

Indigenous activist Amber Ortega faces prison for protecting ancestral lands

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Tucson, November 25 (RHC)-- In Tucson, Arizona, supporters of Hia Ced and Tohono O'odham land and water protector Amber Ortega held a solidarity rally Tuesday as Ortega awaits a trial verdict over federal misdemeanor charges for peacefully protesting the construction of the U.S.-Mexico border wall near Quitobaquito Springs.

The site is sacred to O'odham people. Ortega was arrested in September of 2020 alongside O'odham land and water protector, Nellie Jo David, after blocking construction machinery.

Amber Ortega, speaking to supporters outside the Tucson courthouse, said: "Our rights as a people need to be restored. Our lands need to be restored to the people, the natural caretakers, our creator. As children, we're raised to know where we come from, where our people come from... What mountains provided for us, what mountains we sing to, what landscapes, what waters took care of us... And we carry those stories because that's our history."

If convicted, Ortega faces up to six months in prison.

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