

## **TLATOKAN ATLAHUAK DECLARATION**

### **Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples Parallel Forum of the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum Mexico City, Mexico March 17-18, 2006**

1. We, representatives of Indigenous Peoples and organizations of Mexico, the Americas and other continents of the world participating in the Indigenous Forum parallel to the 4th World Water Forum, declare our solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico and their struggle for their ancestral territories and natural resources of which water is a primordial element. For all Indigenous Peoples of the world, water is the source of material, cultural and spiritual life.
2. We, international representatives, appreciate the welcome that has been extended to us by the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico. We especially appreciate the opening ceremony of our forum, conducted by the traditional governor of the Yaqui tribe and our Mazahuas relatives.
3. We reaffirm the Indigenous Peoples Kyoto Water Declaration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum of Kyoto, Japan of March 2003. It recognizes our relation with our Mother Earth and our responsibility to future generations. We raise our voices in solidarity and proclaim the responsibility to protect and defend water. We have been placed upon this earth, each in our own traditional sacred land and territory to care for all of creation and water.
4. We reaffirm the same Declaration to honor and respect water as a sacred being that sustains all life. Our traditional knowledge, laws and forms of life teach us to be responsible and caring for this sacred gift that connects all life.
5. We reaffirm that the relationship we have with our lands, territories and water constitute the physical, cultural and spiritual basis of our existence. The relationship with our Mother Earth obligates us to conserve our fresh water and seas for the survival of present and future generations. We assume our roles as guardians, with rights and responsibilities that defend and guarantee the protection, availability and purity of water. We unite to respect and implement our traditional knowledge and laws, and to exercise our right of self determination to preserve water and life.
6. The situation of the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico makes it even more clear that the struggle for our water is tied fundamentally with our struggle for our right of self determination. This is the case of our Yaqui relatives, the Otomí, Ñahñahú, Matlazinca, Mazahua, Tlahuica and Nahuas of the Alto Río Lerma; of our relatives of Xochipas, of Xochimilco of Tecámac, of Xoxocotla Morelos; and as with our relatives of the Sierra de Manantlán and Ayotitlán in Jalisco; and other Indigenous Peoples of the world.
7. Mexico and countries that are accomplices of the multinational corporations, violate with impunity the human rights and fundamental freedoms that they themselves have consecrated in the Covenants, Conventions and Declarations of the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

8. We assert our right of development determined by our own laws and traditional authorities, consistent with our values and world view.
9. Our lands, territories and natural resources, particularly our water (rivers, springs, wells, lakes, groundwater) continue to be stolen or ruined with extreme pollution. The water multinationals, with the support of the international finance agencies like the World Bank and the Interamerican Development Bank are accomplices in the privatization of our territories and our water. This creates a scarcity of water raising its economic value and furthering the view of water as an object of commerce.
10. We reject the neoliberal model of life that views water as merchandise, not as a public good, or a fundamental human right. Agencies such as the World Trade Organization promote privatization projects of our vital liquid. This destroys flora and fauna and consequently creates sicknesses like cancer, even among youth, as well as the disappearance of our cultures.
11. As Indigenous Peoples, we assert in all the national and international laws, the right of self determination and the recognition of our territories. We assert our autonomy in the use and enjoyment of our natural resources such as water, as a human right. We demand this recognition for our own customs and laws and oral traditions.
12. We demand from the national authorities and multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and Organization of American States and the governmental participants of the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, the full participation of Indigenous Peoples in any project or action of water management and development in our territories. We demand the guarantee of the right of free, prior and informed consent as is established by international law.
13. We declare our solidarity with the struggle of the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico and other parts of the world who have come to this forum to condemn authorities that don't resolve conflict nor guarantee the supply of water, but repress those who struggle to defend water; including energy and mining companies that consume and poison our Mother Earth and water and poisoning all Life.
14. We recognize the work of the communities that promote their own peoples. We recognize communities, organizations, universities and committed academicians who protect, defend and recuperate water as a right of all beings.
15. We call upon all Indigenous Peoples to organize and form committees for the defense of water and that it be a basis of all of our struggles to obtain the full recognition and absolute enjoyment of our territories and natural resources.
16. We demand that the Mexican government and its States immediately incorporate mechanisms for recognition of the rights of its Indigenous Peoples in water and public policy as affirmed by international treaties and agreements.
17. We denounce the structure of the World Water Forum for being financially prohibitive, which excludes the very Indigenous Peoples who are impacted. We denounce the format of the World Water Forum for denying the legitimacy of the indigenous world and spiritual vision of the sacredness of water.

**Indigenous Peoples and Organizations Present at the Indigenous Forum Endorsing this Declaration:**

**Tribu Yaqui**, Octaviano Jecari Espinzona (Mexico)

**Indigenous Student Organization of the University of Mexico**, Diana Alejandra Lopez Ramirez (Mexico)

**Red Regional de Turismo en Xochimilco** (Mexico)

**Sistema de Agua Portable**, Saul Rogue Morales (Mexico)

**Coordinadores de Trabajadores en Defensa del Agua**, Angel Martinez (Mexico)

**Organización de Desarrollo y Ayude a los Pueblos Indígenas** (Mexico)

**Confederación Nacional de Naciones Indigenas Originarios de Bolivia**, Jaime Apaza Chuqimia (Bolivia)

**Internacional Indian Treaty Council**, Alberto Saldamando (US & Meso America)

**Indigenous Environmental Network**, Tom Goldtooth (US & Canada)

**Black Mesa Water Coalition**, Enei Begaye (US)

**St'at'imc Chiefs Council**, Chief Garry John (Canada)

**Winnemem Wintu Tribe, Village of Kerekmet**, Headman, Mark Franco (US)