

Nations of Syria's Yarmouk Basin ratify the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations

WHEREAS we, the representatives of the people of the Yarmouk Basin of Syria, declare:

- A. The Yarmouk Basin (Arabic: *Hawdh al-Yarmouk*) of Syria is situated in southwest Deraa on the border with the Golan Heights and Jordan. In the Yarmouk Basin, clans and extended families are defined by the Arabic term *bayt* (literally, 'house'). In the Yarmouk Basin village of Abidin, the two largest clans are *Bayt al-Masri* and *Bayt al-Ghabaiti*. *Bayt al-Sudi* is a clan of black complexion that has long been settled in the area within the Yarmouk Basin called by their name al-Sudi. They are Arabs.
- B. The Yarmouk Basin government, established in Bayt Abu Samir, includes related clans like the *Bayt Abu Marah* found in Jamla, Bayt Al-Masri, a clan in the village of al-Shajra and black populations of unknown tribal affiliation living in Jalin and Tasil.
- C. The Yarmouk Basin's indigenous tribes have distinct identities and traditions and all have experienced encroachment on their traditional homelands.
- D. There is an ongoing need for Indigenous Peoples of the Yarmouk Basin to work collectively to protect and advance their collective rights.
- E. The International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations (ICRIN) is the first comprehensive international law to address the rights and long-term social, economic and political interests of indigenous tribes like those of the Yarmouk Basin of Syria. This concrete initiative calls upon individual indigenous nations to directly decide what role they will play in international affairs. Provisions enshrined in ICRIN include:
 - a. Peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes between Nations and between Nations and States;
 - b. Measures concerning genocide against indigenous nations;
 - c. Protection and maintenance of cultural and biological diversity;
 - d. Protection of the lands and territories;
 - e. Protection of intellectual property; and
 - f. Procedures for resolving disputes through negotiation of treaties.
- F. Indigenous tribes of the Yarmouk Basin of Syria have the inherent right to self-determination that has been recognized by the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations.
- G. The Yarmouk Basin tribal government of Syria regards the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations as an historic statement of our rights as indigenous nations intended to guard against genocide, theft of lands and resources, all kinds of discrimination, and the political exclusion that indigenous people of Syria have suffered—and too often continue to suffer today.
- H. The Yarmouk Basin tribal nations of Syria have the right to establish their tribal autonomy as recognized by the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations, as separate sovereigns which requires a nation-to-nation or government-to-government relationship with the Yarmouk Basin tribes.
- I. Following consultation and coordination with tribal governments, an executive order of the leadership of the Yarmouk Basin was issued on May 25th 2021 requiring the President of the Yarmouk Basin to consult with tribal nations on a government-to-government basis on proposed actions or policies of those agencies which could have an impact on one or more tribal nations or their citizens.

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- J. An Executive Memorandum on Tribal Autonomy by the sheikhs of the Yarmouk Basin ratifies the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations and directs tribes to develop a plan of actions that each tribe will follow to implement ICRIN policies and directives.
- K. The Yarmouk Basin tribes should live up to the principles contained in the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations, which states that "States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them."
- L. This process shall take place in a manner that allows Yarmouk Basin tribal nations to have substantial and meaningful input in the policy making process before such policies or actions are carried out.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that:

1. The Yarmouk Basin tribal leadership hereby formally endorses and ratifies the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations.
2. The Yarmouk Basin tribal leadership urges all agencies of the executive branch that have not yet adopted formal tribal consultation policies to do so immediately in coordination with tribes and in a manner that is consistent with traditions of the tribes of the Yarmouk Basin.
3. The Yarmouk Basin tribal leadership declares mandatory administration-wide implementation of policies and the processes of the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations.
4. This resolution shall be the policy of Yarmouk Basin until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the assembly of tribes of the Yarmouk Basin on June 27th 2021.

[signed]

Sheik Ahmad Sadeik

