

Table 1: United Nations (UN) conventions relevant to rights to health and responses of Aotearoa New Zealand.

United Nations conventions relevant to rights to health	Year adopted	Specific numbered articles relevant to health in each UN document	Year ratified by Aotearoa New Zealand	Comments
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ⁴¹	1966	12: <i>“highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”</i>	1978 ⁴⁵	
Convention on the Rights of the Child ⁴²	1989	23: Rights of a <i>“mentally or physically disabled child”</i> 24: <i>“highest attainable standard of health”</i> 25: Rights of a child in care 39: Rights of victims of child abuse	1993 ⁴⁶	
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities ⁴³	2006	25: <i>“right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health”</i>	2008 ⁴⁷	
Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples ⁴⁴	2007	1: <i>“right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms”</i> 24: <i>“highest attainable standard of physical and mental health”</i>	2010 ⁴⁸	In September 2024, the Government of Aotearoa New Zealand declared that Indigenous rights were protected through Aotearoa New Zealand’s existing legal and constitutional framework. It confirmed that it did not recognise the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as having any binding legal effect on Aotearoa New Zealand and had no plans to take steps to implement it. ⁴⁹

Table 1 (continued): United Nations (UN) conventions relevant to rights to health and responses of Aotearoa New Zealand.

<p>Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD):</p> <p>Concluding observations on the twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of New Zealand⁵⁰</p>	<p>2025 (5 December)</p>	<p>9: CERD expressed concerns that some of the Government's policies (including eliminating the Māori Health Authority and "significant" budget cuts to Māori departments) "<i>may seriously risk weakening the legal, institutional and policy framework for the implementation</i>" of the racial discrimination convention</p> <p>25: "<i>Additionally, the committee is concerned about the misrepresentation of affirmative action to address structural discrimination as 'racial privilege' and 'at odds with universal human rights' by some political and public figures</i>"</p> <p>Relevant specific recommendations from the Committee to the Government of Aotearoa New Zealand were also presented</p>	<p>No response yet from Government of Aotearoa New Zealand</p>	
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