



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 20, 2020

#### **Unity and solidarity officially established between the Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico and the National Council of Native American Churches**

Mirando City, Texas – In an unprecedented move to express unity, solidarity, and transparency during this time of inequality awareness, the Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico officially announced through a statement dated May 13, 2020 their unequivocal support for the National Council of Native American Churches (NCNAC) which consists of the Native American Churches of North America, South Dakota, and Oklahoma, and Azee Bee Nahaghá of the Diné Nation and the Indigenous Peyote Conservation Initiative (IPCI).

The Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico, the largest governing body of the Wixárika people, formally supports the efforts of the NCNAC and IPCI on Peyote conservation. This support includes the need for Indigenous inclusion and leadership when developing policy and addressing issues related to Peyote such as conservation, sacred territories, and access for Indigenous Peyote practitioners. The Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico declares they have no formal representation within the United States and respectfully demands that efforts in the United States to legalize or decriminalize entheogenic possession and use not explicitly mention Peyote in any list of plants and fungi, and not refer to the Wixárika Nation as supporters of any initiative or promotional materials. The inclusion of the word Peyote in decriminalization efforts without Indigenous collaboration is a clear indication of the ongoing lack of awareness regarding Peyote decline, Indigenous histories, and perpetuates systemic racism and marginalization of the original users and practitioners of Peyote.

The unity between the Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico, the NCNAC, and IPCI aligns with the ongoing struggle to ensure religious freedom, equality, and representation that surrounds the sacred Peyote medicine. The Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico and the NCNAC express their sovereignty as the First Peoples and nature protectors. The Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico fully and explicitly supports the mission of IPCI, which is an Indigenous led, land-based initiative that directly addresses the ecological, cultural, and access issues related to sustainability of the Peyote sacrament, and engages in diverse biocultural strategies for spiritual reconnection and restoration of Peyote, including land access and stewardship, youth education, Peyote cultivation, and a system of harvest and distribution that is spiritually and culturally

sound. This is an international collaborative, supporting tribes and efforts focused on sustainability and Indigenous sovereignty of Peyote across the Native American Church, the U.S., Mexico, and Canada.

To learn more about Peyote conservation and to provide support to the Initiative, please visit the IPCI website at <https://www.ipci.life> or contact: Miriam Volat – IPCI Executive Director, [info@ipci.life](mailto:info@ipci.life) Link to the Wixárika Regional Council of Mexico Statement: <https://www.ipci.life/pressreleases>