

IPU SPEECH 2023

Tena koutou Katoa. Greetings from the New Zealand delegation.

- There's a statement all of us in this room have uttered at some stage – it starts like this “I'll always remember where I was when...”
- For everyone in this room there have been Pivotal moments in our countries history involving acts of intolerance and hate, that are bolted to our memories.

- On the 15th of March 2019, a gunman walked up to the entrance of the Al Noor Mosque in Christchurch. Where Haji-Daoud Nabi uttered his last words – saying to the approaching man "Hello Brother."

- We lost 51 lives that day to hate and intolerance. Days later the Imam at Al Noor Gamal Fouda spoke - in the trenches of extraordinary tragedy he said:
 - “we are broken hearted, but we are not broken”.

 - In so many ways – the Imams words set the tone for the conversations that were to come.

 - The Royal Commission/The Christchurch Call followed

 - What we learned through our experience is that inclusivity is not a destination, it requires a Commitment to a conversation in perpetuity bound in trust and respect. (PAUSE)

Our Former Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern – spoke last year about what’s responsible for fermenting the flourishing of women’s rights in New Zealand – she says “it is blood, sweat and....electoral reform.”

1. Blood and Sweat? – That’s advocacy - A Thriving civil society, citizens who have the freedom to not just ask why but also to ask why not.
2. In NZ we were proud in 2020 to share that we had become the world’s gayest parliament. I believe we overtook our British colleagues.
3. We have put free period products in schools, have 50% women on our public sector boards, we teach Te reo Maori in schools, and have responded to calls to apologise for long term wrongs against our Pacific community and our Chinese community for historic discrimination.
4. So much of this progress can be credited to the advocacy of our citizens and civil society – feeling safe to be present, to be free to actively observe, to challenge and to propose ideas. This is where the genesis of change is born.

Blood / Sweat and – electoral reform:

- There’s a saying that goes -Good leaders are bound by conscience and are liberated by accountability.
- The crystallisation of convention into code is the cradle of inclusivity

- For us we have stood up legal architecture to
- Legalise same sex marriage, to ban Conversion practises - Decriminalise abortion and create abortion safe areas

While 50% of our parliamentarians are women – 2/3rds of women who have ever been parliamentarians in NZ – are in Parliament now – these victories are sublime but many of them are young. It's important to recognise this vulnerability as we work to protect our progress.

BUT - Our role in addressing intolerance is not simply local (pause) – its global.

- I remember where I was when Ukraine was illegally invaded, and when Kabul airport closed. I remember where I was when I learned of the death in custody of Mahsa (Zhina) Amini, I remember where I was on the 1st of February 2021 when the [Tatmadaw](#) deposed the elected Myanmar government.
- Colleagues, - The physicality of outrage you felt, echoed through to many of us across the globe.
- Your outrage sits with us too and in fighting for human rights and inclusion -

If we ever reach a point - **When we have exhausted all possibilities in our fight, remember this – we haven't.**