

7 October 2026

Statement of Solicitor-General Anna Adams KC regarding the prosecution of David Tamihere

As Solicitor-General I am responsible for maintaining general oversight of the conduct of public prosecutions. I make this statement to assist public understanding of the outcome in the prosecution of David Tamihere for the murders of Heidi Birgitta Paakkonen and Sven Urban Höglin, who were young Swedish tourists travelling in Coromandel, New Zealand in 1989.

Today the Crown has confirmed that the case against Mr Tamihere will not proceed to a retrial.

In March 2026, when the Supreme Court allowed Mr Tamihere's appeals against his murder convictions, the Court ordered a retrial. In doing so the Court recognised that there was, in principle, sufficient evidence to support Mr Tamihere's conviction at a second trial. However, the decision on whether a retrial should actually occur was not for the Court. That responsibility rested with the Crown Solicitor at Auckland, Alysha McClintock, whose predecessor prosecuted Mr Tamihere's original trial.

The Auckland Crown Solicitor is required to make an independent assessment of the case for a trial under [the Solicitor-General's Prosecution Guidelines](#). For a retrial to proceed, the Crown Solicitor had to be satisfied that the prosecution of Mr Tamihere was required, using the [Test for Prosecution](#) under the Guidelines. A prosecution may proceed only if it satisfies both stages of the Test:

- The first stage is the Evidential Test: Is there enough evidence to prove the proposed charge beyond reasonable doubt?
- The second stage is the Public Interest Test: Does the public interest require a prosecution to be brought?

The prosecution case against Mr Tamihere in 2026 was assessed only on the evidence capable of being presented at a retrial today. With the passage of almost four decades since the first trial in 1990, the availability and quality of the evidence has inevitably changed. After carefully considering the scope of the evidence now available, the Crown Solicitor at Auckland has decided that there is no longer enough evidence to prove the charges of murder against Mr Tamihere. Because the evidential test is not met, the prosecution cannot proceed, regardless of the public interest in continuing to a second trial.

I support the Auckland Crown Solicitor's decision in this matter as the result of a careful and thorough process. It is important to note, as the Crown Solicitor's office explained to the High Court, that the views of the families of the victims of these crimes, Ms Paakkonen and Mr Höglin, were gathered and considered as part of the decision-making.

It is a key feature of our criminal justice system that public prosecution decisions such as this are demonstrably fair, impartial, and involve quality, evidence-based reasoning. I am satisfied this has occurred in this case.

ENDS

The Solicitor-General's Prosecution Guidelines

The Solicitor-General's Prosecution Guidelines are available on the Crown Law website at www.crownlaw.govt.nz/prosecution-guidelines

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