

# **NEW ZEALAND MISSION to the UNITED NATIONS**

## **Te Māngai o Aotearoa**

ONE UNITED NATIONS PLAZA 25TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10017-3515 USA  
TELEPHONE (212) 826 1960 FACSIMILE (212) 758 0827 HOMEPAGE: [missions.un.int/newzealand](http://missions.un.int/newzealand) EMAIL: [nz@un.int](mailto:nz@un.int)

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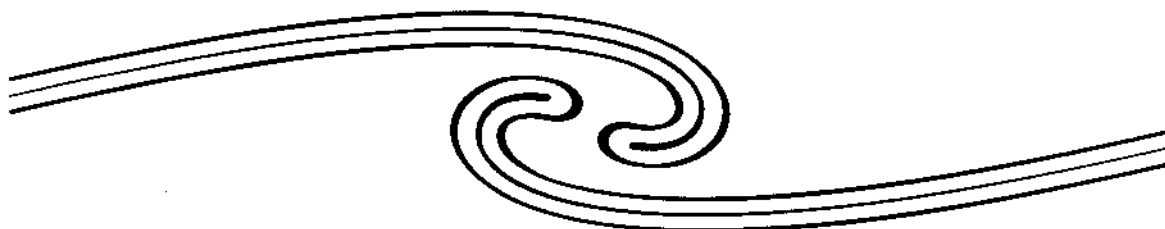
## **UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES 1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION**

### **AGENDA ITEM 7: FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

### **STATEMENT BY NEW ZEALAND DELEGATION MEMBER MR JOHN PAKI**

**22 MAY 2002**

*Check against delivery*



Mr Chairman

Kia ora koutou. We have been listening with interest to the various views being expressed over the past few days. There have been many ideas and recommendations regarding the Forum's future work programme, which reflects both the enthusiasm and support of participants for this new body, as well as a realisation of the amount of work that still needs to be undertaken on indigenous issues.

We are pleased, however, that the issue here at this session of the Permanent Forum has not been *whether* indigenous peoples should increase their participation in the work of the United Nations – that is something that should be a matter of course – but rather, the question is *how* that participation in partnership might take place.

Given the difficulty that indigenous peoples face in accessing information about the United Nations system, we would support recommendations that the Permanent Forum look at ways in which that information could be made readily available and in a coordinated fashion. We would urge that the interests of indigenous women and children are taken into account in this respect. We suggest, for example, that there be data made available that is disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity so that information of the status of indigenous women and children around the world can be obtained.

It is equally important that the United Nations system is able to access information and ideas from indigenous peoples. As some speakers have said already, indigenous peoples are not just victims or clients; they also hold the keys to solving the problems. Perhaps the Forum could look at establishing policy guidelines and principles for consultation by the UN agencies across its mandate. Some agencies already have these in place, but all of us would benefit through learning from others' experiences.

Indeed, it would be helpful for the Forum to look at the specific areas within its mandate, both at the national and international level, where there is a need for greater co-operation

and to work out ways in which effective strategies and programmes and best practices can be identified and shared.

Mr Chairman, there are many activities that the Permanent Forum could pursue: these are only a few suggestions. Whatever the Forum decides upon, we are confident that the work programme will be practical, realistic and forward-looking, and that the Forum concentrates its efforts very much on where it can add value.

Finally, Mr Chairman, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your chairing of this meeting so far. Indeed may we commend all the members of the Permanent Forum for their efforts. We have been greatly encouraged by your commitment to work together and to make this first session of the Forum a success.

Thank you. Tena koe.