

United Confederation of Taíno People (UCTP) CERD/UPR to USA

Thursday, August 11th, 2022 – Informal Breakfast Meeting with the members

Environmental Racism & Non-self-governing and Non-incorporated territories

Presented by: Tai Pelli

Taigüey relatives and esteemed members,

We see the interconnectedness of all things. Ever since the US Invasion to Puerto Rico, we have been subjected to chemical experimentation and exposure, military and toxic waste dumping and contamination of soil, water, and air without anyone ever asking any of us for permission to be poisoned. High poverty rates, high unemployment rates, and a system that places money before people, create a great recipe for Environmental Racism. As a tax and subsidized haven for multinationals, once the benefit is over, they pick up and go and the people are left to deal with the toxic legacy. Our experience has been that an Urgent Action on Toxics is of no avail because the US ignored the inquiries made by the Special Rapporteur. EPA has been aware of this situation for years. Their action, scant to none. Human Right Defenders are criminalized. Environmental racism is intergenerational racism, is violence against women, is violence against humanity, is violence against Mother Earth.

As Taíno Peoples, a non-federally recognized tribe from the oldest colony in the world, you can see what multidimensional and intersectional discrimination can equate to us in a non-self-governing and non-incorporated territory. It is ok to send our people to fight the wars and conflicts, to have some return dead, maimed or ill, but they have no say and no vote when it comes to choosing who could have their lives in their hands.

The CERD is known to be the one place at the UN that has the strongest teeth. We have given you plenty of calcium. It is up to you now to choose whether or not you clench your jaws.