



**TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION**  
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN



**NED NORRIS JR.**  
CHAIRMAN

**ISIDRO LOPEZ**  
VICE CHAIRMAN

January 8, 2010

**Statement Regarding January 6, 2010 U.S. Customs and Border Protection Incident  
on the Tohono O'odham Nation**

At approximately 4:00 PM on Tuesday, January 6, 2010, a member of the Tohono O'odham Nation was involved in an incident with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP). The incident took place at milepost 6.5 on Federal Route 19 and the tribal member was restrained and taken into custody by USCBP officers.

This incident is currently under investigation and it would be inappropriate to provide public comment on the facts of this case at this time. However, the Executive and Legislative Branches, as well as the Tohono O'odham Police Department, will continue to monitor this matter closely.

Unfortunately, the effects of this incident go beyond those directly involved. At the time of the event, a bus transporting children home from school arrived at or near the location. These children, regrettably, witnessed the confrontation. In response, the Indian Oasis Elementary School has arranged for additional counselors to be available at the school for the next week to assist the children with any repercussions associated with this unfortunate event. We applaud the school for its prompt and proactive response.

Incidents of this nature greatly concern the Nation's leadership and the Legislative and Executive Branches are fully committed to protecting the rights of our O'odham members. The Nation has repeatedly addressed this issue and requires federal officers on the border to "respect the human and civil rights of the Nation's members and respond in a timely manner to concerns regarding these issues." They must "refrain from harassing the Tohono O'odham and comply with all applicable federal laws, including but not limited to those governing searches, seizures, vehicle and other stops." (TOLC Resolution No. 07-679.)

The leadership remains committed to ensuring that the rights of members are protected.

Ned Norris, Jr  
Chairman

Verlon Jose  
Chairman, Legislative Council



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