

E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga rau rangatira ma

Karanga mai, mihi mai.

He mihi tēnei ki te mana whenua, a, Te Atiawa, ā Taranaki whānui.

Nā rātou i manaaki i a tātou kua huihui mai nei.

Ki ngā Minita, ki a koutou hoki, kei te mihi, kei te mihi, kei te mihi.

Tena koutou katoa, tēnā tatou.

Ko Sharyn Roberts tōku ingoa

He uri o Ngai Tahu, Kati Mamoe, Waitaha, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa

Ko au te Perehitana ki te roopu tauwhiro i Aotearoa

Kei te mihi ki a koutou katoa.

Kia ora

My name is Sharyn Roberts and it is my privilege to stand here today representing the ANZASW as President.

Kia utoka, kia tauwhiro – be strong, be caring, recognising our social workers fits well with, **Ko ahau na te mea, ko tatou** – I am because we are - the theme for World Social Work day 2021 which is being celebrated today and tomorrow, depending on the time zone by social workers around the globe respectively.

How apt that it is today, with that theme defining our mahi that we are here also celebrating the success of finally, after many years, the mandatory registration of social workers, and recognition of the professional status of social work in Aotearoa.

So it is with a huge sense of satisfaction and pride that I stand here today on behalf of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers, the ANZASW

and declare that we have done it!! We have scaled this lofty mountain of mandatory registration giving assent to the professionalisation of social work and social workers. And in acknowledging this I quote Sir Edmund Hillary, that we have knocked the bugger off!! He may have used another b... word but I prefer to use this one!!

However, this acclamation is not fully mine to claim, and so on behalf of the ANZASW, I want to acknowledge that the true acclamation and our heartfelt thanks go to two wahine toa who pushed this kaupapa over the line, to Shannon Pakura past President and Lucy Sandford-Reed CE, who tirelessly led this kaupapa on behalf of the association of 4,000 or so social work members, taking it from a dream, an aspiration to its realization. These wahine toa are indicative of the tenacity and steely determination that it takes to be a social worker and why social work is a worthy and honorable vocation and I am proud to stand in their wake and speak today.

For many years' social work has labored behind other prominent professions but we are no longer the poor relations. Now social work stands in its own mana with social workers being recognised as the professional workforce they are, located within an ethical and specialized profession.

Now our years of tertiary study and sacrifice have meaning, and our mahi which is a difficult mahi, with people who are at the most vulnerable and desperate times of their lives, who are sometimes battling for their very lives – our mahi now has value and for that we thank you, ministers. For believing in us and supporting us – and for allowing us this day and time.

I am confident that this is just the beginning of better days to come. And on this day, today, that we dare to dream again that perhaps that lofty mountain of Pūao

te Ata Tū will be ours also to conquer. That a commitment made back in 1986, for a new dawn will rise and release us to live and practice in the freedom of our cultural paradigms.

I finish with two ANZASW whakatauki:

- Te mana whakaratarata te iwi whānui hei hāpai ngā mahi whakaharatau
Encouraging social workers to strive for perfection in our practice so that people in the community may live
- Kia tutuki ai ngā whainga me ngā tumanako kia mau tonu i ngā mahi
Through working together our goals and objectives will be achieved

No reira e hoa ma me huihui mai nei i tēnei ra

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā ra tātou katoa

Kia ora mai.