



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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President Shelly thanks Navajo people, issues holiday message for peace and unity



President Shelly thanks the Navajo people. He said to have a safe and enjoyable holiday season. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Across the country, Nov. is celebrated as Native American Heritage Month. It is a time of celebration and reflection on the sacrifices our ancestors made for us to be where we are today.

For the Navajo people, our traditional New Year began in Oct., during the time of the annual harvest season. As we transition into winter, it will be a time for coyote stories and a chance to share with our younger generation the origin of our people and culture, as told through the adventures of the Navajo Hero Twins.

We have much to be thankful for this holiday season. As the largest land based tribe in the country, we often set the tone for the rest of Indian Country to follow. Our sophisticated form of government continues to evolve as new challenges emerge to test the strength of our Nation.

Vice President Rex Lee Jim and I want to say thank you for allowing us to serve as your leaders over the past four years. We are thankful for this blessing to serve our Navajo people and move this Nation forward. Let us remain respectful and peaceful during this shift in our presidential election. The teachings of our elders will bring us forward.

The \$554 million settlement agreement is a tremendous blessing for our Navajo Nation. We must have due diligence for the investment of these funds on behalf of the Navajo people. Their voice must be included in the decision making process before a single penny of the settlement is spent.

Let us be thankful for Diné bizaad, the Navajo language, which brought our people from the darkness of the Emergence to the Glittering World of today. Let us never forget how our brave Navajo Code Talkers used Diné bizaad to save our earth from the ravages of World War II. Our people have survived the most tumultuous times because of our language and traditions that have withstood the test of time.

We are here today because of the Ana'í Ndáá' (Enemy Way) and Hózhó ojí (Blessing Way) ceremonies. Diné bizaad and its use is true Navajo sovereignty. The Diyin Diné (Holy People) gave us this language to speak and use as Nahoká Diné (Holy Earth People).

Let us never forget Diné bizaad and be thankful for our great Navajo Nation, from Sisaajini to Tsoodzil to Dook'o'oslid to Dibé Nitsaa, the Four Sacred Mountains that protect us and will take us forward for generations to come.

As you sit down to break bread with family and friends, remember the many Navajo veterans that cannot be with us at the dinner table because they are serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Let us remember them in our prayers. Be sure to also check on your elders and ensure they have enough heat, food and water for the winter. They need our help.

Thank you for allowing our administration to serve you. We are very proud to serve this great Navajo Nation and our people. Have a wonderful holiday season and take care of each other.