OFFICIAL

Wai 2700, #C59(a)

I TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

WAI 2700
WAI 3003

KEI RARO I TE MANA O	te ture o te Tiriti o Waitangi 1975
I TE TAKE O	te pakirehua Wai 2700 mō ngā kerēme e pā ana ki te Mana o te Wahine
Ā	
I TE TAKE O	tētahi kerēme nā Nora Rameka, rātou ko Rukuwai Allen ko Heeni Brown (Wai 3003)

Whakarāpopoto o te Kōrero Taunaki a Rukuwai Allen
I tēnei rā, i te 17 o Pepuere 2026

RECEIVED
Waitangi Tribunal
20 Feb 26
Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

PO Box 133102
Auckland 1146
kauparelaw.co.nz
aroha.herewini@kaupare.co.nz
amber.evans@kaupare.co.nz
A Herewini / A Evans

TĒNĀ, E TE TARAIPIUNARA

1. *This summary sets out the key points of my brief of evidence filed on 17 February 2026 and identifies which sections of same relate to the various issues set out by the Tribunal in its Statement of Issues for the Rangatiratanga Pou ("TSOI").*[1] *This document is merely a summary, and should be utilised as an aid only to my full brief.*

2. I ēnei kōrero āku, ka kōrerohia ngā āhuatanga kua kite nei ahau, kua wheako nei ahau, kua ako nei ahau i roto i ngā tau, me te tātari i ngā tūwhaiāhuaranga kua puta i te Karauna kore i aro tika, kore i whai tika i tāna i kītaurangi ai ki te iwi Māori i roto i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Anā, mā te mārama ki te ahunga mai o ngā whakahāweatanga motuhake kua tau ki te wāhine Māori, ka pūrangiaho pea he ao anō kei tua, he huarahi anga whakamua e tika ai tā te ao tiaki i te mana me te mauri o te wahine Māori.

   In my evidence, I discuss the things I have seen, experienced and learnt over the years, and analyse the circumstances brought about by the Crown through its failure to uphold the promises made to Māori under te Tiriti o Waitangi. By understanding the source of the unique prejudice that has befallen wāhine Māori, perhaps a new world can be envisioned, a way forward in which the world can properly protect the dignity and mauri of wāhine Māori.

KO WAI AU

Ko Whakataha te maunga
Ko Waitangi te awa
Ko Tauwhara te marae
Ko Rukuwai Allen ahau

3. He hoa wahine, he māmā ahau. He tuakana, he teina ahau. Tokowhā ngā wāhine i taku whānau, tokotoru ōku tūngāne. Kua tupu mātou kia

[1] Wai 2700, #1.4.4 *Tribunal Statement of Issues for the Rangatiratanga Pou* (4 November 2025).

mōhio mātou ki ō mātou marae, ō mātou kāinga anō hoki. Nohinohi tonu au i te wā i whakatūria ahau ki te tuku i te reo karanga atu i taku marae o Tauwhara, i te Waimate. Nō taua wā i mau ahau ki ērā mahi, tae rawa mai ki ēnei rā e pērā tonu ana.

I am a partner and a mother. I am an older sister, and a younger sister. There are four wāhine in my whānau, I have three brothers. We were raised with the knowledge of our marae and home lands. I was very young when I was chosen to deliver the karanga from my marae, Tauwhara, in Waimate. From that time onwards, I have assumed those obligations and continue to do so to this day.

4. Kua mahi ahau i roto i ngā mahi whakapāoho, he whakaputa i ngā pūrongo nō te tirohanga Māori te mahi. Mutu ana aku mahi whakapāoho i mahi ahau i ētahi tari kāwana, i reira tautoko ai ngā mahi Māori, te whakawhanaunga me ngā iwi, te whakapakari i ngā kaimahi kia mārama ake ai rātou ki te ao Māori, he āwhina i te taha ki te reo Māori mā te hanga rautaki anō hoki. I āianei e mahi ana ahau ki roto i ōku herenga whakapapa, hei kaituruki ki Toi Ngāpuhi, e tautoko nei i ngā ringatoi o te kāinga.

I have worked in broadcasting, reporting from a Māori perspective. Following a career in broadcasting, I worked in a number of government departments where I supported Māori affairs, building relationships with iwi, strengthened staff understanding of te ao Māori, and assisted with the Māori language through strategy development. I currently work within my genealogical connections at Toi Ngāpuhi as Programme Director, supporting local cultural practitioners.

WĀHINE HEI RANGATIRA: *THE REDUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND STATUS OF WAHINE MĀORI*

5. *This section of my evidence addresses issue 1 of the TSOI in terms of my understanding of mana motuhake and rangatiratanga in pre-colonial*

times, our kōrero tuku iho and teachings of my tupuna, and the foundation of these as they relate to the roles, status, responsibilities and practices of wāhine Māori. It outlines the shift in the perception and value of wāhine Māori as a result of colonisation and patriarchy and the resulting influence on and distortion of the understandings and exercise of tikanga Māori, particularly those specific to wāhine. In that regard, this section also relates to issues 2 and 3 in terms of how wāhine Māori ability to access and participate in leadership and decision-making roles is viewed and constrained within both the public sector and in Māori communities.

6. Ki au nei, ko te mana motuhake, ko te mana o te wahine, tangata raini kia whakahaere i tōna anō ao. Māna ana tini ara e whakatau, ā, ka kore tētahi atu e whakatau māna. Ko tētahi taha ōna he rongonui, ko tērā atu taha ko te wāhi ki ngā kawenga. Kei ērā kawenga tonu ko ngā haepapa nui ki te hāpai ake, ki te tautiaki, ki te manaaki anō hoki i te whānau, te hapū me te whenua. Kua roa nei te wahine Māori e pīkau ana i ēnei haepapa hei painga mō te iwi.

To me, mana motuhake is the inherent authority and autonomy of a woman or any individual to govern her own world. She determines her own many pathways, and no one else decides for her. One side is prestige or recognition, while the other side is about responsibilities. Within those responsibilities are significant obligations to uplift, to protect, and to care for the whānau, the hapū, and the land. Māori women have long carried these responsibilities for the wellbeing of the people.

7. Ko tā te rangatira, he hāpai ake, he tautiaki, he manaaki anō hoki i te whānau, te hapū me te whenua. Ka kore ērā haepapa e rerekē hakoa ko wai ka tū hei rangatira, wahine mai, tāne mai. Heoi, ka whakaaro whānui ana ki te oranga o tōna hapū, ā, o tōna whānau. Ki te kōrero tātou mō te rangatiratanga, ki au nei, me haeretahi ko te mana motuhake.

A leader uplifts, protects, and cares for the whānau, the hapū, and the

land. Those responsibilities do not change, no matter who stands as leader, whether a woman or a man. A rangatira thinks broadly about the wellbeing of their hapū and their whānau. When we talk about rangatiratanga, to me, it must go hand-in-hand with mana motuhake.

8. Ko te wahine tonu, he rangatira. He mana nui tō te wahine, he mahi motuhake āna ki te kawe i ngā tikanga o mua, ki te hāpai ake i te mauri me ngā tino kaupapa a tōna hapū, arā, ki te ārahi i tōna hapū ki te ora. Ka haere ngātahi te wahine me te tane ki te kawe i ngā tikanga, ki te tiaki i te mana me te mauri o te hapū me te iwi, koia ko te aronga matua.

A woman herself can also be a rangatira. A woman holds great mana, and she has unique responsibilities in carrying forward the practices of our ancestors, in uplifting the mauri and the fundamental kaupapa of her hapū – that is, in guiding her people toward wellbeing. Woman and man walk together to uphold tikanga, to protect the mana and mauri of the hapū and the iwi – this is the central focus.

9. Ehara i te mea i noho motuhake te rangatira, te hautūtanga, ngā mahi whakahaere i te iwi ki te tane anahe, ko te wahine hoki i whai wāhi atu ki aua mahi tonu. Hei tauira, i ngā rā o mua, ehara te taumata i tētahi wāhi motuhake ki te tāne rangatira me ngā whakahaerenga o te hapū. Ko tā te tāne me te wāhine he whai whakaaro ki te ahurea me te ao tōrangapū o te Māori, ka mutu, ki ngā whakataunga mō te iwi. Heoi, nā te 'colonial patriarchy' e noho kāinga ana ki roto i o mātou hapori, o mātou whakahaerenga, o mātou whakaaro anō hoki, ka mutu, kua kōrori haere i te tauritetanga, kua rerekē tō mātou tirohanga ki te wahine Māori, ki tana hirahira, me ngā mahi e tika ana hei mahi māna nōki. Nā tēnei, ehara i te mea ko te tūkinotanga ki ngā wāhine Māori nahe nei te putanga, erangi kua whakararu i te tūāpapa o te ahurea Māori anō hoki.

Leadership, governance and other decision-making roles for the iwi were not exclusive to men, women also took up these roles. For example, traditionally, taumata was not solely a space for male leadership and

decision-making. Both men and women contributed to the cultural and political life and decision-making of the iwi. The influence of colonial patriarchy has entrenched itself within our communities, our governance and our thinking, and thus, has distorted the balance and significantly altered how wāhine Māori are perceived and valued. These shifts have not only harmed wāhine Māori but have weakened the very fabric of our cultural structures.

He reo rangatira

10. Hei whakatauira i tēnei huringa, ko te rerekētanga o te reo ki te whakahua i ngā āhuatanga mō te wahine me te tane. Ka kaha whakamahia te "mana wāhine" me te "wāhine toa" mō te wāhine, engari anō te tāne ka māori noa te whakahua he "rangatira". Ki te whakamahia te wāhine," ka rāhuitia mō ētahi kuia, me te mea nei me kuia ngā wāhine e kīa ai ia he rangatira. Kāhore he take o te whakahua i te "wāhine toa" me te kore e whakahua i te "tāne toa" – *he toa te toa*, tāne mai wāhine mai.

An example of this shift is the difference in language used to describe men and women. Wāhine are often described using terms like mana wāhine or wāhine toa, while men are more frequently referred to as rangatira. When rangatira is used for wāhine, it tends to be reserved for some older women, as if chiefly status is something wāhine must age into. There's no valid reason to say wāhine toa but not tāne toa — he toa te toa, regardless of gender.

11. E whakaatu atu ana tēnei momo reo i te ngākau kino kua tau ki roto ki ō tātou aronga ki ēnei mea te hautūtanga, te taikaha me te hiranga, inarā, ko wai mā te tangata e whakatinana ana i ngā pūkenga o te rangatira. Erangi, nō mua i te taenga mai o Pākehā, kei ngā wāhine tonu tōna rangatiratanga, i tū hei rangatira, hei kaiārahi, hei kaihautū, kei kairautaki, hei kaitakawaenga, hei kaipupuri whenua, hei tohunga, he aha atu anō.

This language difference reveals the underlying biases that continue to shape how we recognise leadership, strength, and value and more importantly, who we believe embodies the traits of a rangatira. However, in pre-colonial times, women exercised authority as rangatira, leaders, strategists, negotiators, landowners, cultural and spiritual leaders and many other roles.

12. I ēnei taima nei, ka whai wāhi te wahine ki ētahi wāhi rerekē, ētahi tūranga whakahaere, mēnā e mate ana tētahi ki te kimi wahine, māmā raini, ka mutu, mēnā e rapu ana i tētahi momo tauritetanga. Ko tēnei āhua, i ōna wā, ka whakataute i te koi, i te atamai o te wāhine. Anā, ko te aronga matua i roto i tēnei momo āhuatanga ko te wahine whai uri, he aha tana hoatu ki te iwi, ā, kāhore e paku aro ana ki ngā pūkenga me te hinengaro koi kei a ia.

In today's age, wahine inclusion into different spaces, including in governance roles, is generally because we need a woman, or need a mother, and need balance. This approach, at times, does a disservice to the intellect of wāhine. A woman's life is often confined to when she has uri, what that means for the tribe, rather than the skills and the intellect she possesses.

NGĀ TAKOHANGA A TE KARAUNA ME NGĀ TURE WHAKAHAERE I KAWEA MAI E TE PĀKEHĀ: *CROWN OBLIGATIONS AND IMPORTED PATRIARCHAL COLONIAL NORMS*

13. *This section of my evidence addresses all three TSOI as it relates to what I understand to be the Crown's duties concerning wāhine Māori ability to exercise their rangatiranga in relation the role, practices, values and responsibilities of wāhine Māori, within the government sector, the wider community and non-government sector. It provides examples of acts and legislations that, in my experience, has failed to uphold its te Tiriti obligations to wāhine Māori and which has caused, and continues to cause, prejudice to wāhine Māori.*

14. Kei a te Karauna te haepapa nui ki te tautoko, ki te tiaki i te Māori, inarā te wāhine Māori āheinga ki te whakatinana i tōna rangatiratanga, hakoa te aha. Tatū rawa mai ki ngā tūranga hautūtanga, whakahaere anō hoki i waenga i te iwi me te kāwanatanga hoki. Ko te houruatanga, ko te matapopore moroki me te oritetanga e here ana te Karauna kia tika mai tana tautoko i ngā wāhine Māori. Engari auare ake.

The Crown has a fundamental obligation to support and protect Māori, in particular wāhine Māori, and their ability to exercise their rangatiratanga, in every respect, down to leadership and governance roles within iwi and the government. The principles of partnership, active protection and equity obligate the Crown to support wāhine Māori as such. However, this has not occurred.

15. Heoi, nā te Karauna takahi i ngā wāhine Māori mau, tuku hoki, i ēnei tikanga me ēnei mātauranga ki ngā whakatupuranga mā roto mai i āna ture, kaupapa here anō hoki, e tāmi tonu ana i ō mātou wāhine Māori me o rātou āheinga kia tuku i ēnei mātauranga ki ngā uri, ka mutu, kua mimiti haere te hunga mōhio.

Instead, the Crown imposed a number of harmful colonial laws and policies that has continued to marginalise our wāhine Māori and their ability to transmit these practices and wāhine-based knowledge to younger generations, reducing our pool of knowledge holders.

16. I ngā hokonga whare me ētahi ture mō te whenua, kāhore i aro ki ngā wāhine kaipupuri whenua, pēnei i taku tupuna kuia, a Harata Tarawau, nōna he kaipupuri hea matua. Heoi anō, i tuku tōna whenua ki ringa kē me te mea hoki kāhore ia i mōhio.

In land sales, and land legislation, female owners were often not recognised and overlooked, as in the case of my tupuna kuia, Harata Tarawau, who was a major shareholder; however, her land was passed through hands without her even being in the room

17. Katoa ēnei me ētahi atu he whakaaetanga ā-ture kia motukia ngā wāhine here i ō rātou whenua, i o mātou mātauranga tuku iho anō hoki, ngā tikanga, ngā kōrero, inarā, ngā mātāpono kei ēnei taonga katoa. Anā, kua huri te aro ki tētahi ao me te pūnaha e tukituki mārika ana ki tō tātou ao Māori, ā, ko ngā wāhine Māori i mate ki te whirinaki atu.

The impacts of these acts and others are not just legalising the separation of women from their lands but also from the knowledge systems, the tikanga, kōrero and importantly the values that come with it. They replaced those important things with systems and ways of being that directly conflict with our way of life and force wāhine Māori to adapt.

ŌKU WHEAKO ME NGĀ WHAKAARO PĀKEHĀ KUA RĀWEKE I TE TIKANGA ME TE RANGATIRATANGA O TE WĀHINE MĀORI: *MY EXPERIENCES WITH PATRIARCHAL COLONIAL NORMS THAT HAVE DISTORTED THE TIKANGA AND RANGATIRATANGA OF WĀHINE MĀORI*

18. *This section of my evidence addresses issue 1 of the TSOI in terms of my personal experiences and perspectives, specifically how the effects of the colonial, patriarchal laws, policies and norms imposed on my tūpuna whaea and kuia continue to affect me and my ability to exercise rangatiratanga and tikanga to this day*.

19. Ka kawe atu ahau i tētahi tirohanga wahine, i tētahi tirohanga whānau. He motuhake ki ahau, he motuhake ki te wāhine Māori. Ka whakaarohia ngā wāhine rangatira nō mai anō, pēnei i a Turikātuku, mō te hanga rautaki i te wā o te riri, kāhore he painga i a ia. Anā, arā noa atu ngā wāhine whai pukenga pēnā i a Turikātuku. I aua wā rā, hāunga rā anō ngā tikanga, ngā kawa me te tapu e tika ana kia puritia, ko te tangata kei a rātou ngā pūkenga mō tētahi momo mahi ki te hāpai i te hapū, ā, ko ia te tangata ka tohua kia tutuki i ērā mahi. Ehara i te mea me tāne i ngā wā katoa.

I bring a woman's perspective, a whānau perspective. It is unique to me;

it is unique to Māori women. And when we think of the women leaders of old, such as Turikātuku, who was unparalleled in her strategic thinking during times of conflict – indeed, there were many women with skills like those of Turikātuku. In those times – aside from the protocols, customs and sacred restrictions that must rightly be upheld – the person who had the skills suited to a particular role in supporting the hapū was the one chosen to carry out those duties. It was not always necessary that this person be a man.

20. Ahatia tēnei, kua huri te ao, kua huri te tirohanga ki ngā wāhine Māori. Ka tīkina atu te karanga hei tauira, ahatia te karanga he tikanga tuku iho motuhake ki te wāhine Māori, he rite tonu te tangata tautohe mō te tikanga o te karanga. Hei tauira, i tētahi wānanga karanga i whakahaerehia i tērā atu tau, ko ngā tāne i kawe i ngā kōrero katoa e pā ana ki te karanga, me pēhea, hei āhea, ko hea tuku atu ai te karanga. I hora ō rātou whakaaro anō nei he tikanga whai mana. Nō muri mai ka pōhiritia ngā whakaaro o taku whaea, katahi ko au.

Notwithstanding this, times have changed and so too has our view of wāhine Māori. I take karanga as an example, while it is a role reserved solely for women, it can be dominated by debates about the tikanga of this customary calling practice. For example, at a wānanga karanga held a couple of years ago. It was men who led the kōrero speaking at length about how, when, and where one should karanga. Their perspectives were presented as authoritative tikanga. Wāhine were not invited to speak until the very end.

21. E kitea ana ko te noho ake o te tāne me ana whakaaro, ko whakaaro o te wahine kei raro. E ai ki ngā kōrero e hāngai ana ngā tikanga kia tika ai ngā whakahaere, e mārama ana tērā ki ahau. Erangi e kite ana ahau e toka ana tēnei momo whakaiti ki roto i a mātou. Anō nei ko te whakaiti tonu he tikanga tuku iho.

We are seeing the positioning of the man and his perspectives elevated,

while the views of the woman sit beneath. According to the teachings, tikanga exists to ensure that things are carried out correctly, and I understand that. But what I also see is that this form of diminishment has become embedded within us – as if subordination itself were an inherited custom.

22. Ko te tauaro tonu e kitea ana, ka noho mārohirohi nei te tikanga hāunga anō ngā panonitanga ka kitea kia reka mai te pākehā ki te Māori. Ko te whakatau tētahi tino tauira, anā, ka mau tātou ki ngā tikanga o te pōhiri hāunga rā te mahi hirahira me te tikanga tapu o te wāhine ka whakakorengia, arā, te karanga.

Conversely, there is also an inability for tikanga to shift unless the shift is more palatable for Pākehā. Whakatau is a prime example, everything of powhiri remains except the most important and sacred practice of wahine, the karanga.

23. I ēnei rangi, kua toka ētahi o ngā whakaaro pākehā ki roto i a tātou tikanga whakahaere, nō reira, e rere tonu ana ngā tohe mō te wāhi ki te reo o te wāhine ki roto i a tātou whakahaerenga me a tātou whakatau take, pēnā raini he reo tō te wāhine ki roto i ēnei kaupapa me ēnei whiriwhiringa kōrero.

These days, it is hard to shift tikanga away from patriarchal norms as we continue to grapple with place of wāhine within our traditional structures and whether or not authority and decision-making sits solely with men.

24. Kīhai rawa ēnei āhuatanga whakataha i te wahine i ahu mai i te ao Māori, i te tirohanga Māori raini, he whakaaro i ahu kē mai i te ao pākehā e meatia nei ko te tāne te atua o ngā mea katoa, ā, kei raro iho ko te wāhine. Ko te mate nui, kua pōhēhē ētahi he tikanga tēnei nā te Māori, e hē!

This kind of exclusion is not reflective of a Māori worldview. It reflects imposed norms from a Pākehā world view in which men are the creator

of all things, and women are inferior, that many now mistakenly believe are part of our tikanga. It is not.

25. Ehara ēnei kōrero i te kōrero noa, he mea wheako kē e au. Arā, ko te taunu, te kore i whai wāhi atu ki ngā whakawhitinga kōrero me ngā whakataunga take. Koinei ōku wheako e rua tau ki muri i ahau e whakaritea ana kia tū hei kaikōrero i tētahi kāhui wahine tokotoru mō Ngā Wāhine o Te Tai Tokerau i te wiki o Waitangi, ā, ka whakanohongia ahau. Kātahi ahau ka rongo i ngā taimahatanga kua roa nei e rangona ana e ōku kuia, whaea nōki.

These are not just theoretical concerns, they are my experiences, namely, the ridicule and taunts, and exclusion from conversations and decisions. This was my experience two years ago as I prepared to speak on behalf of Ngā Wāhine o Te Tai Tokerau at Waitangi as one of three approved speakers. I was sat down. It was then I resonated with the deep burden that our kuia and whaea have long endured.

26. Tērā te tokomaha wāhine reo kua roa e whakakorengia ana i ngā wāhi Māori me te whakaaetia o te tū a te tauiwi, ngā wāhine tauiwi hoki hei kaikōrero. Ehara i te mea e kī ana ahau me tū te wāhine ki te whaikōrero, me whakatāne mātou i a mātou anō, e kahore. Erangi ko te haumūmūtanga o te reo o te wāhine ki ngā momo kaupapa Māori, ki ngā momo wāhi Māori, ka mutu, ki ngā wāhi e tika ana mā te wāhine e kōrero te tino take. Nō reira, me mihi ka tika ngā toa o Te Taitokerau i tō rātou niwha, ā, e kaha nei te poipoi i a mātou me taku reanga kia angitu ai.

For many wāhine, the denial of voice in cultural spaces, and the simultaneous acceptance of non-Māori speakers, or wāhine tauiwi, is all too common. It is not that I am saying wāhine must whaikōrero, or that we should stand as men, absolutely not. My main point however concerns the silencing of wāhine voices at cultural gatherings, in Māori spaces and at places where it is right for wāhine to speak. And so, it is only right I acknowledge the incredible leadership of wāhine across Te Tai Tokerau

for their fortitude, who continue to encourage us to be better and do better.

27. Kua whāiti te tirohanga o ēnei take matua ki ngā pātai tikanga he wehi pea nō tātou ki te titiro whakaroto ki a tātou anō me te arotake, kaua noa iho i te pānga a ngā tāmitanga ki a tātou, engari hoki, ki te hōhonutanga o tana rumaki ki roto ki o tātou mōhioranga ki te ira tangata, ki te rangatiratanga me te mana nōki. Ehara ēnei kōrero mō te takahi i te tikanga, takahi rainei i o tātou tāne. E kahore. He mahi hirahira tā te tāne ki te pupuri ki a tātou tikanga, tō tātou ao Māori me te iwi whānui nōki. Ka nui taku mihi ki a rātou. Engari kē ia, ko te whakaora anō i a tātou tikanga tāku e whai nei. Ko te kaupare i ngā ariā me ngā whakaaro nō tāngata kē e kaha nei te whakakotiti i a tātou tikanga me a tātou mātāpono me te kore e riro ki te iwi he paku aha. Ko te hoki ki tētahi ao e ora nei, e noho tau nei te Māori, ka mutu, kia mau tonu ki te mana o te wāhine e mōhiotia nei e o tātou mātua tūpuna; hei oranga mō te iwi Māori.

The uncomfortable truth is that we have reduced these matters to questions of tikanga because we are afraid to examine ourselves, to ask not just whether colonialism has influenced us, but how deeply it has shaped our current understanding of gender, leadership, and mana. This is not at all about undermining tikanga, nor is it about undermining our tāne. Absolutely not. Tāne play a pivotal role in the performance and survival of our tikanga, ways of being and our people. I thank them sincerely. Rather, it is about reclaiming tikanga. It is about rejecting external values and ideologies that have distorted our customary practices, and values, yet never served our people. It is about restoring balance and ensuring that mana of wāhine is upheld as it always was: essential to the wellbeing of our people.

NGĀ WĀHI ME NGĀ HERENGA A TE KARAUNA E ĀRAI ANA I TE RANGATIRATANGA: *CROWN SPACES AND CONDITIONS THAT CONSTRAIN RANGATIRATANGA*

28. *This section of my evidence addresses issue 3 of the TSOI in terms of what I believe to be Crown-created spaces and conditions that have impacted Māori structures and organisations generally, and also wāhine Māori and their ability to participate in and hold leadership and decision-making roles within the wider community, including our Māori communities. It also relates TSOI Issue 2 in respect of the expectations, conditions and ideals of wāhine Māori who seek to participate and engage in the government sector, including in leadership roles, and how this has impacted our ability to access these roles in an authentically wāhine Māori way.*

29. Kia titiro tātou ki te aunoa, kua meinga te wāhine kia tāne pākehā tana hanga e kuhu atu ai ia ki ngā wāhi tūmatanui, e rangona ai tōna reo. E herea tonutia ana te reo me te noho a ngā wāhine ki ngā paerawa pākehā mō te āhua o te wāhine i ēnei rangi.

    Looking to the mainstream setting, wāhine Maori have been forced to take on and occupy spaces, almost as Pakeha men, just to be heard. Women's voice and place in society is conditional upon meeting western ideals of what it is to be a woman in today's age.

30. Ko ngā tūranga me ngā tono ā-mahi Māori he tirohanga tāne, ā, e hiahiatia ana te tāne. Nā konei, he maha ngā mahi teitei ki roto i te kāwanatanga kāhore e wātea ana ki ngā wāhine Māori. Kāhore te tikanga Māori e whakaarohia ana i ngā tono ā-mahi, ā, kāhore e wātea ana ki ngā wāhine mātau ana ki ngā tikanga e hāngai ana ki te wahine. Koinei ētahi take kāhore ahau mō te tono ki ētahi momo tūranga kāwanatanga.

    Māori roles and job descriptions are curated from a male perspective with a male preference. Because of that, there are a whole

range of high-level jobs in government that wāhine with tikanga Māori experiences and understandings are less likely to access. Tikanga Māori understandings are not reflected in job descriptions or made available to those with tikanga understandings specific to wāhine. These are some of the reasons I would not apply for particular roles in government.

31. E muia katoatia ana tātou e ngā tini kaiārahi wāhine, erangi kāhore te Karauna mō te tūtaki atu ki te wāhi kotahi he arokore nō te Karauna ki tēnei momo. Nō reira, ka whāia e rātou tētahi huarahi e pai ai te hanga me te tane tōna rite, ā, he kuhu atu ki ngā whare kua hangaia mā te tāne kia arohia ia. He pērā anō mō te hanga o ngā rūnanga me ngā hinonga ā-iwi mō ngā whakataunga take tiriti, hei whakautu i ngā herenga a te Karauna, ahakoa he mana nui, he mana motuhake kē ngā hapū. Nō reira, ka whakatōpana te ao Māori kia whai i ngā nekehanga o te kāwanatanga o te rā.

We are rich in Māori women leadership, but it is the Crown that will not meet them where they are at for they are not recognisable to the Crown, thereby forcing them to journey through a process of preparing themselves to be constructions of men, and entering into structures made for male in order to be recognised as community leaders. The same can be said in terms of the creation of rūnanga structures and iwi entities as a response to Crown requirements, particularly in treaty settlements, when hapū are 'entities' in and of themselves. As such, te ao Māori is forced to move to the pulse of the government of the day.

32. Me whirinaki te Māori ki ēnei hinonga e pai ai tā rātou tautoko i te iwi, ka mutu, hore he ritenga e pai ai te noho o te whakaaro Māori ki roto. He mea hanga tō tatou ao, inarā i te tangata mārama ki te rangatiratanga, te ia o te tangata me te mana, nā o tātou hītoria, te tāmitanga, ngā whawhatinga o te Tiriti me te ngākau taikaha o te Māori. E horapa ana ōna rongo ki ngā pūnaha, whare, pāpori, hapori, iwi, whenua me ngā hinengaro puta noa. Iaianei ka kite tēnei i roto i te

arokore ki te wāhine whai tūrangi ki roto ki te kāwanatanga me ngā mahi kaunihere, ka kite i roto i ngā wāhine whakapākeha i a rātou anō e āhei ana tana kuhu atu ki ngā tūranga whakahaere, i hiahia huri mai te Karauna ki te nohotahi, ā, ka kite i te whakamanamana ake i ngā tāne tēnā i ngā wāhine.

Māori must, and do, conform to imposed constructs and structures to continue serving and supporting their people, and there is no flexibility or room to adapt for Māori. Our world today, particularly how we understand authority, gender and power, remains shaped by our history, by colonisation and by persistent breaches of te Tiriti and Māori resistance. These forces continue to permeate through our systems, structures, society, communities, people, places and minds. Today that looks like wāhine being overlooked for roles within government and council roles, it looks like wāhine having to present in an acceptable pākeha fashion to be granted access to governance and leadership positions or for the Crown to entertain any engagement and it looks like men preferred over women.

TE HUARAHI KI TE ORA: *ACHIEVING THE RESTORATION OF BALANCE*

33. *This section addresses the relief questions relating to all three TSOI and offers my personal perspective on what is required, at least as a starting point, to address the ongoing inequities that remain embedded within the current systems and structures. In doing so, I call upon the Crown to uphold its obligations to Māori and wāhine Māori under te Tiriti, and challenges our people to be courageous in the face of adversity.*

34. Ehara i te mea ko te whakatairanga i te wahine i te whakararu kaupapa, ko te mea kē he mārama ki ngā hapori me ōna whakapapa, he whakamāuru, he whakatikatika i ngā raru e kitea ana i roto i ngā whakahaeretanga.

Elevating wahine leadership and enabling rangatiratanga is not about disrupting balance, it is about understanding the communities from which we derive, restoring what has long been suppressed and addressing the ongoing inequities that remain embedded within our leadership structures.

35. He hua mātou ko taku whakareanga nā te māia me te taikaha o ō mātou tūpuna whaea nō rātou e pakanga ana ki te mura o te ahi kia kite ai te tūranga me te mahi motuhake ki te wāhine Māori i ngā wāhi katoa. Nā o tātou tūpuna wehikore te whakakanohitanga mai o ngā wāhine Māori i ngā tūranga hautūtanga o naianei i hua mai ai, ehara nā te Karauna.

Our generation are the benefactors of the bravery and drive of our tūpuna whaea who put themselves in the firing line in the fight for recognition of the unique place and role of wāhine Māori in all spaces. We can credit what little representation of wāhine Māori in leadership positions we see today to our fearless tūpuna, and not the Crown.

36. Mātou ngā wāhine Māori o taku reanga me ērā o raro iho e whawhai ana i tētahi i tētahi whawhai tuku iho ki ngā pūnaha pākeha e whanake tonu ai, e kawe tonu ai ngā mahi kia noho orite te tāne me te wāhine Māori.

Wāhine Māori of my generation and perhaps younger now find themselves in an inter-generational fight against the western patriarchal system to improve on what traction has been made, and to continue work towards restoring the balance between the status and value of men and wāhine Māori.

37. Nā te Karauna ēnei ”structural imbalances” i hanga, i whakatō ai. Māna anō ēnei e whakatika ka tika. Ka kore e tutuki te wāhanga ki te Karauna i tana kī mai ka ngana te whakapiki haere i ngā tūranga wāhine Māori hakoa ngā tūwhaiāhua me ngā taupā ki ngā wāhine e whakakī ana i ngā whārua. Me whakatutuki hoki e te karauna te wāhi ki a ia anō me te ū ki te Tiriti.

The Crown is responsible for the structural imbalances created and entrenched and so, they are also responsible for remediation. Therefore, it is not enough for the Crown to say that it will make best efforts to improve wāhine Māori representation in its spaces when the conditions and barriers to wāhine Māori taking up and remaining in those spaces are firmly intact. The Crown must also do its part and uphold te Tiriti.

38. Ka kore e tutuki te tauritetanga i te whakaata noa, me mātua whakangao te Karauna i te iwi Māori, me kōrero pono mō te turepapa, me te āta whakahoro i te pūnaha kua kaha whakawehe i te Māori me ngā wāhine Māori.

Restoring balance requires more than symbolic recognition; it demands meaningful investment into te iwi Māori, constitutional honesty, and the dismantling of systems that continue to marginalise Māori and, within that, Māori women.

39. Ko te wero ki tō mātou reanga, ko te māia ki te tiro arotake he aha raini ngā mea pono ki a tātou, he aha raini ngā mea kua pēhi mai ki runga i a tātou. Ko te wāhi ki a tātou ko te anga whakamua i te ara e whai hua ai tō tātou iwi, ka kahore e waiho mā te mataku e ārahi erangi mā te ngākau me te wairua māori.

A defining challenge for this reanga is courage, the courage to discern what truly belongs to us and what has been imposed upon us. Our task is to step deliberately toward what genuinely serves our people, guided not by fear or perceived balance, but by our own cultural intelligence.