



THURSDAY 21 OCTOBER 2021 — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement from Chief Coroner Judge Deborah Marshall announcing coronial inquiry into Christchurch masjid attacks

I have now formally opened a coronial inquiry into the 2019 Christchurch masjid attacks.

In making this decision, I have considered the questions and concerns raised by families of the Shaheed, victims and other interested parties.

Opening an inquiry allows more in-depth investigation into the causes and circumstances of the deaths resulting from the attacks. It also allows a coroner to make recommendations or comments that might prevent similar deaths happening in the future.

It's worth noting that an inquiry must be opened before an inquest (a hearing in court where the coroner hears from witnesses in person) can be held, but a decision has yet to be made about whether an inquest will occur and what form it might take.

In light of my decision to retire, announced earlier this year, Coroner Brigitte Windley will be replacing me as the coroner assigned to the Christchurch masjid attacks inquiry.

Coroner Windley is a highly experienced coroner based in Wellington, who was appointed to the Coroners Court in 2015 and has undertaken many complex inquiries. She will continue to work alongside me until I hand over the inquiry and she becomes the responsible coroner. The processes I have already set up in this investigation will not change.

The Coroners Court will work to ensure the families of the Shaheed, victims and interested parties continue to be involved in the inquiry process, that the many people and communities impacted by this tragedy find some answers to lingering questions, and that the deceased are given a voice.

ENDS

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