

Navajo Nation leaders congratulate Joe Biden, Kamala Harris

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NATION WELCOMES enactment of ‘Biden-Harris Plan for Tribal Nations’

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer congratulate the 46th U.S. President Joe Biden and 49th Vice President Kamala Harris, who were sworn-in at the U.S. Capitol Jan. 20, to begin their four-year term in the White House.

As part of the Inaugural Ceremonies, President Nez and First Lady Phefelia Nez were invited to offer a prayer during the 59th Inaugural National Prayer Service, which was set for Jan. 21 at 8:00 am. Biden said he would join the virtual event hosted by the Washington National Cathedral to be livestreamed at <https://biden-inaugural.org/watch>.

President Nez, First Lady Nez, and Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish also took part in a virtual event to honor and remember the over 400,000 American citizens who have lost their lives to COVID-19 across the country.

Nez and Lizer watched the inauguration from their respective homes in Window Rock, Ariz., due to COVID-19 restrictions.

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“On behalf of the Navajo Nation, I congratulate President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris on this historic and remarkable day,” Nez stated. “Across this country, it is time to come together in unity, to heal, and to move forward to build a better future for our children and the generations to come. First Lady Phefelia Nez and I have a very good relationship with President Biden and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden. We are very happy for them and their family, as well as Vice President Kamala Harris and Doug Emhoff.”

“The Biden-Harris team has laid the foundation to work with tribal nations with the ‘Biden-Harris Plan for Tribal Nations’ that they presented in October. In the midst of a worldwide pandemic we saw Native Americans, especially young voters, turn out in numbers that we have never seen before,” he continued. “The voting power and influence of Native Americans was a key factor in the outcome of the election. Thanks to the organizing from the grassroots level on up, all tribal nations now have a seat at the table. The Navajo Nation will continue to build a strong partnership with the Biden-Harris Administration to empower our Navajo people and all tribal nations in the years to come.”

Lizer said, “We offer our prayers to the Biden-Harris Administration as America continues to move forward. We are confident that God will guide us in these times of change. Over the last few years, I have been honored to have good relations with former President Donald J. Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, and the White House.

“The Navajo Nation will continue its partnership with our federal partners to enhance the lives and living conditions across the Navajo Nation. Each day, our duty is to place Navajo first,” Lizer stated. “Our message to Wááshindoon centers on our Navajo People.

“We are indestructible as we have learned in the past, because of our culture and heritage. Resiliency runs deep into our mind, heart, and spirit. The Nez-Lizer Administration has been about ‘Working Together’ since day one. We look forward to working collaboratively with the federal government and congressional leaders on both aisles in Congress,” Lizer concluded.

BIDEN-HARRIS PLAN FOR TRIBAL NATIONS

In October, President Nez met with Biden and Harris and highlighted the need for federal partners to work with the Navajo Nation to move forward with infrastructure development

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projects to provide clean water, electricity, broadband, and roads for more Navajo people. Among other priorities, he also spoke about the need to improve the health care system for tribes to improve health disparities, supporting economic development, educational priorities, remediating uranium mining sites, water rights settlements, solid waste management, and improving public safety.

The Biden-Harris Plan for Tribal Nations states, “Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are committed to upholding the U.S.’s trust responsibility to tribal nations, strengthening the Nation-to-Nation relationship between the United States and Indian tribes, and working to empower tribal nations to govern their own communities and make their own decisions.”

The plan says that the Biden-Harris Administration will reinstate the annual White House Tribal Nations Conference, appoint Native Americans to high-level government positions, appoint judges who understand federal Indian law, ensure fulfillment of federal trust and treaty obligations, promote meaningful tribal consultation, defend the Indian Child Welfare Act, and strengthen self-governance. To view the Biden-Harris Plan for Tribal Nations, please visit: <https://joebiden.com/tribalnations/>

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