

11th Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Item 3: Country engagement
10 July 2018

Tēnā koe Mr/Madam Chair

New Zealand continues to welcome the strengthening of the mandate of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 33/25 and appreciates this discussion this morning.

New Zealand is committed to upholding the rights affirmed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and to engaging further with the aspirations that it sets forth. 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.

New Zealand is committed to a strong, ongoing and healthy relationship with Māori, the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand. The New Zealand Government continues to undertake initiatives across sectors that aim to strengthen the Crown/Maori relationship, towards achieving better outcomes for Maori.

While many advances have been made over recent years, challenges remain and solutions cannot be reached by Government alone.

We continue, therefore, to engage with Māori to better respond to their needs, aspirations, rights and interests, and in ways that demonstrate concrete action on the affirmed rights and aspirations of the Declaration, in a manner consistent with legal and constitutional frameworks. We look forward to learning more from other states and indigenous peoples on common challenges faced and innovative solutions, and appreciate this opportunity to hear about the country engagement so far.

Following EMRIP, the New Zealand Government will consider proposals to develop a work programme on a national plan of action, strategy or other measures on the Declaration. We expect these proposals to consider challenges and opportunities

within New Zealand's domestic context, including engagement with the Independent Monitoring Mechanism, Māori more broadly and other interested groups, along with international experts such as EMRIP.

We look forward to continuing our constructive engagement with this important special procedure, and look forward to engaging with the enhanced work programme as it continues.

No reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Te Puni Kōkiri

July 2018