



United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Item 7: Human rights – Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (with a focus on economic, social and cultural rights)

Statement by Arawhetu Gray, Deputy-Secretary Policy Partnerships, Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Māori Development)

27 April 2015



Condolences to nepolese Peoples and
all other countries who have
lost their people in the earthquake

Ka nuni te miki aroha he tangata
Ki Chile

Tēnā koe, Chairperson.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm New Zealand's support for the Declaration and aspirations to recognise indigenous rights. Further, the New Zealand Government notes the importance of continued understanding and commitment to the common objectives of the Declaration alongside the Treaty of Waitangi and New Zealand's existing legal and constitutional frameworks.

The Government continues to focus on strengthening the relationship between the Crown and Māori to ensure that long-term domestic priorities for advancing indigenous well-being are achieved. This includes addressing past grievances through negotiations with Māori groups that have been impacted by Crown breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Today, forty years on, over \$2 billion dollars' has been transferred or earmarked from the Crown to Māori as commercial or financial redress. This has helped to enable a new age of Māori led economic development.

The Māori economy continues to grow and thrive and the Māori asset base is now valued at an estimated \$42 billion dollars. Māori led economic development is acknowledged as a cross-cutting theme within the Government's current flagship Business Growth Agenda programme. This includes the Crown Māori Economic Growth Partnership initiative - He kai kei aku ringa - which embodies the Māori ethos to gather and grow our own wealth with our own hands.

However, we recognise there is still more to do, particularly to increase social, cultural and health indicators for Māori. Examples of initiatives underway that support this goal include a key cross-government health programme launched in 2010 called Whānau Ora. Whānau Ora incorporates an innovative family-centred approach to health and is considered an expression of Article Three of the Declaration.

New Zealand has also developed a Māori Housing Strategy to support Māori aspirations for safe, affordable and reliable housing both on urban and ancestral Māori lands. Work continues to support the retention of Te Reo Māori, New Zealand's indigenous language, and this year, the Minister of Māori Development intends to introduce a new Māori Language (Te Reo Māori) Bill to Parliament.