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# Statement in Solidarity by American Indian and Indigenous Peoples organizations in Los Angeles, California

written by Struggle - La Lucha  
May 31, 2020



Graphic by Sharaya Yvonne FB

# **Statement in Solidarity with African-American, Afro-Mexicano, Afro-Indigenous and Black relatives everywhere but especially in the USA by American Indian and Indigenous Peoples organizations in Los Angeles, California**

Lazo en Español: <https://bit.ly/SolidaridadconAfroAmericanos>

May 30, 2020

Policing, politics, and pandemics

The police murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department was an outrageous violation of human rights which must result in the prosecution of all the officers involved. The civil unrest which righteously followed was a result of the city of Minneapolis' inadequate response to the actions of its officers as an entity charged with the protection of all of its residents. Across America, Black teenagers, college students, city councilmen, congressmen and residents of all walks of life have shared detailed accounts of the realities of police violence as a daily repeated reality. In America today, we know that being Black is sufficient for police to justify violence as they represent an unfounded threat based in racism.

The Minneapolis Police Department's violence against American Indians in many

ways also gave birth to the American Indian Movement in the '60's. According to the [Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Group \(MUID\)](#) — a collaborative of some thirty American Indian organizations operating within the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota, "The American Indian Movement was founded in Minneapolis in 1968 as a direct response to unchecked brutality being perpetrated by the Minneapolis Police Department upon our community members".

We stand in solidarity with the African American community, as Peoples who have also experienced violent and structural oppression at the hands of the settler state.

Community leaders are calling for meaningful dialogue and elders are laying down prayers. Escalating police presence and ongoing racist ideologies in police departments across the country is not the solution. Therefore, we demand additional community action and organizing to create an authentic dialogue to address the root causes of police violence against black, brown, and indigenous communities.

This morning we awoke again to the reality of police violence in what is fast becoming the clear trappings of an authoritarian state which is only the latest manifestation of a long history of colonization, genocide and violence of the country against Indigenous peoples. At the border, Indigenous children are incarcerated and cast out, across LA, fathers, sons, and brothers have been beaten and shot to death and the Sheriff remains lawless.

And in Minneapolis, buildings burn.

As a result of the current unrest, a local American Indian education center in Minneapolis, called [MIGIZE](#), Anishinabe for Eagle, was burnt down as well.

We've seen this all before. We've lived it.

Indigenous Peoples and tribal members of sovereign American Indian nations here

in California also include African American family members. In Los Angeles, being Black or Brown is also often enough to be dehumanized and criminalized by local police and sheriffs. Police brutality is part of a larger issue of domination, oppression, and colonization in this country. State violence is in the DNA of the founding of this country, state, and city.

Today, we call for continental solidarity with African American communities in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and here in Los Angeles.

We express our love and kinship with our own African American relatives and call for exhaustive measures to be taken to change the culture and purpose of all police departments.

In the new normal, we cannot accept any use of public institutional violence against us. We need to reimagine the role of law enforcement in US society, one that is guided by creating and championing peace and service to all communities.

In solidarity with our relatives and partners in the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota, we call for the swift and vigorous prosecution of the four offending (and now terminated) officers complicit in this murder to the fullest extent of the law.

We stand with the African American community, and all other communities regularly targeted for violence by police and sheriff's departments across the country.

We demand community-based recommendations be implemented without delay in Minneapolis, Los Angeles and across the country. We also demand that more strategies be developed and implemented to properly protect Black, Brown and Indigenous people from the police forces our tax dollars, cities, and towns subsidize, especially as the City of Los Angeles plans to expend additional funds on policing instead of community-building, housing, and education.

As Indigenous Peoples and their allies, we stand in solidarity with all oppressed people in what is currently called the United States, and we call for immediate systemic change with unity, justice and dignity.

We offer our kinship, prayers and commitment from Tovaangar and Tatavium territories (the Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands). As a coalition of Indigenous Peoples we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), 'Ahihirom (Elders) and 'Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

In solidarity,

**Chrissie Castro (Diné, Chicana)**, Chairperson, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission, Co-founder, California Native Vote Project

**Rudy J. Ortega, Jr.**, Tribal President, **Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians**

**Marcos Aguilar & Minnie Ferguson, (Masewali Mexicano)**, Letter Co-author, Semillas del Pueblo -Anahuacalmecac World School

**Salomon Zavala (Nahua Chicano)**, Ollin Law, Letter Co-author

**Dr. Shannon Speed (Chickasaw)**, UCLA American Indian Studies Center, Letter Co-author

**Celestina Castillo (Tohono O'odham/Chicana)**, Executive Director, California Native Vote Project

**Andrea N. Garcia, MD (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara)**, Commissioner, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission, Project Scientist, Department of Psychiatry, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

**Cynthia M Ruiz (Cherokee Citizen)**, Tsa-La-Gi LA Council member

**Joseph Berra**, Human Rights in the Americas Project Director, Human Rights in Action Clinic UCLA Law

**Heather Rae**, IllumiNative

**Felicia Montes & Maria Villamil**, Mujeres de Maíz

**Odilia Romero (Zapoteca)**, Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB), Comunidades Indígenas en Liderazgo (CIELO)

**Gaspar Rivera-Salgado (Mixteco)**, Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB)

**George Funmaker (Ho-Chunk/Dakota)**, Red Earth Defense

**Policarpo Chan (Maya Quiche)**, Maya Vision and Mayan Community of LA

**Monique Castro (Diné, Chicana)**, CEO/Founder, Indigenous Circle of Wellness, Co-founder, California Native Vote Project

**R. Tolteka Cuauhtin (Xicano Nahua)**, Save CA Ethnic Studies Coalition

**Javier Ramirez (Lenca Poton, Nawat, Pipil)**, **David Escobar (Lenca Poton)**, **Scott Scoggins (Nawat, Pipil)** Kuxkatan Indigenous Collective CCNIS, Diáspora representatives

**Lydia Ponce (Mayo/Quechua/Scottish)**, American Indian Movement

**Mati Waiya (Chumash, Chichimeca, Nuuchah-nulth)**, Executive Director, Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation

**Sylvia Gonzales-Youngblood (Ohlone/Costanoan Rumsen/Mexican)**, Advocate/Activist/Community Leader, Co-Founder|So Cal Administrator, Community Advisory Leadership Collaborative

**Alma Marquez**, La Comadre Organization

**Betty Avila**, Executive Director, Self Help Graphics & Art

**Jennifer Cuevas (Chicana/Cora/Huichol)**, Jenerate Media

**Roberto Flores, Eastside Café** (Community Collectives: Son Jarocho, Warrior Jiu Jitsu, Womens Circle, Mens Circle, United Cal Trans Tenants, Yoga, Capoeira , Danza Xiuhcoatl, ESL)

**El Sereno Community Land Trust**

**Jason Erik Reed (African-American/Cherokee)**, Los Angeles Community Member

**Joel Garcia (Huichol)**, Meztli Projects

**Reynaldo F. Macías (Chicano)**, Trustee, Anahuacalmecac World School, Professor, UCLA Chican@ Studies

**Carolyn Webb de Macías**, (Mother of 3 Blaxican men), Board of Directors, LA Community Coalition

**Ernesto Tlahuitollini Colín (Mexica/P'uréhpecha)**, Trustee, Anahuacalmecac World School, Associate Professor, Loyola Marymount University

**Gypsie Vasquez-Ayala (Nahua Chicana)**, Trustee, Anahuacalmecac World School

**Edmundo Perez (Macuiltianguis Zapoteca)**, Trustee, Anahuacalmecac World School

**Tino Torres (Chiende Warm Springs Apache New Mexico)**, Xikano Nation East  
L.A. California

**Bethany Yellowtail (Northern Cheyenne, Crow)**, Founder/Designer, B.Yellowtail

**Tazbah Rose Chavez (Nüümü, Dinè, San Carlos Apache)**, Poet / Writer /  
Director

**Joey Montoya (Lipan Apache)**, CEO, Urban Native Era

**Shannon Rivers (Akimel O'otham)**, American Indian Cultural Advisor: Indian  
Health Center, Santa Clara Valley, Native American Spiritual Leader: for State,  
Federal, Private and Tribal Correctional Facilities in Arizona and California

**N. Bird Runningwater (Cheyenne/Mescalero Apache)**, Sundance Institute

**Cheyenne Phoenix (Diné/Nüümü)**, California Native Vote Project (Youth  
Organizer), Grassroots Organizer

**For more information:**

<https://blacklivesmatter.com/>

<https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/>

[MUIDMN Statement](#)

<https://bit.ly/LAIndigenousBlackSolidarity>



