



*Government House
New Zealand*

International AIDS Candlelight Memorial 2023

Tēnā koutou katoa.

My thoughts are with all those taking part in this year's International AIDS Candlelight Memorial around the country. I know that for many of you, this will be a time touched with sadness, as you remember loved ones who lost their lives to HIV/AIDS.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the first AIDS Candlelight Memorial taking place simultaneously in San Francisco and New York City. 1983 was also the year that New Zealand has its first reported case of HIV/AIDS.

On this occasion, I would like to pay tribute to all the medical professionals who worked to find and deliver treatments for the disease. The COVID-19 pandemic once again highlighted the importance of following the advice of experts to help save lives and protect our communities.

I would also like to acknowledge all those organisations who support New Zealanders living with HIV/AIDS, including Body Positive, Positive Women, the Burnett Foundation, and the AIDS Foundation. My sincerest thanks for all that you do to counter misinformation relating to HIV/AIDS, and continuing to fight for better treatments and reduced transmission.

As Governor-General and Patron of the AIDS Foundation, my very best wishes once again to all involved in this year's memorial.

Kia ora, kia kaha, kia manawanui, huihui tātou katoa.

Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO
Governor-General of New Zealand