

MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES' HIKOI TO WAITANGI

16 - 17 April 2021



Huarahi Hou
Pathway to Te Tiriti-based Multicultural Communities

Foreword

I want to congratulate Multicultural New Zealand for embarking on a journey to build strong, positive and aroha-based relationships with Māori, iwi and hapū.

Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage was pleased to be able to support the “Hikoi to Waitangi” through the Commemorating Waitangi Day Fund.



Community-led events designed in partnership with tangata whenua, like Huarahi Hou, are essential to broadening and deepening our understanding of te Tiriti.

This world-first initiative from Multicultural New Zealand is a valuable contribution to increasing shared understanding of te Tiriti across Aotearoa New Zealand.

“Poipoia te kakano kia puawai”
Nurture the seed and it will grow.

Bernadette Cavanagh
Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive
Manatū Taonga | Ministry for Culture & Heritage

Message from the President

Hikoi to Waitangi, in April 2021 turned out to be a momentous and emotional experience for me. I joined rangatira from around the country to Waitangi to connect with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the history of Aotearoa, guided by haukainga from Whāngarei. Powhiri and warm welcome from the mana whenua at Waitangi, and the planting of a young kauri tree named 'mokopuna' (descendants) on Te Tiriti grounds turned out to be a heart-warming occasion for me.



All the rangatira from iwi taketake who joined me found the hikoi to be an incredibly powerful and spiritual experience. It connected us deeply to the journey of tangata whenua and Aotearoa. It was made possible with the blessings of Māori elders. The event gained both national and international attention.

Ngā mihi aroha

Pancha Narayanan

President

New Zealand Federation of Multicultural Councils



The Journey – introduction

New Zealand's multicultural communities are leading the pathway to te Tiriti-based multicultural New Zealand/Aotearoa. This has been the spirit of Multicultural New Zealand's “Huarahi Hou” initiative.

Over the weekend of the 16th - 17th of April 2021, Multicultural New Zealand (MNZ) took more than 50 community leaders from around New Zealand on a journey up to Waitangi. The group of rangatira planted a tree on the Tiriti Grounds as a gesture of commitment from Aotearoa's multicultural communities to te Tiriti o Waitangi and a positive relationship with tangata whenua.

MNZ President, Pancha Narayanan, called this a momentous occasion. “Never before in the history of te Tiriti has something like this been done,” he said. “We are only able to call this beautiful land home by the grace of tangata whenua and te Tiriti. We want to show that we recognise that, and that we are ready to honour our side of the agreement.”


Narayanan emphasised that it was specifically the reo Maori version of te Tiriti that the multicultural communities would endorse. He also acknowledged that this gesture did not come without a long history of whakawhanaungatanga (building relationships) with tangata whenua first. “We do not see enough recent migrants with a relationship with tangata whenua, or an awareness of te Tiriti. This needs to change. How can we call New Zealand home if we have not been welcomed by the people of this land or we do not know its founding agreement?”

Guided by hau kainga (local people) from Whangarei, including Northland rangatira Taipari Munro, the MNZ group also stopped in Whangarei and Ruapekapeka to learn more of the history and meaning of te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The kaupapa received national applause from senior figures in both iwi and crown bodies and was sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Office of Ethnic Communities. The wider kaupapa that this hikoi was completed under MNZ's “Huarahi Hou” initiative.

MNZ with the help of the Northland haukainga (local people), Multicultural Whangarei, chose a strong young Kauri tree to plant on the Waitangi Grounds. The tree was named “Mokopuna”, and was dedicated to a united, te Tiriti-based, multicultural future for Aotearoa. The group was formally welcomed onto the grounds by mana whenua to plant the tree. “It will be a historic day; we can all feel the wairua building.” Narayanan commented on the day. “We want all of our ancestors to see this”, he added.

The young kauri tree was named Mokopuna in recognition of those who would inherit the society we build together; the choice of a kauri tree was a great symbol of nationhood. Our grandchildren and their grandchildren would remember this as a historic moment.



This occasion was marked a historic milestone both in the history of te Tiriti and in Multicultural New Zealand's "Huarahi Hou" initiative. Scholars and researchers acknowledged this as a world class community-based initiative. The intent of migrant and refugee communities to connect with their first nation people is a world first. It signals the change in the cultural demographics of tangata tiriti and sentiments toward te Tiriti.

At this gathering, rangatira from around the country (chairpersons of regional multicultural councils) unanimously agreed to include a commitment to te Tiriti and Tiriti-based objectives into their respective constitutions.

New Zealand's Multicultural Councils return to their respective regions to build a strong and aroha-based relationship between their local mana whenua and their local multicultural communities. MNZ will continue to push for a shift in government departments - including the new Ministry of Ethnic Communities, and the Office of Immigration - to be te Tiriti-based and to consult tangata whenua on their processes.

This journey was possible because of the collective vision of these rangatira. Together, we achieved more than what we could have done individually. An earnest mihi from all Multicultural Councils went out to MNZ President Pancha Narayanan for his work and vision that made this hikoi possible.

The Journey – detailed

The group of community leaders left Auckland early on the Friday (16 April 2021) morning and landed in Whangarei, where they were welcomed onto Whangarei Terenga Paraoa Marae by haukainga from Ngāpuhi and Multicultural Whangarei. After a powhiri and a kai, Ngāpuhi rangatira and kaumatua, Taipari Munro led the group in a wananga on the history and make up of te marae. Many delegates agreed that this telling of history and folklore helped them connect deeper to the wairua present in the whare nui and to the place of Whangarei. It was fitting to receive such a meaningful welcome at the gateway to the North.

From Whangarei, the group were guided North by Barney Mackie, Ngāpuhi member and kaitiaki of the young kauri tree to be planted on Waitangi. Mackie took the group North to Ruapekapeka, a historic Pā site where one of the most significant battles in the Northern Wars between Māori and European colonisers took place after the signing of te Tiriti. This wahi tapu (sacred place) was well preserved and gave an insight into the context and events that surrounded te Tiriti.

Arriving in Paihia on Friday evening, the group was joined by Chief Human Rights Commissioner Paul Hunt, Deputy Police Commissioner Wally Haumaha, and

soon-to-be Superintendent Rakesh Naidoo. MNZ regional leaders agreed unanimously to incorporate a commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi into their constitution and acknowledged some of the rangatira, who gifted their time and faith to this kaupapa, included the late Ann Dysart, the late Mohi Waihi, Dr Ihakara Puketapu, Wallace Haumaha, Taipari Munro and Rakesh Naidoo.

The following morning, New Zealand's multicultural community leaders were up with the rising sun to gather before they stepped onto the Tiriti Grounds. Anticipation was high and dressed in their formal cultural attire the leaders made for a bright and colourful group as they walked up to the Waitangi Marae. They were welcomed by Chairman of the Waitangi Grounds Trust Board, Pita Tipene, Far North Police Commander Riki Whiu and a group of powerful mana whenua rangatahi in a formal powhiri ceremony. Inside the wharehau many were moved by MNZ President's korero o te manawa (words from the heart).

The tree planting ceremony was an auspicious occasion, the significance and wairua was clear in the silence of those present. Tamariki, kaumatua, rangatira and otherwise, all participated in settling the tree Mokopuna into the maara (soil).

After a thoroughly informative tour of Te Kōngahu Waitangi Museum, MNZ concluded the event and made their way back to Auckland. Many delegates found the trip to be deeply spiritual, enriching and connecting. They acknowledged feeling much closer to tangata whenua and mana whenua and voiced a responsibility to bring the lessons back to their communities and to pass them on to future generations. They also acknowledge that there was still much to learn about te Tiriti and te ao Maori and were ready to take this up.







Plaque Ceremony – 1 May 2022

At MNZ, it is our belief that if the first nation people do not welcome us, we cannot really call Aotearoa home. Our leaders widely endorse Te Tiriti-based induction for all former refugees and migrants at the initial stage of their arrival into Aotearoa New Zealand. It serves as a pathway to forming a meaningful and genuine relationship with tangata whenua.

Following the hikoi and tree plantation on Waitangi Grounds, MNZ planned a plaque ceremony which took place on Sunday, 1 May 2022. Owen Taituha from the Visitor Centre was also there to welcome our MNZ leaders onto the Waitangi Grounds. The karanga to MNZ leaders onto the marae at the start of the powhiri was initiated by Awatea Stensness, whilst Marion Kerepiti-Edwards Vice President MNZ responded on the group's behalf to the karanga as we were led alongside Tane Bell who instigated the Waiata Tautoko (song of support) to uphold the mana of the speaker and of MNZ rangatira.

MNZ President Pancha Narayanan spoke in detail about the importance of visiting Waitangi grounds and of Te Tiriti for multicultural communities and thanked the Waitangi National Trust Board and all those present on the occasion.

After the plaque ceremony, it was time for kai at Whare Waka Café. Along the way, the group visited the site of 800-year-old kauri tree stump. Next to it was Ngātokimatawhaorua, which is the world's largest ceremonial waka sheltered under Te Korowai ō Maikuku. MNZ rangatira were clearly impressed by this double hurled waka houra.

MNZ expects to visit Waitangi Grounds in future every year in February close to Waitangi Day.









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