

## Brief statement (Good practices and lessons learnt)

Kai aku rangatira tēnā koutou, Greetings to you all, esteemed leaders and delegates from all over the world.

I am Hana Mereraiha, I hail from the tribes of Ngāi Tahu, Te Arawa, Tainui and Taranaki in Aotearoa, New Zealand. I am a council member for the United Nations Association NZ and The New Zealand Association for Research in Education.

I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to express some of my thinking around Some of the issues covered over the past few days. In particular with regards to the linguistic rights of Indigenous peoples. The Māori people of Aotearoa share a similar history with other Indigenous communities of the world whose languages were literally beaten out of children through the schooling system. Whilst we have seen improvement in the last 30 or so years with the establishment of Māori Early Childhood Language Nests, Māori Primary, Secondary and Tertiary institutions. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done in terms of reversing lanuguage shift, and for Te Reo Māori to be recognised in mainstream schools, alongside English.

92% of Māori children are in general-stream schools. It is therefore important to advocate for culturally and linguistically responsive teaching as many schools are currently unsafe for our Māori children. Here are some recommendations to improve practical educational outcomes for Māori children and to ensure the survival of our native language.

- To move forward with promoting and implementing the Māori language (as one of the three official languages in Aotearoa NZ alongside English and sign language) the linguistic knowledge base of teachers entering the education profession must be increased.
- To move forward with the removal of unconscious bias and systemic racism in schools, we need to raise the critical awareness of prospective teachers in Aotearoa NZ.
- There is still a current shortage of quality Māori language teachers entering the profession.
- Additionally, professional development programmes must be established to upgrade the language facility (knowledge and proficiency) of all teachers which will enable the tenets of The Treaty of Waitangi to be enacted in the promotion of a bilingual Aotearoa New Zealand.