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Ottawa Kicks off First Indigenous Sovereignty Week, Saturday, October 24th

OTTAWA, Oct. 23 /CNW Telbec/ - In July of this year Defenders of the Land, a network of Indigenous communities and activists involved with land struggles across Canada, put out a call to Indigenous people and their allies to organize events for a first ever Indigenous Sovereignty Week. In response, a number of Ottawa-based organizations and individuals have put together a comprehensive week of public activities starting on Saturday October 24. The intent of the week is to contribute to building a cross-Canada movement for Indigenous rights, self determination, and justice that is led by Indigenous communities but with a broad base of informed support.

Indigenous Sovereignty Week events in Ottawa will start off on the 24th with a night of food, music and spoken word at the Odawa Native Friendship Centre. There will be something every day through the rest of the week including workshops, talks, films and music. The week will culminate with a walk to Victoria Island from downtown, featuring presentations on current issues along the way and a closing ceremony at the Island. The full schedule and details can be found at: <http://www.ipsmo.org/>

Presenters for the various sessions come from nearby First Nations, including Mireille Lapointe Co-Chief of the Ardoch Algonquin and Marilyn Poucachiche from Barrier Lake. There are also speakers from across the country including Ellen Gabriel from Kahnésatake (Quebec), Art Manuel from Neskonlith (B.C.), and Gitz Crazy Boy from the Dene and Blackfoot Nations (Alberta).

Michael Desautels, one of the organizers describes the week as "an opportunity to bring forward the challenges and strengths of Indigenous peoples and to help build understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people." He adds that "We want this week to be an inclusive and welcoming event and encourage everyone to come out and join us."

The Ottawa events are being supported by a number of local and national organizations including: PSAC, CUPE, CUPW, Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement - Ottawa (IPSMO), MiningWatch Canada, EquitableEducation.ca, Bolivian Action Solidarity Network, OPIRG - Carleton, OPIRG - UofO and the UofO Canadian Studies and Aboriginal Studies Student Association.

Indigenous Sovereignty Week, Oct. 24-31, Ottawa

Sat Oct 24

Celebrating Indigenous Cultural Resistance!

3:00pm - Workshop: Circle Stories Rising Strong: Love Your Voice, Share

Your Song

Moe Clark, Métis, and Emile Monnet, Algonquin - the Bird Messenger Collective

6:00pm - Dinner, 7:00pm - Kick-Off Concert for Indigenous Sovereignty Week

Featuring: Elder Albert Dumont (Algonquin) Every Women's Drum Group, Bird Messenger Collective, Mosha Folger (Inuit - Eskimocentricity), Suzanne Keptwo (Metis of Algonquin/French and Irish) Christopher Herodier (Cree) Rachel Wuttunee (Oji-Cree), Luis Abanto (Peru)
Odawa Friendship Centre, 12 Stirling Avenue (at Scott)

Sun Oct 25, 1:00pm

Remembering Residential Schools

Presenters: Irene Lindsay Thomas Louttit, Gordon Williams, and Viola Thomas, Jackie Miller (Aboriginal Healing Foundation). Moderated by Violet Paul (AFN).

Ottawa Public Library main branch auditorium, 120 Metcalfe St (at Laurier)

Mon Oct 26, 6:30pm

Indigenous Perspectives on the Environment

Presenters: Daryl Sainnawap (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug), Clayton Thomas Muller (Indigenous Environment Network), Gitz Crazy Boy (Dene and Blackfoot Nations), Marilyn Poucachiche (Barrier Lake Algonquin).

Ottawa Public Library main branch auditorium, 120 Metcalfe St (at Laurier)

Tues Oct 27, 7:00pm

Fighting for Our Rights: Indigenous Women and Youth in an Urban Context

Presenters: Joceyln Forsma, Clayton Thomas Muller, others TBA

St. Joseph's Church, 151 Laurier Ave E. (at Cumberland) (Hall entrance at 174 Wilbrod St)

Wed Oct 28

5:00pm - Kahnesatake: 270 Years of Resistance (Film)

7:00pm - New Frontiers of Resistance: Exploring Kahnesatake and the Tar Sands

Presenters: Ellen Gabriel (Kahnesatake) and representatives from Beaver Lake First Nation.

St. Joseph's Church, 151 Laurier Ave E. (at Cumberland) (Hall entrance at 174 Wilbrod St)

Thurs Oct 29, 7:00pm

Defenders of the Land: National Speakers Tour

Presenters: Art Manuel (Neskonlith / Indigenous Network on Economy and Trade), Russel Diabo (Kahnawake), Mireille Lapointe (Ardoch Algonquin)
St. Joseph's Church, 151 Laurier Ave E. (at Cumberland) (Hall entrance at 174 Wilbrod St)

Fri Oct 30, 7:00pm

Pachakut'i (Cosmic Upheaval): the Emergence of Indigenous Peoples
Presenters: Ben Powless (Six Nations), Marcelo Saavedra-Vargas (Quechua-Aymara Nation and UofO), Georges E. Sioui (Huron-Wendatt Nation and UofO), Louise Cassleman (PSAC)
Alumni Auditorium, Jock Turcot University Centre, University of Ottawa

Sat Oct 31, 11:00am

Workshop: Indigenous Solidarity for Settlers
Presented by Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement -
Ottawa room 205, Jock Turcot University Centre, University of Ottawa

Sat Oct 31, 1:00pm

Celebrating Indigenous Sovereignty march and rally
Starting at the corner of Rideau and Sussex, ending on Victoria Island, informational stops along the way. Followed by closing ceremony with elder Albert Dumont (Algonquin)

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For further information: Media Contact: Michael Desautels: (613) 222-7381, (desautm@psac-afpc.com); Web links: www.defendersoftheland.ca, www.ipsmo.org, www.grupoqpoyo.org

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