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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Apache Stronghold 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Ruling Does Not Advance the Resolution Mine**

*San Carlos Apache Reservation, Ariz.* – While the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals ruling Friday, March 1, 2024 against the non-profit citizens group Apache Stronghold is extremely disappointing, the ruling does not clear the way for construction of the Resolution Copper Mine.

“The culturally and environmentally devastating Resolution project is no closer to construction today than it was before the appeals court ruling,” San Carlos Apache Tribe Chairman Terry Rambler said. “The Tribe will continue to fight construction of the project that would have devastating impacts to the Tribe’s culture, the environment and Arizona’s drinking water supplies.”

The proposed Resolution Mine would obliterate sacred lands, including Oak Flat, that are listed as a Traditional Cultural Property on the National Register of Historic Places. The mine would also destroy more than 15,000 acres of state and federal lands and deplete more than 750 billion gallons of groundwater in the East Salt River Valley.

The Trump Administration pushed through Resolution’s deeply flawed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in the last week of Trump’s presidency. The Biden Administration subsequently withdrew the EIS because it failed to address the irreparable harm this mine would inflict on the environment and Apache culture.

“The Biden Administration correctly withdrew the deeply flawed report and should never reissue the environmental study,” Chairman Rambler said. “The Tribe appreciates President Biden’s leadership in ensuring the federal government honors its solemn commitments to tribes, including the protection of sacred areas on federal land.”

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There are also two outstanding federal lawsuits – including one filed by the San Carlos Apache Tribe – that have yet to be litigated. These suits raise multiple critical arguments on why this mine should not be allowed to move forward.

Resolution Copper Company is owned by Anglo-Australian miners Rio Tinto (55%) and BHP (45%). Both companies have close ties to China. Rio Tinto's single largest shareholder is the Chinese state-controlled aluminum company Chinalco with nearly a 15% stake. More than half of each company's annual sales are to China.

The United States already exports one-third of the copper produced in its mines because there is not enough smelter capacity to process the country's raw copper into finished metal. Resolution has stated it does not intend to build a new smelter. China operates nine of the 20 largest copper smelters in the world and is the world's largest importer of raw copper concentrate.

“All the evidence points to the fact that Rio Tinto and BHP will export Resolution's copper overseas to China. This is a national security threat that will bolster China's economy at the expense of all Americans.” Chairman Rambler stated. “The Resolution Mine is clearly not in the best interest of the Tribe, the citizens of Arizona, and American taxpayers and must be stopped.”

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