COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

WORKING GROUP FOR INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS
TENTH SESSION
20-31 July 1992

ITEM 5

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS PERTAINING TO THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INCLUDING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND STATES.

STATEMENT OF NGAATI TE ATA
Tena koutou,
Erihapeti, Moana, me korua hoki Te Atawhai me Hohepa nga
mangai o te Whakakotahitanga o Aotearoa, tae noa ki to
tatou tamahine, Moana. Koutou nga uri rangatira a o koutou
tupuna matua, me a koutou Maunga, Awa, Moana, Ngahere, Waahi
Tapu Tena koutou.
Nga mihi hoki ki a koe te mangai o te kawana Miriama me nga
torero a te Maunga tapu o Taranaki e iri nei ki runga i a
koe.

Madame Daes, Distinguished Members of the Working Group,
Observer Governments and the Distinguished Representatives
of Indigenous Peoples Tena Koutou Katoa.

May I pay tribute to those indigenous peoples who pioneered
our entry into the United Nations.

In past years Ngaati Te Ata has presented statements of both
a local tribal and general national nature pertaining to
Review of Developments. This year Ngaati te Ata acknowledges
the presence of the Te Whakakotahitanga o Aotearoa the
National Maori Congress as well as other established
representatives from our country.

At this the Tenth Session of the Working Group, statements
have been presented that cannot be ignored. For example,
the New Zealand Settler Government claims that '......there
should be consistency between international instruments...' and
refers to Chap 26 of Agenda 21 of UNCED where the term
"lands" ' is simply used together with a statement of the
understanding of the meaning of the term' as a preference,
instead of lands and territories. It claims not to know the
distinction and cites the Treaty of Waitangi as the lawful
reason it has alienated us from our lands and continues to
alienate us through its privatisation and corporatisation
policies. Then it proceeded to outline in this
international forum its formula for the application of
national law.

Two years ago in a joint intervention, we made reference
to a comment made by a government representative who later
denied saying that, "the N.Z. Government will never agree
for Maori people to have SELF DETERMINATION."

Today, the New Zealand Settler Government has shown its true
colours and has grandly announced that "it is not able to
support the inclusion of the 'right to SELF DETERMINATION in
the declaration', then, amazingly it seeks to impose SELF
MANAGEMENT on the Indigenous Peoples of the world. Such a
blatant watering down of our inherent rights is totally
rejected. The Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of
Waitangi ensures our right to SELF DETERMINATION.
Although the Hearing before the Waitangi Tribunal concerning the desecration and confiscation of our sacred burial grounds at Maioro, the despoilation of our tribal waterways and other acts of injustice was held in 1984, the case has still not been resolved by successive governments.

It must be said that despite our being continually denied our inherent rights by the New Zealand Settler Government there are many exciting Maori developments nationally and locally.

Ngaati Te Ata has prepared a Tribal Policy Document outlining very clearly to all external agencies our vigorous pursuit towards SELF DETERMINATION. It is based on our tikanga (lores/laws), it is pursuant to but not depended upon the 1835 Declaration of Independence and it will succeed because it is designed by, driven by and actioned by our own people. We have 'THE RIGHT TO BE OURSELVES'

For example, our vibrant action policies on the restoration of Papatuanuku Mother Earth and the total environment is central to our SELF DETERMINATION.

Without proper nurturing care and protection Papatuanuku Mother Earth shall not survive  
If Papatuanuku Mother Earth does not survive People shall not survive  
for we are inseparable.

It is not too late for the New Zealand Settler Government to change its position, acknowledge and support the inherent right of Indigenous Peoples to SELF DETERMINATION for the key to mans survival is with the Indigenous Peoples.