediately.

We call for all external discrimination against any other race, religion or culture to be stopped immediately.

Respect of Our Culture

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for unrestricted access to our traditional, historical artifacts whether they are in museums, private collections or any other possession.

Our traditional ceremonies must be recognized and respected by governments, school boards, business owners and the greater society as equal to other religious holidays and practices.

We will not allow our culture and tradition to be defined by outside or foreign influences.

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for media to highlight the positive aspects of Indigenous culture rather than perpetuate stereotypes.

We call for all news reports relating to Indigenous peoples to accurately represent our perspective.

Media black-outs cannot be tolerated.

We call for governments and international forums to support Indigenous created media bodies.

Colonization

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island refuse to be subject to any form of colonization.

We refuse to allow all previous effects of colonization to pass onto the next seven generations. All hate, resentment and anguish ends now.

We must reestablish the connection between the youth and the elders and work towards unity.

We forgive all peoples who have damaged our culture, lands and our people.

We ask that all peoples of Mother Earth join us in this healing.

Our Mother Earth

We as Indigenous Youth of Turtle Island call for that our Mother Earth be protected at all costs.

We call for unrestricted access to sacred sites. Sacred sites must be maintained in their natural, original state.

We call for all environmentally destructive behaviors to stop immediately. The health and well-being of our people and our ceremonies is dependent on the well-being of our Mother Earth.

We as Indigenous peoples need to re-establish our connection to the land.

We need states and multinational forums and organizations to assist and join us in reconnecting and healing all life.

As guardians we implore ourselves to take action to protect, preserve and restore Mother Earth and all creation.

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