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**Statement by Mr. Álvaro Pop Ac, Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
and Dr. Dalee Dorrough and Chief Edward John, Expert Members of the Permanent
Forum on Indigenous Issues, on the escalating violence against unarmed protestors at the
Dakota Access Pipeline construction site (North Dakota, USA)
22 November 2016**

The Chair and Expert Members of the Permanent condemn the aggravated conditions that have worsened near the Sioux tribal territories of Standing Rock.

We share the anguish over the violence that has been perpetrated against indigenous peoples and others at Standing Rock which escalated over the weekend. We have received reports that police officers were spraying unarmed protestors with cold water, rubber bullets and tear gas. The heightened militarization and brutality being inflicted by so-called law enforcement personnel is, at a minimum, a breach of the basic human rights of the protestors.

We have previously stated that we are stunned by the lack of a federal government presence at the protest site and urged President Obama and his administration to act in favour of the peaceful protestors. We again call for the full implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and respect for the civil and political rights of indigenous peoples.

We reiterate this call to action, especially considering the viciousness that is being demonstrated by enforcement officials against indigenous peoples.

We understand that President-elect Trump is one of the investors in Energy Transfer LLC -- the company undertaking the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. We ask the President-elect to use his capacity to suspend the construction that affects the compliance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and violates the human rights of indigenous peoples.

A step in this direction would be a positive signal towards the search for a peaceful solution to the issues surrounding the lack of consultation with, and consent of the Standing Rock Sioux peoples, as well as the recognition of their rights to lands, territories and resources in relation to the Dakota Access Pipeline project.