

Standing together we are strong

The New Zealand we believe in is one where the hopes of refugees and migrants arriving in any New Zealand community are realised with welcome and safety. It's one where our Muslim whānau who have long been part of Aotearoa New Zealand would remain safe.

Above all, safety at prayer.

Let Friday be one of our darkest days, but one that we vow never to let happen again. Let's not give extremists the power to change who we are for the worse – let this be a chance for us to grow stronger, more committed to what is important to us, and to create every single day the communities that we want to live in.

Among our Muslim whānau are families that have come to New Zealand seeking safety, seeking shelter from persecution and conflict. One family at a time, our volunteers and staff have been learning the stories of escape, and of hope for peace sought by people reaching New Zealand.

The New Zealand chapter of these stories was about neighbours helping neighbours by showing warmth and welcome as, one family at a time, our new whānau were beginning to rebuild their lives. We must continue.

As CEOs from some of New Zealand's international NGO community organisations, we are united in love for our Muslim community. Many of us will have heard our Prime Minister ask that we show our Muslim whānau love and compassion.

We share faith that in standing together with love and compassion for our neighbours we will defeat hate. We know we must.

We stand for a community and a nation where freedom, justice, hope and love are not negotiable values, but at the heart of who we are.

Together, we make New Zealand what it is: a land of welcome, respect and openness. This demands each of us make this vision real, and that we challenge injustice wherever we see it.

Kia kaha Christchurch.

A joint letter by the CEOs of New Zealand's international NGO community:

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CEO Caritas
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Paul Brown,
CEO ChildFund
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Murray Sheard,
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