

# Speeches by the Governor-General of New Zealand

## The Honourable Anand Satyanand

**Restorative Justice Book Launch, Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington**

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I greet everyone in the languages of the realm of New Zealand—English, Maori, Cook Island Maori, Niuean, Tokelauan and New Zealand Sign Language.

Greetings, Kia Ora, Kia Orana, Fakalofa Lahi Atu, Taloha Ni and (Sign)

Specifically I acknowledge the editors of the book, Dr Gabrielle Maxwell, Senior Associate, Institute of Policy Studies and Associate Professor James Liu, School of Psychology; Publisher, Professor Jonathan Boston, Deputy Director of the Institute of Policy Studies; Distinguished and knowledgeable authors of the book; esteemed guests otherwise; ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you for inviting Susan and myself to Victoria University of Wellington Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui for me to launch of this important book: *Restorative justice and practices in New Zealand: Towards a restorative society*.

In every New Zealand setting, whoever speaks ought first to establish a place to stand before the audience.

To that end, although I speak primarily as erstwhile Governor-General of New Zealand, and in this capacity will officially launch the book in some moments from now – just as vitally I speak today as a long time member of the country’s legal community—one who has maintained an interest in the development of the principles of restorative justice in our legal system over a twenty year or more period.

From the time of practitionership and work on the government law reform committee for a number of years following 1977 I observed how less than adequately the needs of everyday New Zealanders were sometimes handled by the court system.

Since then however there have been a number of waypoints which have played some role in the gathering restorative landscape. I think of our country’s Waitangi Tribunal legislation, of Ombudsman methodology and likewise the development of the Youth Court of the late 1980s and installation of Family Group Conferences. Restorative justice was seen initially as too radical to be workable in the traditional adversarial system underpinning the criminal courts. But that has begun to change with a number of these waypoints to which the book makes reference.

A particular waypoint for restorative justice development in the courts was a crucial paper delivered by my colleague Judge Fred McElrea at the Triennial District Court Judge's National Conference in 1994, where he proposed introducing restorative justice to adults, rather than in youth situations alone.

It was another item of momentum that has been so necessary to be repeated every few years.

A little over a year ago, I spoke at the opening of the Restorative Justice Centre Aotearoa which is led by Professor Ian Shirley and is based within the Institute of Public Policy at the Auckland University of Technology.

The launch of this book today marks yet another milestone for recognition of the principles of restorative justice.

It has contributions from a wide range of New Zealanders whose expertise touches areas of dispute resolution as diverse as criminal justice, education, civil disputes and government, this book provides an important analysis of how restorative justice practices are being applied across New Zealand.

As current Parole Board Chairman, Judge David Carruthers has written in the introduction, this book: *“takes a wider lens on what is happening in the movement than is usually taken by those like myself who have an interest in criminal justice systems.”*

It takes its genesis from the 2005 Conference, of the same name, organised by the Institute of Policy Studies.

Thus, the book, like the Conference, recognises that restorative justice can be an important tool in ensuring a fair, inclusive and just society for all. I like particularly the contribution of Jonathan Boston towards the end where he emphasizes that development of a restorative approach is very much work in progress and his chapter is a cogent challenge to keep looking for other avenues in which a restorative approach may benefit society.

This is particularly relevant in an age when New Zealand's identity is increasingly defined by its cultural and religious diversity.

I add congratulations to the book's authors, and its editors. *Restorative Justice And Practices In New Zealand: Towards A Restorative Society* is an important book not least in its comprehensive gathering of all that has been achieved to date in New Zealand. I take great pleasure in officially launching it today.

I began speaking in all the New Zealand realm languages. May I close by speaking in Maori, issuing greetings and wishing everyone good health and fortitude in your endeavours.

No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou, kia ora, kia kaha, tena koutou katoa

