

PRESS RELEASE – Tue. July 30, 2013

O'odham VOICE Against the Wall: US Border Patrol Violates O'odham Rights

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The O'odham are Indigenous people, members of the Tohono O'odham Nation, a federally-recognized Indian reservation in Pima and Maricopa County of Southwestern Arizona, having continually since time immemorial conducted and practiced the Him'dag, the O'odham Way of Life, hereby declare that the United States Government Department of Homeland Security, Border Patrol Forces with malicious intent and with armed aggression have:

1. **Violated O'odham Rights to Life;**

by continuous monitoring and surveillance in communities on the entirety of O'odham lands, restricting free movement within communities and entire lands, armed abuse and violent attacks on O'odham members, and driving through yards and fenced-in areas at high speeds endangering lives of O'odham.

2. **Violated O'odham Cultural Rights;**

by interference and disruption of ceremonial hunts by their presence in hunting areas (even upon proper notice to their head authorities), disarming traditional hunters, helicopters flying over hunting area, trucks, ATV's and horses in hunting areas, spotlighting ceremonial dancers, driving through ceremonial grounds and driving and parking in ceremonial grounds.

3. **Violated O'odham Rights of Mobility;**

by stopping and restricting O'odham conducting prayers and offerings, collecting foods and medicine plants and hunting on O'odham lands, aggressive and physical attacks while interrogating O'odham as to their personal travel agenda, including threat of criminal charges, coercion and imprisonment using gross profanity and racial remarks, outright demeaning of O'odham not proficient in the English language and demanding passports from O'odham while in their yards, in their homes and while traveling on Bureau of Indian Affairs Roads and State Road 86 that is on O'odham lands, including at structures of illegal check points on the boundaries of the Tohono O'odham Nation reservation.

4. **Trespassed and Destroyed O'odham Cultural Property;**

in creating numerous access roads without authorization, including use of community hunting and fire wood gathering roads, grading and destroying mountains and hills including ceremonial use mountains and lands, and handling and destruction of burial sites on mountains and lands, removal of burial items, driving on and over marked burial area such as cemeteries, destroying natural habitat of animals and plants of great significance to O'odham ceremonial use, uses for medicines, and destruction and surveying of mountain tops for proposed surveillance towers without authorization, including assembly of portable surveillance equipment on mountains and hills, and making access roads to these areas without authorization, parking on ceremonial grounds, parking in cemeteries and near or by burial areas, making numerous roads by homes and within communities.

We request the general public to support the O'odham by demanding a stop to these profoundly offensive and repeated violations occurring to the O'odham by the United States Government Department of Homeland Security Border Patrols and demanding protection of O'odham Right to Life, Cultural Rights, Rights of Mobility and Cultural Properties, all rights guaranteed under United States Government laws and International Laws.

Send comments and questions to the following Tribal and United States Government authorities:

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