

## Media Release

### Iwi Chairs Reject the Doctrine of Discovery

“The National Iwi Chairs Forum has called on government to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery immediately,” said spokesperson Professor Margaret Mutu.

The Forum is a collection of 72 Iwi leaders who are meeting in Waitohi (Picton) to make decisions of national concern to Maori.

“The Doctrine of Discovery underpins our legal system and relies on the myth that White Christians are superior to all other peoples. It gives them permission to dispossess, enslave and exterminate other races, cultures and religions. It was used to take the Foreshore and Seabed from us in 2005 and shapes the government’s Treaty claims settlement policies and practices today,” said Professor Mutu.

“The Doctrine originated from the Catholic Church in the 1400s and despite petitions from indigenous communities, they have refused to repudiate it. Our hope is that our Government will ask the Vatican to change its position,” she said.

“This Government has made a commitment to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Doctrine of Discovery violates all of the standards included in the Declaration,” Professor Mutu concluded

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