



John R. Mataira
New Zealand Consul-General
Los Angeles



John Mataira took up his position as New Zealand Consul-General, Los Angeles, in June 2008. He is a career foreign service officer with nearly twenty years experience in a variety of foreign postings. These included two stints in Tokyo, Japan (1990-93, 1998-2002) where he worked to improve and expand market access for New Zealand products. John also has extensive experience working in the Pacific Islands, with postings to Papua New Guinea (1995-97) and the Solomon Islands (2002-2004). In addition to managing New Zealand's

bilateral development assistance programmes to both countries, John was extensively involved in New Zealand's conflict resolution and peace-brokering efforts (in Bougainville in PNG, and with the precursor to RAMSI in Solomon Islands). John has also served in a wide range of temporary assignments including at the United Nations in New York (1989), Kiribati (1997), Fiji (2007) and Jordan, (2005).

John has a Bachelor of Arts (Waikato - Political Science and Japanese), and a Bachelor of Laws (Auckland). John attended High School at St Paul's Collegiate School in Hamilton.

John was born in Wellington, and has indigenous New Zealand Maori tribal affiliations to the *Te Whanau a Iri-te-Kura* sub-tribe of *Ngati Porou* on the East Coast of New Zealand's North Island, and to the *Ngati Rakaipaaka* sub-tribe of *Ngati Kahungunu* in the neighbouring Hawke's Bay region of New Zealand's North Island. John's great great grandfather, *Matenga Tukariaho*, Paramount Chief of *Ngati Rakaipaaka*, was one of the founding signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. John's *whakapapa* (genealogy or family tree) has also been enriched by English, Irish, and German Jewish antecedents.

John took a year off from his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1993 to pursue an abiding interest in the study of Japanese culture by working as a "salaryman" at Toyo Ink Ltd – during which time he also played a season of semi-professional rugby.

John is married to the lovely and talented Lisa Nagamine (a native of Santa Cruz County, CA) and has two children. Apart from family, interests include golf, Sumo wrestling and a variety of other sports, as well as art, reading and foreign languages. In his spare time John writes children's books in *Te Reo* (Maori) to provide educational reading material for young Maori language learners.