



SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION
AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

WGIP 88 GOV/OCE.NZL/2

WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS

NEW ZEALAND OBSERVER GOVERNMENT DELEGATION

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

3 AUGUST 1988

Distinguished Chairperson, Members of the Working Group, Ambassador Excellencies here in forum, friends, brothers, sisters. Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa. My warmest greetings to you all.

I am Erihapeti Rehu Murchie, New Zealand Observer Government Delegation. Thank you for the courtesy of permitting me to speak. His Excellency Ambassador Fortune, who could not remain with us, asked that I seek Conference's attention for no more than two minutes. He has a wish to resolve, here in forum, a concern expressed about the chant, waiata or song, which concluded the Aotearoa New Zealand statement. There are two factors in this matter. Firstly, the status of the speaker; secondly, the status of the person being addressed and the significance of the forum.

Aotearoa New Zealand's spokesperson, Nganeko Minhinnick, is a tribal chief in her own right. Once a chief speaks formally in a forum of this significance a chant is not a religious rite; it is not a song; it is not a ceremony. It is identification of her tribe; it is the final statement of a chief's speech. Nganeko, aware of her tribal responsibility, tailored her statement to less than eight minutes in order to complete, appropriately, her presentation to you Madam Chairperson, a rangatira, a chief, in your own right.

We regret any anxiety we might have caused you because we, the Maori, have much aroha, love and warmth, for you and your sterling efforts on behalf of humankind.

May God bless and keep you.

Thank you.