

RACE RELATIONS IN  
Aotearoa New Zealand

*Whanaungatanga ā iwi*



STATEMENT ON RACE RELATIONS

## HOW WE IDENTIFIED OURSELVES IN THE 2006 CENSUS

### ALL UP

European	2,609,592	67.6%
Māori	565,329	14.6%
New Zealander	429,429	11.1%
Asian	354,552	9.2%
Pacific	265,974	6.9%
Other	36,237	0.9%

### EUROPEAN: FIVE LARGEST GROUPS

NZ European	2,381,000
English	44,000
Dutch	28,000
British	27,000
Australian	26,000

### PACIFIC: FIVE LARGEST GROUPS

Samoaan	131,000
Cook Island Māori	58,000
Tongan	50,000
Niuean	22,000
Fijian	10,000

### MĀORI: FIVE LARGEST GROUPS

Ngāpuhi	122,000
Ngāti Porou	72,000
Ngāti Kahungunu	60,000
Ngāi Tahu	49,000
Te Arawa	42,000

### ALL UP: FIVE LARGEST GROUPS

NZ European	2,381,000
Māori	565,000
Chinese	147,000
Samoaan	131,000
Indian	104,000

### ASIAN: FIVE LARGEST GROUPS

Chinese	147,000
Indian	104,000
Korean	31,000
Filipino	17,000
Japanese	12,000

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## FOREWORD

We have long been passionate in New Zealand about our race relations. Our debates on the subject can be highly charged. Sometimes we forget how much we actually agree on. I hope this Statement on Race Relations will provide a basis for identifying common ground and for continuing the dialogue.

The first draft of the Statement was launched at the New Zealand Diversity Forum in 2007. It is a project of the New Zealand Diversity Action Programme, facilitated by the Human Rights Commission. After initial public consultation, a second draft was promoted in March 2008 in association with Race Relations Day under the theme of Finding Common Ground. It was the subject of a workshop at the Parihaka Peace Festival, formed part of the annual Te Papa Treaty debates, and was discussed in other community, academic and public sector forums.

Roundtables of New Zealand Diversity Action Programme participants were held in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch in May 2008 to consider the public feedback. The Statement was further revised to reflect the outcome of this process and then presented in its final form to the New Zealand Diversity Forum in August 2008.

This Statement follows on from the Statement on Religious Diversity which originated at the 2006 Diversity Forum and was published in May 2007. That Statement sought to provide a human rights framework for ongoing discussion and dialogue on issues raised by our increasing religious diversity. The Statement on Race Relations seeks to do the same in response to our growing ethnic and cultural diversity. Both statements are also a resource for advocacy, education and training.

The Statement is followed by some further commentary that reflects issues raised in the consultation process and provides some additional background information.

**JORIS DE BRES**

RACE RELATIONS COMMISSIONER KAIHAUTŪ WHAKAWHANAUNGA Ā IWI

## STATEMENT ON RACE RELATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

We live in an increasingly diverse society. We are a mix of Māori, Pākehā, Pacific, Asian and many other peoples. Although we are diverse, we are all New Zealanders.

Our growing diversity brings both benefits and challenges. It enriches our cultural heritage, increases our international connectedness and contributes to our economic well-being. It challenges us to counter instances of racism and discrimination and to foster intercultural communication, understanding and respect.

International treaties uphold the equal rights and dignity of us all. The universal human rights they contain are affirmed in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act, the Human Rights Act, other statutes and the common law.

These human rights underpin our race relations. They are set out here as a number of brief statements that together provide a framework for further dialogue and monitoring of our progress in achieving harmonious relationships.

- 1 THE TREATY OF WAITANGI** We acknowledge the Treaty as the founding document of our nation. It recognises both the rights of Māori as indigenous people and the rights of all who have subsequently settled here.
- 2 FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION** We all have a right to protection from discrimination and to remedies if we experience it. Discrimination on the basis of race, colour, ethnic or national origins is unlawful.

- 3 FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION** We all have a right to freedom of expression. It should be exercised in a manner that respects the rights of others. Incitement of racial hostility is a criminal offence. The media have a responsibility to be accurate, fair and balanced.
- 4 SAFETY** We all have a right to safety of our person and of our personal and communal property. Hateful acts including racially motivated threats, verbal abuse, harassment, physical assault and damage to property are unacceptable.
- 5 PARTICIPATION** We all have a right to participate in public affairs. We should be involved in decisions that affect us, through consultation and representation in decision-making bodies.
- 6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** We all have a right to decent work, education, health and housing and an adequate standard of living. Where social and economic inequalities exist between ethnic groups, special measures should be taken to address them.
- 7 NEWCOMERS** Newcomers have the same fundamental rights as the rest of us. We should welcome, inform and support them to settle and participate in the community.
- 8 EDUCATION FOR DIVERSITY** We should all have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge we need for life in a diverse society, including an understanding of our history, the Treaty of Waitangi and the diversity of our cultures.
- 9 CULTURAL IDENTITY** We all have a right to use our own languages and to practise our own cultures within the bounds of the law and respecting the rights of others. The diversity of our origins, languages and cultures is an important social, economic and cultural asset that shapes our common national identity.

**10 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** Human rights come with responsibilities. When we uphold and exercise our own rights and freedoms, we have a responsibility to respect the rights and freedoms of others and to contribute to harmonious race relations.

## **COMMENTARY ON THE STATEMENT**

### **RACE RELATIONS**

Race relations is a commonly used term for the relationship between ethnically and culturally diverse peoples, even though the concept of race itself, as a biological distinction, has long been discredited. An important associated concept is racism, which uses biological differences, whether imagined or real, to assert superiority of one group over another – devaluing the ‘other’ – to justify aggression or privilege.

The term ‘race relations’ is used in the Human Rights Act. The Act provides for the position of Race Relations Commissioner, whose role contributes to the Human Rights Commission’s statutory function to ‘encourage the maintenance and development of harmonious relations between individuals and among the diverse groups in New Zealand society’.

### **NEW ZEALANDERS**

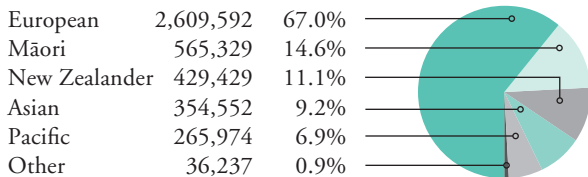
The Statement takes a broad and inclusive view of New Zealanders, not dependent on citizenship or residential status. It is recognised that not everyone who lives here sees themselves as New Zealanders, for example people who have come here to work or study temporarily, but we are all part of the wider New Zealand community.

## HUMAN RIGHTS GENERALLY

The key principles set out in the Statement reflect universal human rights, but they are applied here specifically to the context of race relations in New Zealand. This does not diminish in any way the importance of human rights generally or of other forms of discrimination. Discrimination on the grounds of religious and ethical belief is addressed in the Statement on Religious Diversity. Unlawful discrimination under the Human Rights Act includes not only religious belief, ethical belief, colour, race and ethnic or national origins, but also sex, marital status, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status and sexual orientation. Often people suffer discrimination on a combination of these grounds, for example sex or disability or religious belief, together with colour, race or ethnic or national origins.

## OUR GROWING DIVERSITY

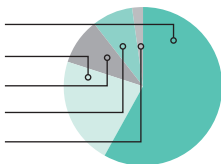
Māori were the original inhabitants of Aotearoa New Zealand and are thus the indigenous people. Migrants from the 19th to the mid 20th century came mainly from Britain and Ireland, but there were also smaller groups such as Chinese and Dalmatians. Since the 1950s, people have come in larger numbers from continental Europe, the Pacific and Asia, and also, in smaller numbers, from Africa, the Middle East and the Americas, including some as refugees. New Zealanders identified their ethnicity in the 2006 Census as follows:



*NB: The total exceeds 100% because people can identify with more than one ethnicity.*

Young people are even more diverse. The ethnicity of New Zealand children attending primary and secondary school in 2007 was:

European	436,717	58.3%
Māori	164,021	21.9%
Pacific	69,888	9.3%
Asian	62,867	8.4%
Other	16,135	2.1%



Of babies born in 2007, around 55% were at least partly of Māori, Pacific and Asian descent. There has been a marked increase in multiple ethnicities. In the 2006 census only 10% of all New Zealanders identified with more than one ethnic group. By contrast, 25% of babies born in 2007 had more than one ethnicity. Two thirds of Māori babies and half of Pacific babies belonged to multiple ethnic groups, as did a third of babies of European, Asian and other descent.

## INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

Universal human rights are set out in a number of international treaties. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Other treaties apply these rights to particular groups or issues. These include the:

- Convention on the Status of Refugees
- Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- Convention Against Torture
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Rights of People With Disabilities

New Zealand has contributed actively to the development of international human rights treaties, starting with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and has ratified all the above conventions.

In 2007 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Although it does not have the status of an international human rights treaty, it is an important guide to the evolving international human rights standards in relation to indigenous peoples. All these documents can be accessed on the website of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)).

The Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination requires governments to eliminate racially discriminatory policies, prohibit racial discrimination and encourage intercultural communication. It commits governments to declare the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination and acts of racial violence unlawful and to prohibit organisations that incite racial hatred. It declares all people, without distinction as to race, colour, national or ethnic origin, to be equal before the law and in the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and it provides for special measures to be instituted to achieve equality. Governments are required to provide protection and remedies against racial discrimination and to adopt measures to combat prejudice and promote understanding and tolerance.

The New Zealand Government must report to the United Nations every five years on its compliance with the convention and the current state of our race relations. The most recent report (which goes to the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) was provided in 2006, and the next one is due in 2011.

**1 THE TREATY OF WAITANGI** *We acknowledge the Treaty as the founding document of our nation. It recognises both the rights of Māori as indigenous people and the rights of all who have subsequently settled here.*

The Treaty was signed in 1840 between representatives of Māori and the British Crown. It provided for kāwanatanga – a unified government, rangatiratanga – a guarantee of the existing rights of Māori as the indigenous people, and rite tahi – equality of all before the law. There is a long history of breaches of the Treaty by subsequent governments, with lasting cultural, social and economic effects on Māori. The process of acknowledging these wrongs, and putting them right, continues through the Waitangi Tribunal and through Treaty settlements negotiated between the Government and Māori iwi, hapū and whānau. The Tribunal was established in 1975 and is a permanent commission of inquiry charged with making recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to government breaches of the promises made in the Treaty. The Tribunal’s jurisdiction was extended in 1985 to include historical grievances dating back to 1840, providing a process for truth and reconciliation. Parliament decided in 2006 to set a deadline of September 2008 for the lodging of historical claims. The Government’s goal is to have all historical claims heard and settled by 2020.

The Treaty is not incorporated in our law generally, but references to it in many statutes mean that there is a legal obligation to implement its principles in such areas as education, health and the environment. The Treaty principles are generally understood by the courts to require a “relationship akin to a partnership” between the Government and Māori on matters that affect

them as Māori, and active protection of Māori language, culture, lands, resources and places of special cultural significance.

The Treaty is not only about the relationship between Māori iwi, hapū and whānau and the Government. It is also the founding document of our nation and applies equally to all of us – recognising the right of us all to belong here and to enjoy equal rights.

**2 FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION** *We all have a right to protection from discrimination and to remedies if we experience it. Discrimination on the basis of race, colour, ethnic or national origins is unlawful.*

The Human Rights Act provides for the Human Rights Commission to receive complaints of racial discrimination and to seek to resolve them in the most efficient, informal and cost-effective manner possible. It is unlawful to discriminate in access to public places, vehicles and facilities, education, employment, industrial and professional associations, qualifying bodies and vocational training bodies, partnerships, the provision of goods and services, land, housing and accommodation. People can lodge complaints by:

**FREE PHONE:** 0800 496 877

**EMAIL:** [infoline@hrc.co.nz](mailto:infoline@hrc.co.nz)

**MAIL:** PO Box 6751 Wellesley St, Auckland

**IN PERSON:** in Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch

The Commission has a toll-free helpline (above) to provide advice and professional mediators to assist where appropriate in resolving the issue. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the complainant can take it to the Human Rights Review

Tribunal for consideration and decision. The Office of Human Rights Proceedings may provide legal representation subject to certain criteria.

The Human Rights Commission monitors complaints of racial discrimination and reports on them annually in the Race Relations Report and in its annual report to Parliament.

**3 FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION** *We all have a right to freedom of expression. It should be exercised in a manner that respects the rights of others. Excitement of racial hostility is a criminal offence. The media have a responsibility to be accurate, fair and balanced.*

The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act states that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and opinions. This freedom is limited by sections 61 and 131 of the Human Rights Act.

Section 61 of the Act makes it unlawful:

- (A)** *To publish or distribute written matter or broadcast words which are threatening, abusive, or insulting; or*
- (B)** *To use such words in any public place or meeting; or*
- (C)** *To use such words in any place in the knowledge that they were reasonably likely to be published in the media – being matter or words likely to excite hostility against or bring into contempt any group of persons in or who may be coming to New Zealand on the ground of the colour, race, or ethnic or national origins of that group of persons.*

It is not a breach of Section 61 for the media to publish a report relating to the use of such words if the report accurately conveys the intention of the person who used them.

It is important to note that the use of threatening, abusive and insulting words must be likely to excite hostility against a particular group to be unlawful under this section of the Act. The right to freedom of expression in the Bill of Rights Act prevails if the words are simply offensive.

Section 131 of the Act makes it an offence punishable by up to three months imprisonment or a fine not exceeding \$7,000 to excite racial disharmony where there is deliberate intent:

*Every person commits an offence who, with intent to excite hostility or ill-will against, or bring into contempt or ridicule, any group of persons in New Zealand on the ground of the colour, race, or ethnic or national origins of that group of persons;*

**(A)** *Publishes or distributes written matter or broadcasts words which are threatening, abusive or insulting; or*

**(B)** *Uses such words in any public place;*

*being matter or words likely to excite hostility or ill-will against, or bring into contempt or ridicule, any such group of persons in New Zealand on the ground of the colour, race, or ethnic or national origins of that group of persons.*

Section 131 thus requires not only a likelihood that the words will excite hostility, contempt or ridicule, but also an intent to do so. Prosecution needs the consent of the Attorney General.

Although the media are exempt under Section 61 of the Human Rights Act when they are reporting others, they are nevertheless subject to professional standards either provided for in legislation (for radio and television) or in voluntary codes (in the case of newspapers and magazines, and of advertising). The media standards generally include a requirement for

accuracy, fairness and balance and not to denigrate ethnic groups. Complaints can be made to the Broadcasting Standards Authority, the New Zealand Press Council or the Advertising Standards Authority as appropriate. The Human Rights Commission reports the decisions of these bodies on race-related complaints in its annual Race Relations Report.

Freedom of expression also implies a positive role for the media to promote racial harmony through the airing of plural voices, the promotion of tolerance and the provision of information that aids public understanding. The New Zealand Action Plan for Human Rights calls for improvement in the reflection and promotion of cultural diversity in the media through journalism training and increasing the diversity of the journalism workforce. The numbers of Māori, Pacific and Asian journalists in the mainstream media remain disproportionately low.

When public figures (such as politicians, media and sports personalities) or other people in positions of power and influence make comments that are racially offensive, there are other options even though such statements may not be unlawful. Sometimes the most effective and immediate action is for members of the public to express their concern, and for the person's peers, colleagues, employer, sports body, board or other organisation to disassociate themselves from the statement and to take appropriate action pursuant to relevant codes of conduct. Organisations should have policies and codes of conduct that do not tolerate racially offensive comments.

**4 SAFETY** *We all have a right to safety of our person and of our personal and communal property. Hateful acts including racially motivated threats, verbal abuse, harassment, physical assault and damage to property are unacceptable.*

The Human Rights Act defines racial harassment as the use of language (whether written or spoken), or visual material or physical behaviour that:

- *expresses hostility against, or brings into contempt or ridicule, any other person on the ground of the colour, race, or ethnic or national origins of that person; and*
- *Is hurtful or offensive to that other person (whether or not that is conveyed to the first-mentioned person); and*
- *Is either repeated, or of such a significant nature, that it has a detrimental effect on that other person in respect of any of the areas to which the Act applies (which include the workplace and educational institutions).*

The Human Rights Commission is able to deal with complaints about racial harassment in the same way it deals with complaints about discrimination. Workplaces and educational institutions should have racial harassment policies that provide for the safety of workers and students and include procedures to deal with complaints.

The Summary Offences Act does not list offences that are specifically racially motivated, but it does contain a range of offences, including disorderly behaviour, offensive behaviour, offensive language, intimidation, assault and damage to property, that apply in such cases. The Sentencing Act makes it an aggravating factor in sentencing if the offender committed an

offence partly or wholly because of hostility towards a group of persons who have an enduring common characteristic such as race, colour, nationality, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability.

The Police are committed to prosecuting racially motivated crime where they have sufficient evidence. Prosecutions and convictions are monitored by the Human Rights Commission and reported annually in the Commission's Race Relations Report.

**5 PARTICIPATION** *We all have a right to participate in public affairs. We should be involved in decisions that affect us, through consultation and representation in decision-making bodies.*

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives, to vote and be elected at genuine periodic elections by universal suffrage and secret ballot, and to have access, on general terms of equality, to public service. New Zealand has a long tradition of representative government and free and fair elections, including provision for Māori seats to ensure representation. The MMP electoral system has also boosted the representation of Māori, Pacific and other ethnic groups in Parliament. Of the 121 Members in the 2005–2008 Parliament, 22 were Māori, five were Pacific and two were Asian. However, this still fell short of the proportions of Pacific and Asian people in the population as a whole. Concerns were expressed by the Electoral Commission that the level of voter turnout by Māori and Pacific peoples in 2005 was lower than the average. This continues to raise questions about the level of participation in democratic processes.

In local government, the number of successful Māori, Pacific and Asian candidates in the 2007 Council elections was disproportionately low, with Māori comprising 4.8% and all others who did not identify as European comprising only 6.3%. Māori were better represented on district health boards after the 2007 elections and Ministerial appointments, with 19.2% of members, but the percentage of Pacific and Asian members was negligible. There were also elections for school boards of trustees in 2007. Māori comprised 15.4% of trustees after the election, Pacific peoples 3.5% and Asian peoples 0.9%.

Achieving full participation in democratic bodies by all New Zealand's diverse communities therefore remains a challenge.

**6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** *We all have an equal right to decent work, education, health and housing and an adequate standard of living. Where social and economic inequalities exist between ethnic groups, special measures should be taken to address them.*

There continue to be significant social and economic inequalities between ethnic groups, despite a wide range of government policies and community actions that seek to address them.

There has been progress in recent years in reducing disparities in areas such as employment, life expectancy, income and educational achievement, but there is still a long way to go and gains may be fragile in the face of changing economic conditions. Reducing inequalities and providing equal opportunities must remain a top priority for both government and communities.

Special measures to achieve equality between different groups do not constitute unlawful discrimination or privileges. Their purpose is to bring a group that is disadvantaged up to the

same social or economic level as others. Special measures are provided for in the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Act and the Bill of Rights Act, but are justified only until equality is achieved.

**7 NEWCOMERS** *Newcomers have the same fundamental rights as the rest of us. We should welcome, inform and support them to settle and participate in the community.*

In 2006–07, around 47,000 migrants were approved for residence in New Zealand. The largest group (26%) came from the United Kingdom, followed by China (12%), India (9%), South Africa (8%), the Philippines (6%), Fiji (5%), Samoa (4%), the United States (3%) and South Korea and Tonga (2% each). New Zealand accepts an annual quota of 750 refugees. The main source countries in 2006-07 were Myanmar (49%), Afghanistan (30%), the Sudan (3%) and Iraq (2%).

Migrants generally enjoy the same rights as others from the point of their arrival, although there are minimum residence requirements for some social benefits. When they are granted permanent residence they become eligible to vote (unlike many countries, where migrants can only vote if they become citizens). Refugees are granted permanent residence at the time of their acceptance.

It is now recognised that successful settlement and integration are most likely to be achieved through active policies of welcome, information and support. There is a national settlement strategy and settlement plan of action for central and local government, and local settlement strategies have been completed for some of the major metropolitan centres. The National Action Plan for Human Rights envisages settlement plans being in place

for every local authority area, bringing together the efforts, services and resources of both central and local government. The Action Plan also calls for adequate resources for non-governmental and community groups to support settlement. There is a huge voluntary effort to support migrant and refugee settlement through organisations like Refugee Services, ESOL Home Tutors, ethnic community associations, migrant centres, multi-ethnic councils, service organisations, faith communities and many others.

**8 EDUCATION FOR DIVERSITY** *We should all have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge we need for life in a diverse society, including an understanding of our history, the Treaty of Waitangi and the diversity of our cultures.*

The core principles of the New Zealand Curriculum include:

**THE TREATY** – acknowledging the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand. All students must have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga.

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY** – reflecting New Zealand’s cultural diversity and valuing the histories and traditions of all its people.

**INCLUSION** – being non-sexist, non-racist and non-discriminatory; ensuring students’ identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed.

Throughout the Curriculum students are also to be encouraged to value: diversity, as found in our different cultures, languages and heritages; equity, through fairness and social justice; community and participation for the common good; and

respect for themselves, others and human rights.

The tertiary sector, including adult and community education, also has a responsibility to provide education for diversity.

**9 CULTURAL IDENTITY** *We all have a right to use our own languages and to practise our own cultures within the bounds of the law and respecting the rights of others. The diversity of our origins, languages and cultures is an important social, economic and cultural asset that shapes our common national identity.*

The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act states that a person who belongs to an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority in New Zealand shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of that minority, to enjoy the culture, to profess and practise the religion or to use the language, of that minority.

Central and local government, community organisations and businesses play an important role in fostering and supporting diverse communities in celebrating and sharing their cultures, through such major events as Waitangi Day, the Chinese New Year, Pasifika, Race Relations Day, Matariki, Diwali and other cultural and religious festivals and national days.

Language is a very important issue for race relations, both in affirming identity and in fostering understanding of different cultures. The New Zealand Curriculum provides for all students to have the opportunity to learn te reo Māori, and to learn at least one language other than English. The right to speak one's heritage language implies the opportunity to learn it. While language can be learnt in the home, there is also a responsibility on the part of Government to ensure the continued survival and use of languages that are unique to New Zealand and to its

directly associated Pacific Island nations, namely te reo Māori, New Zealand Sign, and the languages of Niue, Tokelau and the Cook Islands. Government should, in partnership with communities, also seek to provide opportunities to learn and use the heritage languages of migrant communities. The New Zealand Diversity Action Programme's Statement on Language Policy provides a framework to realise these rights and responsibilities.

An important means of supporting the preservation and use of community languages and cultures is through the availability of media, including dedicated radio and television stations and programmes.

**10 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** *Human rights come with responsibilities. When we uphold and exercise our own rights and freedoms, we have a responsibility to respect the rights and freedoms of others and to contribute to harmonious race relations.*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of (his or her) personality is possible. In the exercise of (his or her) rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.”

There are many ways we can contribute individually to harmonious race relations, for example by raising our children to respect people who are different, supporting or getting involved in organisations that promote cultural diversity, intercultural exchange and dialogue, or helping newcomers

to settle. We can show zero tolerance of racism at work, at school and in the community; learn and use a little of other languages; and attend or participate in cultural events. In so doing, we will create a more tolerant society that will make New Zealand a better place for all of us.

## **THE NEW ZEALAND DIVERSITY ACTION PROGRAMME**

The New Zealand Diversity Action Programme is a network of some 250 organisations that are committed to practical action to foster cultural diversity and harmonious race relations.

It includes networks on language policy, interfaith dialogue, refugee issues, and the media. Participants and others come together for the annual New Zealand Diversity Forum in August. Joining the Diversity Action Programme is one way in which organisations can make a difference and share good practice.

Details are available at  
[www.hrc.co.nz/diversity](http://www.hrc.co.nz/diversity)



## THE ROLE OF THE RACE RELATIONS COMMISSIONER

The Race Relations Commissioner is appointed by warrant of the Governor General to lead the work of the Human Rights Commission on race relations. This new role came into being in 2002 as a result of the merger of the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator. The role of the Commission was also changed in 2002, with an increased emphasis on advocating and promoting respect for human rights and encouraging the maintenance and development of harmonious relations between individuals and among the diverse groups in society. The Commission has an enquiries and complaints service to deal with instances of racial and other forms of discrimination, and it is required to deal with these by resolving disputes rather than determining fault. Professional mediators carry out this role.

The Human Rights Commission encourages the development of positive race relations through:

- *Promoting practical action on diversity through facilitation of the New Zealand Diversity Action Programme and its networks*
- *Working in partnership with government and non-government organisations*
- *Building understanding of the human rights dimensions of the Treaty of Waitangi*
- *Organising the annual New Zealand Diversity Forum*
- *Acknowledging positive contributions to race relations*
- *Promoting community participation in Race Relations Day and other diversity events*
- *Publishing an annual Race Relations Report*
- *Providing a disputes resolution service for complaints about discrimination*
- *Providing advocacy, facilitation, research and information on race relations and human rights*

**THE DIVERSITY FERN** is the logo of the New Zealand Diversity Action Programme. It was originally designed for Race Relations Day 2005 by Malaysian-born New Zealand designer Jean Voon. The fern represents the growing cultural diversity of New Zealand.

*Baby fronds symbolising new growth*

*Middle Eastern (Iranian motif)*

*Vietnamese motif from fabric*

*Indian paisley design*

*Traditional Chinese  
character found on  
silk cloth*

*Samoan tapa cloth pattern*

*European Fleur de Lys, from the doors  
of St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland*

*Traditional Māori kōwhaiwhai pattern from a painted panel  
in Manutuke church (1849, Rongowhakaata)*

