

NHRU

**12th Session United Nations Human Rights Council  
Item 6: Consideration of Universal Periodic Review Reports**

**Consideration of New Zealand's Universal Periodic Review  
Thursday, 24 September 2009**

Chairperson, Members of the Human Rights Council I speak on behalf of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission an A accredited national human rights institution.

The Commission commends the Council for the Universal Periodic Review process. While aspects need further strengthening, it provides an invaluable opportunity for constructive international scrutiny of a country's human rights performance.

The Commission acknowledges the work by the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in collating, summarizing and translating the Treaty Body recommendations and those of civil society and national human rights institutions. The clarity of those documents is crucial to the effectiveness of the process.

The Commission records our appreciation to the New Zealand Government and to the previous Government for their strong support and active engagement with the Universal Periodic Review. The leadership provided by the Minister of Justice, the Hon. Simon Power, throughout the process was crucial to its credibility.

New Zealand has responded positively to many of the 64 recommendations, albeit with qualifications in some cases. The challenge now for the Government is to reflect those commitments in legislation and policy initiatives and financial decisions. It will be a further challenge in a time of financial constraint and uncertainty to resist any deliberately retrogressive measures.

The Commission emphasises the importance of action on the seven priorities the Government identified in its report to the Working Group, including implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and on those recommendations which cover:

- a statement of support for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- more systematic incorporation of international human rights obligations, including particularly economic, social and cultural rights, into New Zealand's domestic legislation, policies and practices
- further consideration of the status of the Treaty of Waitangi
- action on all forms of unlawful discrimination and socio-economic disparities.

The Commission, women's groups and trade unions would have welcomed stronger responses to the recommendations relating to equality for women and the gender pay gap

The New Zealand Human Rights Commission will advocate strongly for, monitor and report on the implementation of the commitments made through the Universal Periodic Review.

**Rosslyn Noonan**  
CHIEF COMMISSIONER  
Te Amokapua