



## Media Release

### **Students will fight government's weak defence of unfair loan scheme**

Students are vowing to continue their Human Rights case against the unfair student loan scheme, following government's hypocritical defence of the policy.

"The Crown Law response to our case says that the loans scheme is not discriminatory and women are not economically disadvantaged despite their longer student loan repayment times," said Camilla Belich, National Women's Rights Officer of the New Zealand University Students' Association.

"This contradicts government initiatives such as the Action Plan for New Zealand Women and the Pay and Equity Taskforce, which signal a commitment to make student loans fairer for women," said Belich. "It also flies in the face of international pressure to end loan discriminations from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women."

Belich describes the Crown Law response as a patchy defence, which is based on flawed logic and uses outdated methods for calculating loan repayments.

"Government have admitted that loans are unfair to women too many times to now claim that there is no economic disadvantage to women when they pay thousands more in interest than men, and take twice as long to repay," said Belich. "It just won't wash with students, graduates, or any other group of voters."

Students will write a formal response to the legal opinion from Crown Law and then enter into mediation with representatives from the Ministry of Education and Crown Law.

For further information contact:  
Camilla Belich  
NZUSA NWRO  
Phone 04 498 2500  
Mobile Phone 0274 86 86 75