



Sovereign Bodies Institute
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Sovereign Bodies Institute Statement on visit to Mauna Kea

Sovereign Bodies Institute had the great honor of visiting the lāhui encampment on Mauna Kea, August 30th through September 2nd.

On behalf of Sovereign Bodies Institute, Executive Director Annita Lucchesi and Board Member Morning Star Gali participated in protocol and events, attended the university at camp, and joined in celebrating Queen Lili'uokalani's birthday commemorations. To witness Kapu Aloha practiced in its sacred responsibility and forms, was a powerful and unforgettable experience that we shared with our sisters and daughters on the Mauna.

In light of these experiences and relationships built during this visit, Sovereign Bodies Institute would like to issue a formal statement of support in solidarity with the Kupuna and Kanaka Maoli that have now stood for over 55 days in protecting Mauna Kea.

Sovereign Bodies Institute condemns state sanctioned violence against unarmed peaceful protectors on Mauna Kea. Sovereign Bodies Institute was founded on the belief that Indigenous peoples have the right to live lives free from violence, including desecration of sacred places, criminalization, elder abuse, and environmental injustices, all of which has already occurred on Mauna Kea. We understand that violence against our land and sacred places is also a violation of our peoples, and that the safety and sovereignty of women and girls is tied to protecting our sacred lands from state and colonial violence. We support Kanaka Maoli freedom to honor and protect their sacred places and homelands and will continue to lend our support to Kū Kia'i Mauna and all of our Kanaka relatives.

As witnessed by a number of Human Rights defenders and organizations; the State of Hawaii has erected blockades that prevent Kanaka access to their most sacred places of worship. This is a violation of Kanaka Maoli rights as protected by the United Nations. Sovereign Bodies Institute affirms that the following rights as outlined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples have been violated in State led efforts of continued desecration and state sanctioned violence:

Article 12,

Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.



Article 13,

Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons. 2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

Article 24,

Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services. 2. Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.

As our Kanaka Maoli relatives stand strong in defense of Mauna Kea, their culture, and their sovereignty, we stand alongside them in solidarity and kinship. While colonizers obsess over the scientific importance of a telescope on sacred land, they fail to maintain basic data on violence against Native Hawaiian women and girls. It is clear that they are far more invested in ongoing violation of Hawaiian people and ways of life than they are in responding to violations of Hawaiian women and girls.

Sovereign Bodies Institute filed two Freedom of Information Act requests with the State of Hawaii for data on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Youth. Both times, the State of Hawaii denied the request, by claiming they do not possess such data. Now the State of Hawaii is attempting to study violence against Kanaka Wahine without proper consultation as a violation of free and prior informed consent.

When a Kanaka wahine goes missing or is murdered on our tribal territories, we honor her and fight for her as we do for our own. Sovereign Bodies Institute wholeheartedly supports Kanaka self-determination in documenting and responding violence against all wahine, in accordance with their customs and traditions, and we are actively reaching out to Kanaka elders and community leaders to further build relationships that help to address the issue of Missing and Murdered Kanaka Wahine. Please contact Sovereign Bodies Institute at annita@sovereign-bodies.org to join us in these efforts.

We will continue to stand alongside our Kanaka relatives, and fight for safety and sovereignty for all Indigenous women and their peoples, in the spirit of all of our titas & mahu.

#MMIW #MMIWG #MaunaKea #NoTMT # KuKiaiMauna