

1. We thank you for the opportunity to speak to the reports on the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Rights of the Indigenous child. We wish to draw attention to recent developments that have placed significant risk around these workstreams, and are requesting that the mechanism provide guidance to the New Zealand government around the protection of Human Rights Defenders and their families.
2. We celebrate these reports which note the importance of self-determination, without which Indigenous peoples' human rights cannot be fully enjoyed, and the wellbeing of Indigenous children cannot be secured. Unfortunately, this important human rights work has recently been targeted by alt-right commentators, leading to death threats and harassment of Indigenous rights defenders and their families.
3. We note the recent report on death threats and killings of human rights defenders by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. The negative political rhetoric, smear campaigns, harassment and death threats spoken to in that report as the pre-conditions for killings are exactly the conditions we are experiencing in Aotearoa right now. Some of the most extreme online threats have included a call for widescale killings of Maori in our homes, attacks of marae and calls for a "race war", which is very specific language from the international white supremacist movement. The lack of an effective response from online platforms and the state has led to a normalisation of harassment and threats against Maori.
4. We can also report that threats have extended to the children of Indigenous rights defenders. We wish the members of the Mechanism to note this in relation to the report on the rights of Indigenous children, and the state's responsibilities under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
5. We note that the white-supremacist front has demonstrated a clear capability to act upon these intentions, evidenced by the Christchurch Mosque Attacks of 2019.
6. Further, there is overwhelming agreement from the targets of said harassment and threats that our government is failing to protect us. We are still awaiting a comprehensive legislative framework for addressing racial discrimination and incitement to racial hatred as recommended by CERD in the universal periodic review.

7. Reporting mechanisms for digital harassment and threats have been ineffective and re-traumatising for users, leading to under-reporting. Inter-agency dialogue appears fractured, and often leaves claimants feeling exposed and excluded. We recall that in 2018 the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues requested the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights expand and strengthen the United Nations response to reprisals and threats faced by Indigenous human rights and environmental defenders. Given the enduring and well reported lack of protection for human rights defenders, we call for the establishment of an independent UN register for the reporting of threats and harassment of Indigenous human rights and environmental defenders.
8. We further request that the Expert Mechanism provide guidance to the New Zealand government in upholding their commitments under the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, which requires they take all necessary measures to ensure the protection against any violence, threats, retaliation, adverse discrimination.
9. We ask that the mechanism further provide direction to our government to work collaboratively with experts and representatives from targeted communities to co-develop a national action plan based upon responsibilities outlined in the Declaration for human rights defenders, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples