

Nygren agrees to release proclamation calling for a ceasefire in Palestine

Written by gallupsun

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President invited local community organizations to the President's office to discuss the necessity for the Navajo Nation to call for a ceasefire in Gaza/Palestine Dec. 15. The invitation was extended by President Buu Nygren after he and First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren witnessed a demonstration for Palestine led by K'é Infoshop during the Christmas Tree Lighting event in Window Rock on the evening of Dec. 14.

Nygren met with Diné members from K'é Infoshop and other community organizations, expressing his distress about the tens of thousands of civilian casualties incurred from the Israeli bombing campaign in Gaza since Oct. 7, the majority of whom are children. He stated interest in using his authority as Navajo Nation President to proclaim a permanent ceasefire.

The group provided information to Nygren and his staff on the history of Palestine, Zionist settler colonialism, the US-backed genocide of Palestinian people, and urged all Diné people to research this widely-studied topic. They noted the parallels between Palestinian experiences and those of Diné people.

"Witnessing the inhumane destruction, mass genocide and forced displacement of Palestinian peoples reminds us of the atrocities our own people faced under settler colonial violence during Hweeldí, so it is important for us to honor everything our ancestors have overcome and make it clear we will not play any part in condoning or remaining silent in face of the genocide that is being carried out by Israel with US support" KJ Naabaahii (K'é Infoshop said).

Following discussion, a statement was presented recommending that Nygren calls for a permanent ceasefire in Palestine and for the Navajo Nation to sever all diplomatic, economic, cultural, and religious ties to the state of Israel, along with 11 other recommendations.

Nygren agreed to start the process of drafting a Proclamation calling for a ceasefire, saying he would notify the group by Dec. 29 about a follow-up meeting to review the Proclamation after consulting Bidtah Becker, Chief Legal Counsel for the OPVP, to ensure that he is properly exercising the authorities of his office.

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“We know that this is definitely an action that can be taken by the Navajo Nation President’s office. Communicating clear positions on federal issues is something that has been done and continues to be done through directives to the Navajo Nation Washington Office,” Jaiden Willeto (K’é Infoshop), who met with the President as part of the group, said. “As the largest tribal nation in the U.S., we have a responsibility to make it clear that we choose to be on the right side of history and uphold our responsibilities as Diné people to respect and protect all sacred life.”

The group stated in a press release that they intend to maintain community education efforts regarding the Israeli occupation of Palestine whether or not Nygren issues a ceasefire proclamation.

“Although we would appreciate an immediate response to the recommendations we presented today, we are going to continue our efforts to inform the public of the plight of the Palestinian people given the gravity of the genocide unfolding at this moment,” Rain Metteba (K’e Infoshop) stated. “Millions of Palestinians are under attack without the basic necessities to survive the winter. The crisis worsens by the second and we cannot afford inaction.”

