



## Constitutional Advisory Panel

/ C/o Ministry of Justice  
DX SX10088, Wellington

The Honourable Bill English  
*Deputy Prime Minister*

The Honourable Dr Pita R Sharples  
*Minister of Māori Affairs*

Tēnā kōrua e ngā Minita,  
Tangihia te pō, nau mai e te ao, tihei mauri ora.

*Nāu i whatu te kākahu, he tāniko tāku*

Kai te mihi ki kā ringa hāro muka o neherā,  
o nāianeī.

Kua kōtuia kā muka o te kaupapa ture o  
Aotearoa, ā, ka whakarākeitia ki kā huatau  
mō āpōpō.

He kākahu hai tāwharu i kā tāhuhu kōrero, i kā  
tūmanako, i kā awhero mō tātou, mō kā uri ā  
muri ake nei.

Kua whatua te kaupapa, mā tātou e tāniko.

*You wove the cloak, I made the border.<sup>1</sup>*

Warm thanks to the people from the past and  
present who have created the foundations for  
the conversation about the constitution.

We have woven together the strands of  
conversation from the past and adorned it with  
ideas for the future.

A cloak of history, expectations, and aspirations  
for the generations to come.

It is up to you, and the future generations, to  
make the final touches.

In accordance with paragraph 15 of the Terms of Reference, we enclose our report: New Zealand's Constitution – A Report on a Conversation, He Kōtuinga Kōrero mō Te Kaupapa Ture o Aotearoa.

When you invited us to undertake this task you noted that as a panel we would face challenges, but ultimately believed the exercise would be fruitful and rewarding for New Zealanders. Having fulfilled our terms of reference we agree. The report provides a snapshot of a developing conversation about New Zealand's constitution. The report summarises the conversation, discusses common themes and makes recommendations on each topic.

In engaging with people on constitutional matters we focussed on collecting a range of views, reflecting the diversity within our nation. The report reflects this range of views, and the advice of the Panel to take the conversation a step further.

The conversation reflected our unique history, people and circumstances. Many people expressed a desire for a range of constitutional changes to reflect this uniqueness. Common themes woven through the topics of conversation included: a sense of belonging, fairness and justice, representation and participation, and checks and balances on power.

<sup>1</sup> Neil Grove & Hirini M. Mead, *Ngā Pēpeha a Ngā Tūpuna* (Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press, 2001) p. 319

The conversations demonstrate people are still developing their ideas and want more information to support future conversations. Our key recommendations are to continue the conversation and to develop a national education strategy for education in schools and in the wider community. The purpose of the strategy would be to raise awareness and understanding of the constitution and to support a more informed conversation about constitutional issues.

The report signposts a way forward for future conversations about the constitution - a conversation that many within our nation are enthusiastic to continue.

We hope this report supports the people of Aotearoa New Zealand in having future conversations about our constitution.

Best regards



**Professor John Burrows**

Co-chair, Constitutional Advisory Panel

Heoi anō, nā



**Sir Tipene O'Regan**

Co-chair, Constitutional Advisory Panel

#### **Panel members**

**Peter Chin**

**Deborah Coddington**

**Hon Sir Michael Cullen**

**Hon John Luxton**

**Bernice Mene**

**Dr Leonie Pihama**

**Hinurewa Poutu**

**Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith**

**Peter Tennent**

**Dr Ranginui Walker**