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**THE NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION**

**RESOLUTION #2020-02**

**TITLE: Urging Adoption and Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

**WHEREAS,** the National Native American Bar Association (“NNABA”) was founded in 1973 and serves as the national association for Native American attorneys, judges, law professors and law students, and NNABA promotes and addresses social, cultural, political and legal issues affecting American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

**WHEREAS,** Native Americans have been the subject of exclusionary policies and language which sought to erase Native Americans from the body politic of the United States since its founding, including by the United States Supreme Court, which stated in *Johnson v. M’Intosh* that Native Americans are not “citizens” but instead “perpetual inhabitants” of the United States “with diminutive rights,” at the hands of the “discovery and conquest” by European colonizers; and

**WHEREAS,** Indigenous people were actively involved in the drafting and implementation process of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration) since 1999; and

**WHEREAS**, the Declaration is an historic statement of rights intended to guard against the genocide, the theft of lands and resources, the discrimination, and the political exclusion that tribal nations and many other Indigenous Peoples have suffered – and too often continue to suffer today; and

**WHEREAS,** the Declaration contains the “minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples of the world”; and

**WHEREAS**, NNABA believes that implementation of the Declaration by the United Nations, the government of the United States, individual states, and other governments—including tribal nations—is critical for protecting and furthering the rights of Indigenous Peoples both domestically and internationally; and

**WHEREAS,** years after the adoption of the Declaration, Indigenous rights are still regularly violated, with Indigenous Peoples in all regions continuing to face atrocities that violate their individual and collective rights; and

**WHEREAS,** Indigenous peoples and individuals will benefit vastly if the principles of the Declaration are implemented by the United States, the individual states, tribal governments; and other governments; and

**WHEREAS,** much work remains to be done to implement the Declaration; and

**WHEREAS**, Indigenous peoples have the opportunity to set an example for nations, states, and other governments regarding the importance of implementing the Declaration; and

**WHEREAS**, some tribal governments and Native nations have already begun to set such an example by adopting Resolutions stating various types of support for the Declaration;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that NNABA hereby endorses the Declaration, and commits to undertaking efforts to encourage implementation of the Declaration through awareness-building and advocacy activities;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NNABA encourages Native nations and other Indigenous peoples to consider endorsing and/or adopting the Declaration as tribal law; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that NNABA calls on the federal government to commit to the implementation of the Declaration, including through the development on a national action plan;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that NNABA calls on all state and local governments to commit to the implementation of the Declaration;

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that NNABA supports this resolution as policy until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**Certification**

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Board of Directors of the National Native American Bar Association, on November 16, 2020, with a quorum present.



Thomasina Real Bird, President

Attest:



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Heather Torres, Secretary