

The Dakota-Lakota-Nakota Human Rights Advocacy Coalition

Charter and Governing Principles

Preamble

Whereas the sovereign Dakota-Lakota-Nakota (herein referred to as “DLN”) Indian Nations and Peoples possess the right to self-determination; by the virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development;

Whereas the DLN Nations and Peoples that suffer under colonial occupation and/or IRA government structures, or are otherwise denied the exercise of their self-determination;

Whereas the rights of the individual and the collective rights of DLN people are inextricably linked;

Whereas the protection of our Grandmother, the earth, and her natural environment is similarly linked to the rights of American Indigenous Nations and Peoples to determine their own destiny;

Whereas DLN Nations and People are victims of human rights abuses, discrimination, persecution, population transfers, forced assimilation, deprivation of land or other natural resources and sometimes genocide;

Whereas the unprovoked use of all forms of violence by the occupying Federal, State, County, and Municipal governments against DLN Nations and Peoples is to be condemned;

Whereas the non-recognition of a majority of DLN Nations and Peoples by intergovernmental organizations and the absence of meaningful venues for the expression and enforcement of their aspirations and rights often leads to the use of violence;

Whereas the ends sought by the DLN Nations and Peoples are similar in their individual situations, history and goals, and range from the recognition and protection of basic human rights, including cultural and religious rights, within existing occupying governmental entities, to the recognition of their sovereignty or statehood on an equal basis with other Nation-States;

Whereas an effort is needed to effectively address the legitimate issues raised by DLN Nations and Peoples to strengthen the stability of its tribal governments, and to promote common integrated rights based on genuine respect and understanding of the ways of our relations passed.

Therefore, the DLN Nations and Peoples, represented by the undersigned Representatives, establish among themselves, the Dakota-Lakota-Nakota Human Rights Advocacy Coalition (the “DLN Coalition”).

General Provisions

Article 1

It shall be the aim of the DLN Coalition to assist DLN Nations and Peoples to express their positions, needs and grievances in legitimate forums and to provide a network of support, to advance the fulfillment of the aspirations of DLN Nations and Peoples by effective non-violent means.

Article 2

The activities of the DLN Coalition shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- a) The facilitation of consultation, exchange of views and experiences, and cooperation with each member;
- b) Providing assistance in effectively utilizing available tribal, regional, national and international legal and administrative procedures;
- c) Promoting omnibus legal training in tribal, constitutional, and international law;
- d) Promoting training in negotiation skills and professional assistance to DLN People in conflict resolution through lay advocacy;
- e) Developing strategic plans and policies;
- f) Seeking and providing lay advocacy and public relations advice to the extent allowable by applicable statutes;
- g) Providing for the dissemination of information provided by DLN members and participants to the public and among our own people;
- h) Assisting in the development of traditional DLN governments and processes;
- i) Assisting in the development and implementation of measures designed to protect the natural environment while promoting economic self-sufficiency among DLN Nations and People.

Article 3

The DLN Coalition shall, inasmuch as possible, be modeled after traditional DLN Warrior Society and Tiospaye form.

A **DLN Governing Council** shall be established and composed of a single representative **Delegate** DLN Member from each specialized advocacy “**Tiospaye**,” or working body, involved with a particular DLN issue, concern, or organizational subdivision. The DLN Governing Council shall decide how to best fulfill the needs of the DLN Coalition keeping the common good of the DLN Nations and People as the foremost objective. The DLN Governing Council shall make consensus decisions with the understanding that all alternative viewpoints will be afforded respect in the Talking Circle. Unanimous agreement of the DLN Governing Council shall direct the strategic and administrative matters of the DLN Coalition. Amendments to the Charter shall be approved by unanimous agreement of all Tiospaye Delegates to the DLN Governing Council.

Each **Tiospaye** shall undertake specialized issues and objectives and work as a team, delegation, body, or committee in their functional area of expertise. Examples include teams and working groups formed to address specific areas of need such as Legal Defense, Child and Family Rights, Law Enforcement Abuses, and so on. Each Tiospaye shall decide upon a member among their number to represent their Tiospaye as delegate to the DLN Governing Council. The DLN Governing Council may appoint Advisory Board(s) to assist in bringing additional wisdom and expertise to particular Tiospayes. A specific organizational Tiospaye will be formed to “administer” to the needs of the DLN Coalition entity.

The DLN Governing Council shall conduct DLN Coalition-wide tribal meetings at least twice yearly; Special DLN Coalition-wide meetings as needed, and planning meetings among themselves. Each Tiospaye Delegate may serve the DLN Governing Council as long as their Tiospaye so desires and decides. The DLN Governing Council shall appoint a Sergeant at Arms, if needed, from among the DLN membership present at meetings, to assist in conducting the meeting and tending to other meeting-related administrative matters.

Article 4

Each DLN Coalition member shall take general and specific measures, which are appropriate to help the organization to achieve its aims, and shall refrain from actions intended or reasonably expected to reflect dishonor to the DLN Nations and People or impede DLN Coalition activities.

Provisions Governing Membership

Article 5

Membership is open to all DLN Nations and People, and to those of other American Indian ancestry, and to those friends and supporters from all Nations who are dedicated to recovering and preserving traditional DLN ways and devoted to the pursuit of integrated rights for the DLN Nations and People. Membership dues may be implemented through DLN governing Council action.

DLN members are asked to embrace and adhere to the following social principles and guidelines:

- a) Belief in the sovereignty of American Indian Nations and Peoples and in their inalienable right to self-determination;
- b) Adherence to internationally accepted human rights standards as laid down by the United Nations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

- c) Rejection of totalitarianism and any forms of religious intolerance;
- d) Rejection of terrorism as an instrument of policy;
- e) Respect for all peoples and population groups, including minority or majority populations, who, likewise respect the traditional ways of the DLN Nations and People and have no desire to assimilate, convert, or otherwise weaken or destroy native cultures.

Article 6

For the purposes of this Charter:

The DLN Nation and People shall mean the group of human beings (and their supporters) which possess the will to be identified as members of the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota (Nakona) Indigenous Nations and People, and to determine its common destiny as a nation or people, and is bound to a common historical, racial, linguistic, cultural, territorial, and Spiritual heritage.

Article 7

Participation in the DLN Coalition does not in any way imply agreement among all participating Nations and Peoples on each other's objectives, policies, or allegiances and does not require any form of cooperation or solidarity beyond what is contained in this Charter.

Article 8

The DLN Coalition favors the use of peaceful means to achieve their goals. Members shall not use the organization or any of its bodies, specialized agencies or services in its name, to promote the use of violence.

Termination of Participation

Article 9

Members may terminate their membership in the DLN Coalition, if they desire, by sending formal notice to their respective Tiospaye Delegate. Termination shall be effective upon receipt of notice.

Termination of the DLN Coalition

Article 10

The DLN Coalition shall cease to exist if the Governing Council, through unanimous agreement of Tiospaye Delegates, so decides.