

Cultural Survival

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/15-calls-action-honor-indigenous-rights-open-letter-biden-harris-administration>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Greetings President Biden, Vice-President Harris, and all members of this new administration,

Cultural Survival extends our congratulations and a warm welcome to your new leadership role. As we all know and have experienced, the past four years have been nothing short of destruction and chaos for our communities and Mother Earth. While much is needed to be done to heal, restore, and re-define our relationships with one another, our lands, and all living things, we believe that transformation is both possible and necessary. As an Indigenous-led organization who advocates for Indigenous Peoples' rights and supports Indigenous communities self-determination, cultures and political resilience, since 1972, we understand the importance of returning to right relationship with one another and our environment. We believe we are in a moment of time where we must choose one of two paths: one that centers reciprocity, love, empathy, inclusion, equity and kinship, or, one that centers hate, division, discrimination, extraction, and profits over people. We hope that this administration will go down the right path to right the wrongs of history.

We applaud the bold actions taken via numerous executive orders issued in your first weeks, including rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement, rescinding the Keystone XL Pipeline permit, and placing a temporary moratorium on oil and gas activity in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We also call on you to continue to address injustice, inequity, violations of Indigenous, human, and civil rights everywhere.

Towards that end, we urge you to address this initial list of issues of importance to Native communities in the United States.

Moreover, we also echo important calls made by our relatives at [Land is Life](#) in their open letter dated January 26, especially:

Secure permanent protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and halt construction of the Dakota Access and Enbridge Line 3 pipelines.

Secure permanent protection for the sacred sites Mauna Kea, Bears Ears National Monument, and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

Commit to promoting and implementing effective actions for the protection and respect of the human rights of Indigenous defenders globally.

Pardon and free Leonard Peltier.

Addressing this non-exhaustive list of 15 calls to actions serves as a momentous opportunity for the United States to restore its relationship with Tribal Nations and the lands that we all call home. Following and respecting the leadership of American Indians and Indigenous Peoples and continuing to increase their representation in leadership positions within your administration will support your efforts to implement these calls to action. Thank you for your service and we look forward to the good work that lies ahead and the healing of our nation with Indigenous Peoples at the forefront.

Sincerely,

Cultural Survival

Special Acknowledgements: Deep gratitude and recognition of Sach Primeaux-Shaw (Ponca, Yankton-Dakota, Seminole and Chickasaw Freedman), Community Organizer and Janene Yazzie (Din), Consultant, CEO of Sixth World Solutions and North American Focal Point to the Indigenous Peoples Major Groups to the SDGs for their invaluable expertise and contributions to this letter.

Photo: IndigenousPeoples March. Photo by Chenae Bullock.

[Wingapo! Intertribal Native American Dance Circle Takes Place at the Kennedy Center](#)

[Indigenous Migrant Children at Higher Risk for Flu-related Deaths, Yet Denied Basic Flu Shot](#)

[Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Continues Fight for Land](#)

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are headquartered on [Massachusetts land](#), in Cambridge, MA, and we thank the past and current Indigenous stewards of this land.

Cultural Survival advocates for Indigenous Peoples' rights and supports Indigenous communities self-determination, cultures and political resilience, since 1972.

Cultural Survival envisions a future that respects and honors Indigenous Peoples' inherent rights and dynamic cultures, deeply and richly interwoven in lands, languages, spiritual traditions, and artistic expression, rooted in self-determination and self-governance.

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