

NGA MIHI

Nga korero e whai ake nei, no etahi nga rangatira o te ao Maori i tino marama i tino mohio ki nga ture o te Pakeha me nga tikanga o te ao Maori. No reira, tena koutou katoa.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the articles contained in this issue of the *Journal of Maori Legal Writing*. As always, the *Journal* contains a compilation of perceptive articles on the current legal issues facing our communities, written from a uniquely Maori perspective informed by the law and tikanga.

The *Journal* was established by Dr Nin Tomas, the first Maori legal academic to obtain a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (Law). Dr Tomas' thesis examined the core principles of tikanga Maori and their use as regulators of human relationships and natural resources in Tai Tokerau. It is appropriate that this issue of the *Journal* begins with her article "Coming Ready or Not! The Emergence of Maori Hapu and Iwi as a Unique Order of Governance in Aotearoa New Zealand". This important article delves into the dynamic nature of Maori custom law in the context of emerging Maori corporate governance structures. Dr Tomas argues that these structures and the models and principles that underpin them, present a timely challenge to New Zealand's constitutional arrangements and the way in which the state sees itself – domestically and internationally.

The other contributions to the *Journal* are equally important. Carwyn Jones in his excellent article, "Tino Rangatiratanga and Sustainable Development: Principles For Developing a Just and Effective System of Environmental Law in Aotearoa" reminds us of the need to develop an environmental legal framework which responds to the values and aspirations of all New Zealanders. In many ways, his analysis echoes the arguments of Dr Tomas, which are grounded in the recognition of the sovereignty and dignity of Maori and indigenous peoples throughout the world, as we continue to work towards revitalising our culture and legal frameworks.

Dr Maria Bargh writes about New Zealand's foreign policy, indigenous peoples and the core assumptions that underpin foreign policy in New Zealand. Dr Bargh highlights the poor levels of Maori participation in Crown foreign policy and the basis for future, increased involvement.

Mamari Stephens in "Me He Korokoro Tui" explains the groundbreaking and inspirational work that has been undertaken on the Maori legal language project, which is another step in the direction of building a legal system with the tools to fully integrate tikanga Maori. Khylee Quince and Valmaine Toki complete the *Journal*, by examining themes that address, firstly, the experience of Maori women and the criminal justice system. Drawing on a breath of New Zealand and international jurisprudence, Khylee explores the experience of Maori women against the backdrop of colonisation and tikanga Maori. Finally, Valmaine Toki concludes this issue with a persuasive and timely argument for the establishment of an indigenous court.

In keeping with the tikanga established by Dr Tomas in the first *Journal*, this issue opens with a tribute to the late Michael Bruce Taggart, Professor of Law, friend and mentor at the University of Auckland who died in 2009. He is sadly missed.

Kerensa Johnston, 2010.