

Dear Minister,

I am writing to express my concern about the very high rates of family violence in some Pacific countries that New Zealand has close relationships with. I kindly ask that you, as New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, do something to address this problem and help the women and children affected by physical and sexual violence in our neighbourhood.

I recently learned from a World Vision campaign that countries like Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have extremely high rates of family violence. Two out of three women report having experienced violence from a partner or family member. The rates of violence against children are equally shocking.

I understand that many Pacific governments are already making efforts to tackle this issue but often they don't have the resources, expertise or political will to succeed. As a consequence, violence persists and the needs of women and girls continue to be neglected.

I strongly believe this is something New Zealand should be helping with. I read with great interest about your recent announcement of a "Pacific reset". I ask that you make ending violence against women and children a key component of this "Pacific reset" and New Zealand's assistance to developing countries more broadly.

We all must speak out against family violence when it happens. It is never acceptable, and it should never be justified. Please do your best to tackle the beliefs that justify violence and support the thousands of victims of violence in our Pacific neighbourhood.

Kind regards,

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