

Statement by New Zealand: EMRIP Agenda Item 3
Indigenous Peoples and the right to participate in decision making

Tena koutou katoa

New Zealand wishes to express appreciation to the members of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for their work to date on the study on indigenous peoples and the right to participate in decision making, and to express appreciation to all those who have contributed to the study.

As set out in New Zealand's statement of support for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, New Zealand has developed, and will continue to rely upon, its distinct processes and institutions that afford opportunities to Māori for such involvement. These range from broad guarantees of participation and consultation to particular instances in which a requirement of consent is appropriate.

In those processes and institutions, we acknowledge that our ongoing national dialogue is grounded in the Treaty of Waitangi. We further recognise that Māori have an interest in all policy and legislative matters and acknowledge the determination of Māori that custom, worldviews and cultural heritage should be reflected in the laws and policies of New Zealand. Māori have been, and continue to be, active in developing innovative responses to issues with a strong indigenous perspective and in engaging with successive governments on possible paths forward.

Next week Mr James Anaya, Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, will be visiting New Zealand. The New Zealand Government, iwi and non-governmental organisations will be very much interested in Mr Anaya's views on issues such as the role of indigenous peoples in decision making and look forward to wide ranging discussions with him.