

Recognising tino rangatiratanga ke racism in Aotearoa

NZ Herald

3 Feb, 2023 06:00 AM 4 mins to read

Establishing a Truth, Reconciliation and Justice Commission and recognising Māori tino rangatiratanga are among several recommendations in two pivotal reports released today by Te Kāhui Tika Tangata Human Rights Commission.

The recommendations are in *Ki te whaiao, ki te ao Māramai*, a community engagement report for developing a National Action Plan Against Racism (Napar), and *Maranga Mai*, a report into the dynamics and impacts of colonisation, racism and white supremacy upon tangata whenua.

Both reports call for Government to commit to constitutional transformation and co-governance with tangata whenua – as outlined by the separate *Matike Mai Aotearoa* and *He Puapua* reports.

“We all have the right to be treated fairly and to be free from racial discrimination. The institutional and inter-personal racism occurring daily in our society represents a clear breach of human and indigenous rights,” said Kaikōmihana Whakawhanaungatanga ā Iwi Race Relations Commissioner Meng Foon.

“We have heard from tangata whenua and many other communities that racism continues to have a negative effect on them and their whānau. A much more positive future will be achieved when He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi are recognised as the founding documents of Aotearoa.

“Alongside their experiences of racism, people also shared their ideas and aspirations for a future free of racism - an Aotearoa that gives effect to the inclusive promise of Te Tiriti to uphold the tino rangatiratanga of tangata whenua and provide a place to stand for all tangata tiriti,” he said.

To guide the commission’s work on the Napar, a National Anti-Racism Taskforce was established, with two caucuses representing tangata whenua and tangata tiriti. This partnership led to diverse views being shared and considered, so as a result, many of the recommendations from the reports are connected and supportive.

The commission engaged with more than 400 people in 23 online hui, and received 470 online submissions about people’s experiences of racism and their views on the best options for its prevention and elimination. The views are published in *Ki te whaiao, ki te ao Māramai*, which has been provided to the Ministry of Justice.

The report describes the long history of racism in Aotearoa affecting tangata whenua and ethnic and religious communities. It has more than 40 recommendations, including:

- Eliminating racism in key sectors (housing, employment, work and income, health, education, criminal justice).
- Addressing the land issues of tangata whenua in a Tiriti-based way.
- Constitutional transformation.
- Education about the history of colonisation and racism in Aotearoa.
- A campaign encouraging the public to take anti-racist action.
- Requiring or incentivising public and private organisations to take anti-racist action.

Maranga Mai

Maranga Mai outlines the immense harm caused to Māori by more than 180 years of colonisation – resulting in discrimination, violence and impoverishment.

“The report provides a crucial perspective on extremely challenging issues which will define Aotearoa for years to come. It compels us to acknowledge the white supremacy and institutional racism woven into the fabric of the colony as immigrants settled in these islands,” said Te Amokapua Chief Human Rights Commissioner Paul Hunt.

A three-year Truth, Reconciliation and Justice Commission, as recommended by the report, would aid understanding of the injustices affecting Māori and help with the healing and reconciliation. It would also provide a path to realising constitutional certainty before the bicentenary of Te Tiriti in 2040, he said.

Maranga Mai explains that to be free of discrimination and to determine their own future, tangata whenua want tino rangatiratanga under Te Tiriti restored, as well as their indigenous rights under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Undrip).

Maranga Mai recommended:

- Committing to constitutional transformation.
- Establishing a Truth, Reconciliation and Justice Commission.
- Establishing an independent body or bodies to uphold Te Tiriti and Indigenous rights.
- Appointing an Indigenous Rights Commissioner and exploring the option for an independent Indigenous Rights Commission.

Bold action needed

National Anti-Racism Taskforce member Dr Rawiri Taonui said: "The tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti caucuses have called for bold action to halt racism in Aotearoa that continues to affect vulnerable communities.

"Many people from tangata whenua, Pacific, Asian, Pākehā and many other communities spoke to the issue of racism, including the ongoing injustice resulting from colonisation, and the importance of addressing racism and respecting diversity as a strength to bring the country together.

"We have the opportunity to stop the ongoing negative effects of colonisation, racism and white supremacy and move towards a positive future as a country where we have greater respect for each other," he said.

To read the full reports:

Ki te Whaiao, ki te ao Mārama

https://admin.tikatangata.org.nz/assets/Documents/Ki-te-whaiao-ki-te-ao-Marama_Full-Report_PDF.pdf

Maranga Mai!

https://admin.tikatangata.org.nz/assets/Documents/Maranga-Mai_Full-Report_PDF.pdf