

**Fifty-seventh Session of the United Nations Commission on
the Status of Women**

**Statement by Ms Jo Goodhew, Minister of Women's Affairs,
New Zealand**

*E aku rangatira, tēnā koutou katoa. Ka nui te honore ki te mihi ki a
koutou.*

Madam Chair

I am honoured to present the New Zealand Government's national statement to the Commission on the Status of Women.

New Zealand welcomes and endorses the statement made by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the Honourable Willy Telavi of Tuvalu, on behalf of the Pacific Island Forum.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Last year, we presented our 7th report to the CEDAW Committee, highlighting progress for women in New

Zealand. We are now working to respond to the recommendations made by the CEDAW Committee.

Today, I am pleased to announce that we have added our voice to those of the 29 other Governments around the world who have pledged to take action to end violence against women and girls through the UN Women initiative, Commit. This initiative urges Governments to take steps to ensure that women and girls are able to lead violence-free lives. I will be talking about some of the ways in which New Zealand continues to address this challenge. Through these initiatives we pledge our commitment to a zero tolerance policy for violence against women and girls.

Madam Chair

Ending violence against women and girls is a long-standing priority for the New Zealand Government. It is a global scourge, and a violation of the basic human right to be safe, and we welcome this year's priority theme.

New Zealand has a comprehensive approach towards ending violence, spanning primary prevention to preventing revictimisation. We have a strong legislative framework that

covers protection of and support for victims, and accountability of offenders. We continue to improve this framework by, for instance, expanding the legal definition of domestic violence to include economic abuse. We have also announced a new restraining order that will reduce the likelihood of victims of serious violent or sexual crimes having unwanted contact with their attackers once they are released from prison.

Communities are integral to successfully addressing violence against women and girls. Since 2005, government and non-government sectors have shown a significant commitment to the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families. The Taskforce work includes the E Tu Whanau Ora Programme of Action and Pasefika Proud – strengths-based initiatives designed for and by Māori and Pacific communities, to help build strong families, free from violence.

Responsibility for addressing violence within families sits across Ministerial portfolios. My Government has convened a Family Violence Ministerial Group to ensure linkages between the Taskforce and other strategic priorities. In this and other ways, I work with my Ministerial colleagues to ensure an effective approach to promoting safety for women and girls.

New Zealand has taken a leadership role in the Pacific through the Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Programme – a joint initiative of the New Zealand Government, New Zealand Police, and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police. It focuses primarily on capacity-building of Pacific Police services, including partnerships with other organisations, to prevent and respond effectively to domestic violence. The Australian Federal Police recently agreed to work with New Zealand Police to support the programme. This demonstrates our joint commitment to reducing domestic violence across the region.

Madam Chair

I look forward to constructive dialogue about what we can do to end violence against women and girls.

Nō reira, tēna koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.