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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2009

Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Proposes Resolution on International Declaration to Intergovernmental Relations Committee

St. Michaels, Ariz. – The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission (NNHRC) presented a resolution recommending the position statements of the Navajo Nation regarding the Organization of American States (OAS) draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee (IGRC) at the Navajo Nation Council Chambers on Monday in Window Rock, Ariz.

By an 8-0 vote, the IGRC voted to defer legislation no. 0118-09 to a work session at a time appropriate as determined by the NNHRC and the IGRC.

The NNHRC has been accumulating statements made at public hearings and from organizations such as the Dine Hataalii Association and the Native American Church and compiled them into a summary report on four issues that continuously re-surface: Unsolved deaths in border towns, desecration of sacred sites, the environment and forced relocation.

NNHRC Chairperson Duane H. Yazzie says the Commission has received considerable comments on the desecration of San Francisco Peaks and the plans to produce artificial snow using waste water to pro-long the ski season.

Chairperson Yazzie says the Commission reviewed the current OAS draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and took the four re-

occurring thematic issues, made recommendations on the language and hopes OAS will accept it and implement it into the declaration.

“We are obligated to come before you to share with you this recommendation, for your blessing and concurrence, to pursue this implementation into the declaration,” Chairperson Yazzie said.

Government Services Chairperson Ervin Keeswood, Sr. told the NNHRC that the declaration contained language that IGRC had contributed prior to this resolution proposition and motioned for the legislation to be deferred to a work session so the two entities could sort out the details.

NNHRC Executive Director Leonard Gorman says recognition in the international community that Navajo people have rights is very critical and monumental and will affect the Navajo people in the future.

The tentative IGRC work session with the NNHRC is March 25-26 in Albuquerque, New Mex. For more information about the OAS draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples visit the NNHRC website at www.nnhrc.navajo.org or call (928) 871-7436.

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