



MEDIA STATEMENT

Rahui Katene

Constitutional Issues Spokesperson for the Maori Party

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Treaty must be the backbone for constitutional change

Maori Party MP Rahui Katene says the Treaty of Waitangi will occupy a significant place in the review of the countrys constitutional arrangements.

I welcome the Governments announcement today that it will be reviewing the constitution, Maori Party constitutional issues spokesperson Rahui Katene said.

Our party asked for the review because of the strong need we see for nationhood building and the creation of a society that is more inclusive.

The Treaty is our countrys founding document and it belongs to all of us Maori, Pakeha and all other peoples of this country. It is about partnership, mutual respect, co-operation and good faith and therefore it must form the foundation of any new constitutional framework.

We want open and informed debate for constitutional change and we look forward to seeing what our constituents and the nation will have to say over the next three years.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Maori Party: Constitutional Change Policy

Our tupuna saw a future for this nation in a partnership based on mutual respect, co-operation and good faith. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the founding document of our nation. It provides the basis for good governance. It sets out a framework for how resources should be managed, and how we can aspire to be a more ethical and inclusive community.

The Maori Party is the only political party where the Treaty underpins its actions through kaupapa tuku iho. The Maori Party is calling for open and informed debate for constitutional change.

Our priorities are:

Constitutional Commission

Establish a Constitutional Commission to begin a constitutional review aimed at, among other things, drafting arrangements that give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi.

Parliamentary Commissioner for the Treaty

Appoint, as an Officer of Parliament, a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Treaty to proactively promote the Treaty's commitment to partnership.

We also argued, in the coalition framework, for ensuring that Maori participation and representation be accorded priority within the constitutional review.

Maori Electoral Participation

Representation in a democracy is not only a basic human right, it also enables our nation to move forward together. The Maori seats will stay until such time Maori freely choose, via a mana-whenua referendum or constitutional review, to get rid of them.

Source: email message, 8 December 2010 - online at <http://www.maoriparty.org/index.php?pag=nw&id=1479&p=fw-treaty-must-be-the-backbone-for-constitutional-change.html>