

Jahalin Bedouin Tribes ratify the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations

WHEREAS we, the representatives of the Jahalin Bedouin Tribe, hereby declare:

- A. The Bedouin of the Jahalin Tribe originate from the Tel Arad district of the Negev desert. Our traditional tribal territory ranges from 50 km northeast of Bir Sheva to 30 km west of the Dead Sea and 30 km south of Hebron.
- B. The Bedouin of the Jahalin tribes originate from the Tel Arad district of the Negev desert. The majority of the Negev Bedouin were forcibly evicted from their ancestral lands in the Negev by the Israeli authorities in the years immediately following the 1948 conflict.
- C. The Jahalin Bedouin are 1948 Palestinian refugees originating from the area of Bir el Sabe'e (Beersheva) in the Naqab (Negev), now located in Israel. Most have subsequently been internally displaced within the occupied West Bank.
- D. Tribal history relates that from 1949 Israeli authorities began a campaign of forced evacuation against the Bedouin in the Tel Arad region. Refusing to collaborate, the Jahalin came under increasing pressure from Israeli forces to leave their lands. The Jahalin Tribe fled their tribal territories to the edges of the Negev, before moving into Jordan and the West Bank, seeking refugee status in the early 1950s.
- E. Clans from five tribes of the Negev Bedouin entered the West Bank seeking refugee status with UNRWA following the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. The Jahalin Tribe is the largest refugee tribe in the West Bank today.
- F. Following the 1967 occupation, Israeli military forces again targeted the Jahalin, expelling them from land confiscated for Jewish settlement. This campaign of ethnic cleansing continues into the present, as expanding settlements around Jerusalem threaten to displace the Jahalin once again.
- G. Since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967, a range of Israeli policies and practices adopted over time have forced pastoral groups including the Jahalin to reduce their seasonal movements and settle into permanent communities. The Jahalin pastoralists of the central West Bank selected locations along their established migration routes in the northern and eastern Jerusalem periphery and the Jericho governorate.
- H. Greater restrictions on movement, settler violence and settlement expansion, and the ongoing construction of the Barrier, have rendered the day-to-day lives and livelihoods of Palestinians resident in Area C, including the Jahalin Bedouin in the Jerusalem periphery, increasingly unsustainable.
- I. The Jahalin people face human rights violations whereby ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony have been exhumed, excavated, stolen, exchanged, studied or taken under duress, without the free, prior, and informed consent of our people and moved beyond the boundaries of Palestine.
- J. This human rights violation is perpetuated through the continued possession, display, study, or profit from our ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

Jahalin Bedouin Tribes ratify the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations

- K. The International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations is an historic statement of rights intended to guard against the genocide, theft of lands and resources, the discrimination, and the political exclusion that the Jahalin Bedouin and many others have suffered – and too often continue to suffer today.
- L. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with Indigenous peoples concerned.
- M. The Jahalin nation has consistently supported other nations that seek to protect ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.
- N. Indigenous peoples of Jahalin should be able to maintain, protect, and have access to their religious and cultural sites and should have the collective right to repatriate their human remains, ceremonial objects and cultural patrimony.
- O. The Jahalin are experiencing difficulty locating ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony in international repositories due to various reasons, such as misidentification, no listed cultural affiliation, lack of available records from international repositories to our nations, and no presently existing centralized notification system to nations.
- P. The Jahalin member tribes and the national community of Palestinian tribes have prioritized the need for autonomy in order to establish laws, courts, investigations, tribunals and the implementation of legal protections to ensure the repatriation of ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony taken, exhumed, excavated, exchanged, studied, and otherwise residing in repositories worldwide.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that:

1. The Jahalin tribal leadership hereby formally ratifies the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations.
2. The Jahalin tribal nation hereby supports other tribal nations in their efforts to form autonomous governments.
3. The Jahalin tribal nation will urge other Palestinian tribes to ratify the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations and implement its policies within 90 days of ratification.
4. Jahalin will work with the Palestinian tribal leadership and others to collaborate with indigenous nations in promoting ratification of the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations.
5. This resolution shall be the policy of Palestian tribes of Jahalin until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing ratification was adopted by the leadership of the Jahalin Bedouin Tribes on October 20, 2021 of the Common Era.

[signed]

Sheikh
Ahmad Husni Atwa

