



## The Archbishops and Primates of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia

26 March 2018

Sent via email: [j.ardern@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:j.ardern@ministers.govt.nz)

Dear Prime Minister,

### **Opportunity to discuss an extension of the terms of reference for the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care**

The Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, meeting on the 15-16<sup>th</sup> March 2018, resolved to urge the New Zealand Government to broaden the terms of reference for the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care to include church related bodies.

We are the representative body of our Church which includes Archbishops, clergy, and laypeople from all three Tikanga of our province. Our primary concern is for the needs of those whose lives have been impacted by abuse, and we are conscious that abuse has been perpetrated by agencies across our society, including the Church and its agencies. We are concerned that it will be unhelpful to victims and survivors, if the inquiry and its process is limited only to the state sector, denying some the right to have their voices heard.

We believe that victims, survivors and the public at large would have greater confidence in the processes and outcomes of the Royal Commission's Inquiry if it was fully inclusive. By contrast, for example, if we were to hold a parallel inquiry into our Church organisations we believe it would have a lesser standing and therefore lesser restorative benefit.

We are also mindful that this process will require us to be proactive in the ways we engage with the Commission and with those who have suffered abuse while in church care. We are actively working towards establishing how we may most effectively respond to them.

Our Christian faith teaches us the power of truth, justice and reconciliation. We see this Commission of Inquiry as one way we can put that faith into action, and we encourage you to give this request serious consideration, in the hope that this will provide a pathway to healing and wholeness for all concerned.

Yours Sincerely,

**Archbishop Philip Richardson**  
Archbishop of New Zealand

**Archbishop Winston Halapua**  
Archbishop of Polynesia

co-chairs of the General Synod Standing Committee

cc'd: Children's Minister Hon Tracey Martin [t.martin@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:t.martin@ministers.govt.nz)

