

May 28, 2010

Greetings,

Indian Affairs Committee New York Yearly Meeting Religious Society of Friends

At our called meeting on May 22, 2010, the Indian Affairs Committee, using the minute from Syracuse Monthly Meeting as a foundation, approved the following minute on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery.

We seek to live in a just peace with our fellow human beings, both as individuals, and as peoples.

We call on the United States Senate to support the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, so that it becomes the law of the land in the United States of America.

We repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, which originated in the 15th century from Papal Bulls and European royal charters issued at that time. We cannot accept that the Doctrine of Discovery was ever a true authority for forced takings of persons and land. It is false for the United States to assert the Doctrine of Discovery to compel a jurisdiction over Indigenous peoples or their lands.

We honor the inalienable rights that sustain the existence of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples have rights to their homelands, water, spiritual practices, languages, cultural practices, and to self-government. An Indigenous people has the right to make decisions and conduct international relations on their own behalf.

In peace, Sybil Perry, Clerk