

Call for action: Do you care about the Treaty? If so, please act now.

Kia ora friends,

Do you see the Treaty of Waitangi as the foundation to just and peaceful relationships in our country? If so, we urge you to write a message to the Constitutional Advisory Panel. The Panel is currently inviting submissions on several aspects of our constitutional arrangements including the Treaty. We feel that a longer conversation is needed to generate a values based, Treaty based constitution than this government initiated process allows. However it is important to ensure that the Panel is aware of the clear support for the Treaty particularly as there is a campaign underway to exclude it from any future constitution.

We suggest you put something in your own words so that it can be seen that a wide cross-section of people wish to uphold the Treaty relationship, believing that it is foundational to our Constitution. To prompt your thinking some possible angles are given below, along with details on how to make a submission and where to find further information.

We ask you to share this information and encourage others to make submissions. The closing date is 1 July so please act now and have your voice on this critical issue.

Best wishes,

Joan Macdonald, Susan Healy, Jen Margaret, Alex Barnes
(Tamaki Treaty Workers and Wellington Treaty Educators Network)

This call for action is supported by: Auckland Regional Migrant Centre Trust; Bicultural Desk of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland; Network Waitangi Otautahi; Network Waitangi Whangarei; Northland Urban Rural Mission; Pax Christi; Peace Movement Aotearoa; Social Justice Council of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland; Tamaki Treaty Workers; Tangata Tiriti - Treaty People Project; Tauwi Solutions; Treaty Education for Migrants Group; Treaty Relationships Group of Te Haahi Tuuhauwiri (Quakers); Wellington Treaty Educators Network; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Aotearoa.

Submission content:

We encourage you to provide a Treaty-based perspective in relation to all the questions asked by the Panel. However if you have limited time you may wish to focus on the questions related to 'Aspirations' and 'Treaty of Waitangi'. The Panel's questions from these sections are below with some suggested angles to take:

What are your aspirations for Aotearoa New Zealand?

- That there are just and honourable relationships based on the Treaty of Waitangi.
- That we engage in a longer, more in-depth conversation in order to develop a values based, Treaty based constitution.
- How do you want our country to be run in the future?
- In a way which reflects te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Specific Treaty questions are at <http://www.ourconstitution.org.nz/Treaty-of-Waitangi>

Thinking of the future, what role do you think the Treaty of Waitangi could have in our constitution?

- The Treaty is the founding document of our country. It needs to be the foundation for our constitution.

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi provided the framework for an ongoing relationship between Maori and others who came to settle here. Any future constitution needs to develop from the starting point of this document.
- He Wakaputanga (the Declaration of Independence) and Te Tiriti o Waitangi provide the fundamentals for governing in this country. Any further constitution needs to develop from the starting point of these two covenants.

Do you think the Treaty should be made a part of our constitution? Why?

Presuming you say "yes" to the first part of this question, possible starts to the second part are:

- The entire process for determining our constitution needs to be based on the Treaty - rather than trying to fit the Treaty into an existing constitutional framework.
- As Pakeha/Tauīwi I understand that te Tiriti o Waitangi provided for the establishment of a government which allowed my people/me to come here. It's important to our status as non-Maori that this document is the basis for our constitution.
- The Treaty of Waitangi benefits all New Zealanders and enriches us as a country, therefore it should be central to the constitution.
- The Treaty is the foundation document of our nation, therefore the constitution needs to reflect this.
- The Treaty provides a basis for honourable and just relationships between Maori and all other New Zealanders.
- Since attending a Treaty course/workshop (include name of course), I have ...
- I belong to an organisation/church/group that has a Treaty commitment. We believe ...
- Our country has made a statement of support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. If we are going to live up to that commitment it is essential that we honour the Treaty relationship.

Note: We use Treaty and the Treaty of Waitangi interchangeably to refer to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty in the Maori language).

How to make a submission:

Submissions can be made at <http://www.ourconstitution.org.nz/>. It can take just a few minutes or longer if you have the time. For the range of options for making a submission, see <http://www.ourconstitution.org.nz/How-to-make-a-Submission>. Remember the closing date is 1 July 2013.

Further information:

On the Constitutional Advisory Panel: <http://www.cap.govt.nz>

On other processes related to establishing a Treaty based constitution:

- Aotearoa Matike Mai: <http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/iwi.htm>
- Time for Change: <http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/change.htm>

This call for action is available on-line at <http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/cap.htm> - June 2013