

Native group lends support to Palestinians living in the West Bank

Written by By Rick Abasta Sun Correspondent
Friday, 18 May 2018 07:02



The “Palestinian Right of Return” presentation at the Work in Beauty House in Gallup brought together people united in support of Palestinians struggling to survive on the West Bank.

On May 14, the Red Nation Gallup Chapter invited Diné activist Melissa Tso, 30, to speak about her recent trip to Palestine with a delegation from the U.S. called “Black 4 Palestine.”

“We wanted to share our struggles with Palestinians and learn from them,” she said.

Tso is from Chinle, Arizona.

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She is Todich'iinii (Bitter Water Clan) born for To'ahani (Near to Water clan). Her maternal grandfathers and To'ahedliinii (Water Runs Together People) and her paternal grandfathers are Tsinjajinii (Dark Streak People).

Palestine was an eye opening experience and she said it provided a lot more meaning into the work she does in "Solidarity with Palestine."

During the trip, the group traveled to Beirut, Lebanon and attended a conference with activists around the world called the "Global Campaign to Return to Palestine."

In Palestine, Tso spent time in the West Bank. She visited Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem, Hebron and Jerusalem. She visited refugee camps and universities.

"I gave some presentations about Standing Rock and Indigenous Solidarity with Palestine," she said. "I think it was the wrong move for Donald Trump to move the embassy to Jerusalem because it has triggered more genocidal acts by the Israeli occupation forces."

The move has emboldened Israelis, she said.

During her presentations, Tso claimed to give "genuine accounts" of what she witnessed there and her feelings about what she sees as an apartheid system that exists in occupied Palestine.

"If people want to support Palestine they can join the movement to end the occupation. Boycott and end government and institutional policies and businesses that support the occupation," she said.

She encouraged community outreach and education.

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“Take action in political circles by voting and writing elected officials. Join and support organizations like Jewish Voice for Peace, Black 4 Palestine, Samidoun and Addameer, Global Campaign to Return to Palestine and others,” she said.

Tso is a member of the Red Nation Albuquerque Chapter. The Red Nation formed in November 2014 and has chapters in Gallup and cities in other states.

“We formed to address the marginalization and invisibility of Indigenous struggles within mainstream social justice organizing and to speak out and strategically fight against the ongoing destruction of Indigenous life and land,” she said.

For more information contact the Red Nation Gallup on Facebook.

By Rick Abasta

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