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Title:

Comments: To many indigenous Peoples, the Black Hills means freedom. As former Attorney General Ramsey Clark stated in Leonard Peltier's biography 'Prison Writings, My Life is My Sundance', native elder Peltier was (and is still fighting) "...in defense of not just his people but of the right of all individuals and people to be free from domination and exploitation." Same goes for Mother Earth. So for me the Black Hills signifies hope for correcting a wrong done to many natives who have fought for such freedom and liberation in all its forms.

The 'United Nations Declaration of The Rights of Indigenous Peoples' states:

Article 8,

2. States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for:

(a) Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities;

(b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources; (c) Any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights;

Article 25,

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26,

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.

2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.

3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

Article 27

States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process, giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used.

Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process.

All of these will be in violation if the mining withdrawal is not approved.

I would love to visit the Black Hills one day and feel her medicine so many natives love her for.

Being respected is how Mother Earth gives back to us. She does not bother us. She only provides, cares, nurtures. If we/this generation does not protect her, who we love, future generations will not enjoy her. My tribe Higuayagua fully supports this withdrawal and an expansion.

Please approve the mineral withdrawal, protect Black Hills natural and cultural resources, and expand the mineral withdrawal to include more land. An expansion to the withdrawal will benefit even more of Mother Earth's children and future generations ?? . Bee ??well and be wise...please for all of us. Hajom/ Thank you.