

DEED OF SETTLEMENT SIGNING CEREMONY

Te Ariki Tā Tumu te Heuheu

Waitetoko Marae, Turangi – 8 July 2017

Ko Tongariro te maunga, ko Taupo te moana, ko Tuwharetoa te iwi

The Honorable Christopher Finlayson, Minister in Charge of Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations, the Honorable Minister Te Ururoa Flavell, Members of Parliament, representatives of Regional and District Councils, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys.

Ngāti Tuwharetoa is honoured to welcome you all today, to celebrate the signing of the Ngāti Tuwharetoa Comprehensive Claims Deed of Settlement.

This settlement is the culmination of one of the major milestones in the relationship between the Crown and Ngāti Tuwharetoa. It concludes a prolonged and intense period of substantive negotiations. Ngāti Tuwharetoa explored every conceivable option, to address the scope and nature of the claims, whilst adhering to our tikanga and the principle of mana motuhake.

While the journey posed numerous challenges for our negotiating team and I suspect for the Crown as well, we should reflect on those challenges and what has been achieved.

Minister, I convey my sincere gratitude on behalf of Ngāti Tuwharetoa, for the leadership you have demonstrated during the negotiations. Your wisdom and influence has been clearly demonstrated in bringing this auspicious occasion to fruition. I realise that this has not been a straightforward task, but the outcome is greatly appreciated.

I also acknowledge the professional and personable approach of the Crown Negotiator, John Isles, and the extraordinary commitment of officials from the Office of Treaty Settlements. I also thank the Minister and officials from the Department of Conservation for acknowledging Ngāti Tuwharetoa's vision, and committing to a new partnership recognising Ngāti Tuwharetoa mana, encapsulated in the Te Piringa Agreement.

These negotiations tested the limits of the Crown's settlement policies. Our negotiation team have had to look at the future and our operating environment, with fresh eyes and insights. They have challenged and sought changes to conventional structures and thinking, so as to meet the vision and aspirations of Ngāti Tuwharetoa.

I want to acknowledge the positive engagement with Councilors and senior staff from the Waikato Regional Council and the Mayor and Councilors of the Taupo District Council. The establishment of Te Kopuā Kanapanapa Agreement demonstrates what we can achieve, when all parties choose to engage in a sincere and positive manner.

I also sincerely acknowledge the support of the Crown Forestry Rental Trust, and again the Office of Treaty Settlements. Reaching this stage of our negotiations would not have been possible without your very significant assistance. Ngāti Tuwharetoa wishes to thank you for your invaluable support of our settlement.

I also acknowledge the many iwi who have attended today to support the settlement. Our relationships with each other are founded on tikanga, mutual respect and commitment to uphold the whakapapa that connects us to each other and to our sacred places. We are honoured to have you here to celebrate this day with us.

There are many people who must be acknowledged for their immense contributions to this kaupapa and I would like to begin by acknowledging Tuwharetoa kaumātua, kuia and hapū. *Ngāti Tuwharetoa kia kaha, kia maia, kia haere ngātahi.*

I also thank our Ngāti Tuwharetoa entities who have contributed their voices to these negotiations. I acknowledge the support of the Tuwharetoa Settlement Trust and the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, and look forward to us all working closer together under a newly configured forward-looking organisation soon. Tēnā koutou katoa.

I firmly believe that this settlement provides a solid foundation for Ngāti Tuwharetoa to make paradigm shifts in the key decision that determine our future. We have formed a powerful consensus around our vision and aspirations through our Te Kapua Whakapipi haerenga. Those visions and aspirations were determined by the people of Ngāti Tuwharetoa and we will be guided by them.

Our newly created tribal entity, Te Kotahitanga o Ngāti Tuwharetoa, includes all our people and has a mission to unite and empower our hapū. We have a wonderful opportunity to establish new frameworks and exciting new relationships amongst our people, revitalising our whenua and our taonga tuku iho. To move forward, we must be bold in our endeavor, precise in our intent, but humble in our actions. Suffice to say, our Hapū Delegates and Alternates have worked tirelessly to bring us to this point.

I also acknowledge the immense efforts of the Negotiation Team. Today's signing represents an achievement for Ngāti Tuwharetoa that ranks amongst the top settlements to date. In saying this, let us never forget the remarkable feats of our tupuna, neither can we forget the many who began this journey with us, who though not physically here today, are undoubtedly with us all *a-wairua*, within each and every one of us.

Let this settlement be a sacred thread that binds us all; that we may look to the health and well-being of our future generations from a platform of consensus and unity. It is a testimony to the strength of our tikanga that Ngāti Tuwharetoa has never ceded our authority within our rohe, each generation upholding the legacy of Ngatoroirangi and our tupuna.

The time has come for Ngāti Tuwharetoa to once more look ahead, to visualise the future and the world we want for our tamariki and our mokopuna. As with all major milestones in our tribal journey, we must stand up and be counted now. There is no doubt in my mind that we have the ability to build a future that ensures the well-being of all our people.

In the face of over-whelming odds, we have held fast to our tikanga. Let Tuwharetoa stand as one, let us speak and act on the words of our tupuna, for if we do not act now, we may undoubtedly be too late for our mokopuna tomorrow.

Therefore it is appropriate, that upon this marae of Ngāti Te Rangiita, on this day, in the presence of you all, I close on these words from our tupuna Tamamutu:

E Tuwharetoa e

Kia āta whakaterere i te waka nei

Kei pariparia e te tai

Kia monehunehu te kura.

Ka whakamārotia atu anō,

Ka whakahoki mai ana ki te kapua whakapipi

No reira

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, huri noa tēnā tātou katoa