

**Bologna Institute for Policy Research**  
Via B. Andreatta, 3 - Bologna (Italy)  
+39 051 292 7811 [www.bipr.eu](http://www.bipr.eu)

Date: 28 September 2020

Speakers: Fairlie Chappuis, Independent Expert in Conflict and Security, Switzerland, Max Harris, All Souls College, University of Oxford, U.K., Tina Ngata, Indigenous Rights Activist, New Zealand, Tulia Thompson, Fijian/Tongan/Pakeha Queer Feminist Writer, New Zealand

Moderator: Nina Hall, Johns Hopkins University SAIS Europe, Italy

### **Reimagining New Zealand's Role in the World**

Book Launch of "Beyond these Shores: Aotearoa and the World" edited by Nina Hall

The Bologna Institute for Policy Research (BIPR) hosted a virtual seminar on New Zealand's role in the world, hosted by Dr. Nina Hall. Dr. Hall's set the scene by outlining three reasons why New role in global politics should be discussed: 1) International affairs is not only about major powers players such as the United States and China, and scholars and students should understand the actions of smaller states; 2) we need to challenge the international assumption that New Zealand is a role model for effective, progressive government ; and 3) the world needs new visions and voices beyond traditional foreign policy establishment, particularly in COVID times.

Thompson outlined how New Zealand has been a colonial administrator in the Pacific, and in particular helped corporations extract resources in the Pacific. She argued for a rethinking of Pacific-New Zealand relations based on "coral consciousness" where New Zealanders would listen to priorities of the Pacific, and address climate change proactively both domestically and in their foreign relations (e.g. by targeting Australia). Ngata focused on colonialism in New Zealand and also within international law and institutions. She noted that the doctrine of discovery was based on racist principles (and legitimated European colonialization), and illustrated how Māori and other indigenous peoples are tackling problems such as climate change and plastic pollution in waterways.

In the past two decades New Zealand has changed demographically: in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, Pākehā (white/European New Zealanders) will soon be a minority. Harris argues that New Zealand should rethink its traditional alliances with the UK, Australia and the US and questioned whether it should reevaluate its relationship with the Five Eyes Alliance. Similarly, Chappuis challenged the idea that New Zealand deserves the positive reputation and news coverage it has gained. She pointed out that instances of abuse mar the history of New Zealand's security services both at home and abroad and have only been partially dealt with. She emphasized the importance of security sector reform, specifically the normative commitment to making security and intelligence forces more accountable to democratic governments. When discussing overseas security assistance, Chappuis concludes we must focus on increasing accountability together with effectiveness. Overall, the panel highlighted how New Zealand could play a more proactive role in world affairs, and must also address colonial injustices at home.