



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #MOH-04-###

TITLE:

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

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

WHEREAS, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), an NCAI member in good standing, resolved to support the proposal of the Tribal Leadership Forum to establish an International Forum of Indigenous Nations of the Pacific Rim for the purpose of developing a treaty by and between Indigenous Nations on issues of common concern, and

WHEREAS, the CTUIR subsequently sponsored a resolution in support of the International Forum that was adopted by the 44 member tribes of the affiliated tribes of Northwest Indians, (ATNI) at its Spring 2004 conference, and

WHEREAS, representatives of various Indigenous Nations of the Pacific Rim, recognizing that they share a common history of oppression under British Colonialism and a common legal status as “Nations within a Nation” based on rights derived from English Common Law, have expressed a strong interest in establishing a working relationship with their U.S. Tribal relations on current issues in which there is common ground, and

WHEREAS, officials of the Maori tribal University, *Awanuiarangi*, located in the town of Whakatane on the North Island of New Zealand, have offered to host the 1st International Forum of Indigenous Nations to be conducted in April of 2005, *if there is interest and support by US tribal nations in participating in such a Forum,* and

WHEREAS, planners of the International Forum have also recommended that participating Indigenous Nations should consider developing an International Treaty agreement between U.S. Tribes, Canadian First Nations, Maori Tribes, and Aborigine tribal nations *as a means of recognizing the principles of inherent indigenous sovereignty and indigenous self-determination as the foundation for joint action plans and strategies focused on issues of common concern,* and that such treaty may address the following five points:

- “Indigenous tribal or customary law,” should be the basis for recognition under international law of the inherent rights of Indigenous Nations and for defining the parameters and scope of self-determination rights
- The laws of each Indigenous Nation should be the basis for protection of cultural properties by indigenous nations against illegal claims of ownership and other forms of appropriation by private individuals or corporations
- Scholarly exchanges and programs of joint study on strategies of self-determination should be undertaken by indigenous scholars
- Mutually beneficial and profitable trade agreements between our indigenous nations should be researched and explored, and

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Indigenous nations should collaborate on research in environmental protection issues that directly impact indigenous homelands, now

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby agree to support the proposed International Forum of Indigenous Nations and, in principle, supports the idea of Indigenous Nation-to-Nation treaty making on issues of common concern and in furtherance of common goals and authorizes the executive committee of NCAI to appoint delegates from among the member tribes of NCAI to form a special committee charged with the responsibility of meeting with representatives of other Indigenous Nations of the Pacific Rim regarding this proposal and reporting back to the general assembly of the NCAI at its annual conference in October 2004.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2004 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Mohegan Sun Hotel and Casino, Uncasville, CT on June 23, 2004 with a quorum present.

President

ATTEST:

Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 2004 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Mohegan Sun Hotel and Casino, in Uncasville, CT on June 23, 2004.