



# TOAH-NNEST

Te Ohaakii a Hine - National Network Ending Sexual Violence Together

## MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### TOAH-NNEST SUPPORTS INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT RE SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROSECUTIONS

10 May 2013

Greater international co-operation in prosecuting crimes of sexual violence against women and girls, promised by the government this week, has been welcomed by Te Ohaakii a Hine National Network Ending Sexual Violence Together (TOAH-NNEST).

The Attorneys-General of New Zealand, Canada, Australia, the United States and England and Wales resolved to work together more closely to fight sexual violence at a Quintet meeting in Auckland.

They agreed to share information in areas such as best practices, research and evaluation of legislation, support programmes for complainants and witnesses, and prevention measures. There will be a particular focus on the impact of sexual violence on indigenous and migrant communities.

“We’re very pleased about this closer international co-operation, in the hope that perpetrators of sexual violence will be better held to account and victim/survivors will feel more able to enter the criminal justice system”, said Sandz Peipi Te Pou, the Nga Kaitiaki Mauri Kaitakawaenga of TOAH-NNEST.

“Globally there’s a very high attrition rate for sexual violence cases at every stage of going through the criminal justice system. Out of every 100 sexual offences in this country, only about 10 out of will be reported to the Police, approximately three will get to court, and about one of these will result in a conviction.”

The international agreement’s focus on sexual violence impacts on indigenous communities was particularly welcome, she said. Research shows that Maori women are almost twice as likely as others to experience sexual violence.

“We hope to work with the Attorney-General to improve sexual violence prosecutions not only for Maori but also for other indigenous peoples. New Zealand has often taken the lead in responding to violence against women.”

Greater collaboration between the government and the specialist sexual violence services sector in improving prosecutions for sexual violence was also called for by Dr Kim McGregor, TOAH-NNEST’s Taiwi Caucus Chairperson.

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“Partnership between government and the non-government sector was a strong theme in the recent 57<sup>th</sup> session of the International Commission on Status of Women, which focused on eliminating and preventing all forms of violence against women and girls,” said Dr McGregor, one of the TOAH-NNEST delegates to the event in New York.

“We’d be delighted to work with the Attorney-General on this latest initiative.”

Fighting sexual violence against women and girls is the aim of the Attorneys-General agreement. Dr McGregor pointed out that while sexual violence is “overwhelmingly a gendered crime in which women and girls are abused by men”, there is increasing international evidence that one out of six or eight males also has experienced some form of sexual violence.

TOAH-NNEST represents specialist services for sexual violence prevention and intervention, both kaupapa and tikanga Maori and mainstream, around the country. It works with all aspects of sexual violence, including primary prevention, survivor support, treatment for harmful sexual behaviour and legislative reform.

## CONTACTS:

### **Nga Kaitiaki Mauri o TOAH-NNEST**

Sandz Peipi Te Pou

Kaitakawaenga

Phone 021 771 832

Email [nkmsandz@toah-nnest.org.nz](mailto:nkmsandz@toah-nnest.org.nz)

### **Tauiwi Caucus of TOAH-NNEST**

Dr Kim McGregor

Chairperson

Phone 021 378 991

Email [kim@rapecrisis.org.nz](mailto:kim@rapecrisis.org.nz)