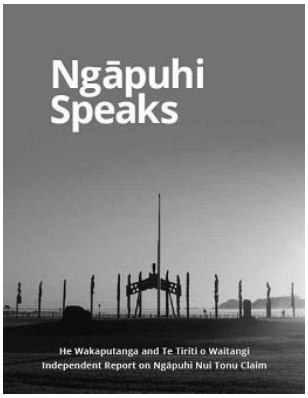
Pre-treaty events



Māori traditions
Inter-hapū strategic alliances:
- gatherings of rangatira to discuss economic, political other matters
- negotiation of formal treaties, tatau pounamu, a regular practice

From 1769
Trade and interaction with European explorers, whalers, sealers and in the early 1800s, with European missionaries and traders.

Problems with lawless Pākehā.

From late 1700s
International trade and travel by Māori – including to Australia, Tahiti, United States, United Kingdom.

Early meetings between rangatira and British governors in New South Wales and Crown in England.

1808 Establishment of Te Wakaminenga o ngā Hapū o Nu Tireni (The General Assembly of the Tribal Nations of New Zealand) - a confederation, having its own sphere of decision making but committed to upholding the mana of the hapū.

1820 Meeting of Hongi Hika and Waikato with King George IV:
- to discuss protection of Māori trade and continue diplomatic efforts to address European lawlessness
- beginning of the formal relationship (a covenant) between Ngāpuhi and the Crown

1831 Letter to William IV from 13 Ngāpuhi rangatira:
- outlined mutual benefits of trade relationship, issues of land alienation, the need for British troublemakers to be disciplined (by the British), and concerns re possible French invasion
- reflected a rangatira to rangatira relationship with Britain
- British Crown responded by appointing Busby as British Resident

1834 Adoption of Te Wakaminenga flag:
- to facilitate international trade
- recognition as a sovereign nation in the international context

1835 Signing of He Wakaputanga / Declaration of Independence:
- initially signed on 28 October by 35 chiefs gathered in a Bay of Islands, subsequently signed by other rangatira
- proclamation to the international world of their sovereignty and collective authority
- stating any foreign authority could be exercised only as they directed
- building on existing alliance with British monarch by:
  - continuing to offer protection to British living on their lands and coming for trade
  - asking support for protection on attempts upon their sovereignty

1835-1840 Leading up to the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi:
- problems with lawless Pākehā had increased, and Busby ineffective in dealing with them. Rangatira wanted the Governor to exercise control over Pākehā, and to ensure hapū and rangatira authority was upheld.
- Te Tiriti of Waitangi was to reinforce the commitments in He Wakaputanga

Source: Ngāpuhi Speaks, 2012