



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S COMMENTS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S DRAFT DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

August 2010

Amnesty International Aotearoa New Zealand (AIANZ) welcomes this opportunity to comment on the Chapter discussing the Right to Education and concurs with the priorities for action.

Amnesty welcomes the implementation of the recent New Zealand Curriculum (NZC), and the elaborating comments made by the Ministry of Education¹ that human rights are considered 'an obligatory part' of the NZC, and within it a respect for human rights "is expected to be encouraged, modelled and explored"².

Amnesty shares the Human Rights Commission's (HRC) concerns that the policy framework for education is not providing effective guidance for human rights education. Amnesty notes there is no nationwide systematic human rights education strategy, and would welcome a commitment to developing such a strategy as the first step to ensuring a strong *rights-based approach* to education. We also note that New Zealand does not yet appear to be participating in the Assisting Communities Together Scheme³ (ACT), which could provide useful direction and resources to further this outcome. We recommend these as additional priorities for action.

We see a rights-based approach contributing positive flow-on effects in countering violence, bullying and abuse in New Zealand, and to meeting our international obligations in this area.

Amnesty commends the changes in the 2009 Immigration Act that allow for undocumented children to be legally enrolled in school, which along with the 2010 budget allocation will enable greater access to education.

¹<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/docs/replies/NEW_ZEALAND_11May2010.pdf> at page 7.

² Ibid, page 8.

³ <<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/act.htm>>.