

Proactive Release

Date: 17 July 2019

The following Cabinet paper/s and related Cabinet minute/s have been proactively released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade:

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Finland
(CAB-19-MIN-0175)

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Finland
(CAB-19-MIN-0270)

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the New Zealand Government;

[© Crown Copyright, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 15 April 2019, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters from New Zealand, from 21 to 28 April 2019, to travel to Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Finland for bilateral discussions;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by two members of staff;
- 3 **noted** that he will be accompanied by his partner, who will take part in elements of the official programme;
- 4 **approved** the expenditure of up to \$64,249 for travel expenses for the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 5 **noted** that he will also be accompanied by a Foreign Affairs Private Secretary from his office, as an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and whose travel costs will be met by the Ministry;
- 6 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 6.1 Hon Shane Jones act as Minister of Foreign Affairs; Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control and Minister for Racing;
 - 6.2 Hon Dr David Clark act as Minister for State Owned Enterprises;
- 7 **noted** that the House is not sitting during his absence.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair
Cabinet

PROPOSED OVERSEAS TRAVEL: RT HON WINSTON PETERS: ICELAND, NORWAY, DENMARK AND FINLAND

I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Finland for bilateral meetings, from 21 April – 28 April 2019. The visit would complement the visit we undertook in November 2018 to open the New Zealand Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden, by raising New Zealand's profile and advancing our political and trade interests in the four other Nordic countries to which our Embassy in Stockholm will be accredited. The Prime Minister's approval has been given in principle.

Overarching Nordic Travel Objectives

2 Given the increasing challenges to the global rules-based system, the visit will have the broad objective of shoring up our relationship with important like-minded partners, which New Zealand seldom has the opportunity to engage with in capitals. The proposed visit to each of the four countries will be brief. But in each case, in meetings with the respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs, it will enable New Zealand to demonstrate our commitment to the relationships and affirm priority areas of cooperation. On multilateral issues, where we work closely with the Nordics at the United Nations and in other international fora, this would include advancing our shared interests in the areas of disarmament, human rights, economic and environmental issues, as well as global peace and security matters.

3 The visit will also be a valuable opportunity to discuss the key issues and challenges that we face in our own regions and explore further avenues for collaboration. In our own region, these include explaining the drivers behind our Government's Pacific Re-Set, climate change, the increasing role of non-traditional actors in our region and geo-strategic trends, including with respect to regional groupings and terminology. From the Nordics' perspectives, it will be valuable to hear

the four countries' insights on Brexit, geo-political trends within Europe, views on concluding a high-quality and comprehensive European Union – New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA), and relations with third countries, s6(a)

In addition to meetings with respective Ministers, two planned public addresses will be an opportunity to publicise the mutual benefit of strengthening New Zealand-Nordic relations, as well as reinforce the positive messages promoting New Zealand as an inclusive, tolerant and open society.

4 Specifically, our visit would include the following elements:

Reykjavik, Iceland (23 April)

- Meeting with Iceland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gudlaugur Thór Thórdarson, for bilateral Ministerial discussions, including over a working lunch.
- Visiting key Icelandic industries, including a visit to a major seafood company as well as to Svartsengi Geothermal Power Plant and Headquarters of HS Orka Energy Company, accompanied by the Foreign Minister.
- Meeting with Iceland's Minister of Tourism, Industry and Innovation Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, who visited New Zealand last year and who has offered to host our delegation to continue exploring mutually beneficial areas for collaboration.

Oslo, Norway (24 April)

- Meeting with Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Søreide, including to discuss closer cooperation as an independent, principled States. s6(a)
- Delivering a speech at the Norwegian Institute of International Relations (NUPI) to raise New Zealand's profile in Norway and underscore the shared interest in closer New Zealand-Norway relations, including on global peace and security issues where we are closely like-minded and often share the same values and interests.
- Signing an Air Services Agreement.

Copenhagen, Denmark (25 April)

- Meeting with Denmark's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anders Samuelsen.

- Signing an Air Services Agreement.
- Delivering a speech at the Danish Institute of International Studies to publicly reinforce why Denmark and the Nordic countries matter to New Zealand, why we are increasing our engagement, and the importance of closer collaboration to advance shared trade, foreign policy and disarmament interests.

Helsinki, Finland (26 April)

- Meeting with Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Timo Soini, over a working lunch during a half-day stop-over in Helsinki.
- s6(a)

Travel

5 I propose to depart New Zealand for Iceland on Sunday 21 April and return to New Zealand on the morning of Sunday 28 April 2019. I would not miss any sittings of Cabinet.

Ministerial Party

6 Ms Jan Trotman (who will undertake some elements of the official programme) and two staff members from my office will be part of the official delegation with their travel costs charged to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel. Additionally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will meet the travel costs of an MFAT Private Secretary seconded into my office to accompany the delegation as the MFAT representative.

Acting Ministers

7 If Cabinet approves my travel, Hon Shane Jones will act in my Foreign Affairs, Disarmament and Racing portfolios, and Hon Dr David Clark will act in my State Owned Enterprises portfolio, between 2pm on Sunday 21 April and 6am on Sunday 28 April 2019.

Costs of Travel

8 The projected costs of the proposed travel (including Ms Trotman and two accompanying staff members) are:

Airfares	\$50,708
Accommodation:	\$4,911
(Note: accommodation costs for MFA in Norway will be covered by the Norwegian Government.)	
Hospitality, transport and gifts:	\$2,350
Meals	\$3,220
Contingency	\$3,060 (5%)
Total	\$64,249

Proactive Release

9 I plan to release this paper in part within 30 business days. All redactions will be made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

10 I recommend that Cabinet:

- a) **approve** my proposed travel to Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Finland from 21 April – 28 April 2019;
- b) **note** that I will be accompanied by two staff members from my office in addition to Ms Trotman who will take part in elements of the official programme; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will meet the costs of a Private Secretary (Foreign Affairs) in my office serving as the MFAT representative on the visit;
- c) **approve** expenditure of up to \$64,249 for travel expenses for the official delegation as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel;
- d) **agree** that Hon Shane Jones will act in my Foreign Affairs, Disarmament and Racing portfolios, and Hon Dr David Clark will act in my State Owned Enterprises portfolio, between 2pm on Sunday 21 April and 6am on Sunday 28 April 2019.

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 10 June 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-19-SUB-0270 on his travel, from 21 to 28 April 2019, to Iceland, Norway, Denmark and Finland for bilateral discussions.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair

Cabinet

REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: RT HON WINSTON PETERS: NORWAY, DENMARK, FINLAND AND ICELAND FROM 21 – 28 APRIL 2019

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland from 21 – 28 April 2019.

Report

2 Following the re-opening of the New Zealand Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden, last year, in late April our delegation visited the other four Nordic countries to which our new embassy will be accredited: Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland. Despite the obvious geographical distance between us, the visit confirmed that the Nordic countries and New Zealand share a wide range of interests and common values and, in that sense, we are close and natural partners. The visit was successful in demonstrating that New Zealand is a likeminded, reliable partner for the Nordics and that there is scope to cooperate further on political and security issues, as well as trade and environmental matters, in our shared interests. At a time when there are serious challenges to the international order based on established rules, having closer and more frequent interactions with partners such as the Nordic countries, with whom New Zealand sees eye-to-eye on many issues, is of significant value.

Norway

3 During a brief visit to Norway, we had a wide-ranging and constructive meeting with the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Sørensen, and signed an air services agreement, which will help make connections between our two countries smoother. The working dinner that Minister Sørensen hosted underscored the large number of issues on which Norway and New Zealand shared similar interests and where intensified cooperation, including through the new embassy in Stockholm, would now be possible. This included on oceans and environmental issues, at the United Nations where Norway continued to benefit from New Zealand's insights as a recent Security Council member, and on challenges in our own respective regions, with Norway demonstrating its interest and engagement with the Pacific.

4 While in Oslo, I delivered a speech at the Norwegian Institute of International Relations that was well-received by an engaged audience, met with the Norwegian Parliament's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence to, inter alia, provide a clear picture of why the Pacific region matters, and laid a wreath at the memorial for the 22 July 2011 Terrorist Attack in Oslo. Following the wreath laying, we had the opportunity to meet with the New Zealand families of two victims who died in the attack. It was an honour to undertake this engagement on behalf of the New Zealand Government, and clearly the families valued the opportunity – after eight years – to share their experiences with a senior New Zealand Government representative.

Denmark

5 Denmark was one of two European Union members visited on the trip. During a working lunch with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anders Samuelsen, in Copenhagen, we discussed areas in which Denmark and New Zealand could work more closely together, including standing up to protectionism and challenges to the World Trade Organisation. New Zealand's new presence in Stockholm would make more regular and closer coordination on such issues more feasible. With respect to the free trade agreement being negotiated between the European Union and New Zealand, we thanked Denmark for the support it had given to date as a fellow advocate for free trade, despite its own considerable agriculture industry, and reinforced our wish to see a comprehensive agreement concluded.

6 The working lunch also provided a useful opportunity to hear insights on Danish and European politics ahead of the upcoming national and EU elections. We also exchanged views and perspectives on international security issues and deployments, challenges faced as agricultural nations with respect to climate change, the implications of Brexit, as well as regional trends, both in Europe and the Pacific. Our two countries signed an air services agreement during the meeting and exchanged views on multilateral matters and UN candidatures. Our brief time in Denmark also afforded me the opportunity to deliver a speech at the Danish Institute of International Studies about the bilateral relationship and opportunities to work more closely together, as well as meet with the family and colleagues of the recently deceased New Zealand Honorary Consul in Denmark.

Finland

7 Another European Union member and one with its own unique perspectives on global and regional trends, it was valuable including a half-day visit to Finland in the itinerary even though it was in the government formation stage following recent elections. The meeting with outgoing Minister of Foreign Affairs, Timo Soini, and senior officials provided the opportunity to have a frank exchange about relations and trends within the EU in the lead up to the European Parliament elections, Brexit and Finland's taking over of the EU Presidency on 1 July. The discussion was also a valuable occasion on which to emphasise and explore the strong similarities that New Zealand had with Finland on many issues. We are both small states that stand up for our interests, such as free trade and adherence to global norms and rules, as well as our values at a time where these are increasingly challenged.

8 The discussions with the Finnish system enabled us to register at a high level the importance that New Zealand placed on the completion of a high quality FTA with the EU, and to thank Finland for its strong support to date. ^{s6(a)}

Multilateral issues of importance were also canvassed, and it was an

opportunity for both sides to raise candidatures, including for New Zealand the request for support for Robert Martin's re-election to the UN's Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We also separately had a useful meeting with New Zealand's Honorary Consul in Finland.

Iceland

9 The opening of the New Zealand Embassy in Stockholm last year, with its cross-accreditation to Iceland, was one of a number of notable recent steps taken by both countries to increase the tempo and depth of the relationship. Following a visit from Iceland's Tourism Minister to New Zealand last year (a first), our visit to Reykjavik was also apparently the first time a New Zealand Minister had officially visited Iceland, despite close working level links for many years, for instance in the United Nations human rights context.

10 The visit included an extensive discussion over a working lunch with Iceland's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gudlaugur Thór Thórdarson, and officials including the Reykjavik-based ambassador to New Zealand. In addition to canvassing areas in the multilateral arena where our two countries already worked alongside each other to advance shared interests, we discussed the challenges and opportunities that small states faced in dealing with larger partners. Iceland's views – as a NATO member but one that is also outside of the EU – on its relationship with the major powers, including in the Arctic Council context, were instructive.

11 The discussion between Foreign Ministers also afforded us the opportunity to speak frankly about the increasing importance of our own region and why the Pacific mattered to our likeminded European partners. At a practical level, we discussed the possibilities of enabling closer people-to-people links and other bilateral issues, as well as discussing candidatures and Iceland's insights as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, ^{s6(a)}

12 At the invitation of the Foreign Minister, we also visited an impressive and high functioning local fish company and processing plant (Visir HF). While there, our

delegation witnessed the latest (Icelandic) technology being employed, as well as hearing about Iceland's world leading fisheries management system, which New Zealand has previously used as a model. The Foreign Minister also accompanied the delegation on a visit to a geothermal plant owned by HS Orka, which showcased Iceland's world leading technology in this sector, as well as their success in using this to create a hub for other businesses in the vicinity that draw on the by-products of the plant (including a fish drying processor; waste management; and the Blue Lagoon heated pool resort). A dinner hosted by the Minister of Tourism enabled us to hear more about the recovery of Iceland's economy over the last decade, including the role that tourism had played after a concerted effort by the Government to better showcase the country's unique natural environment.

Conclusion

13 Coming only a few months after the opening of the New Zealand Embassy in Sweden, our visit to the other four Nordic countries demonstrated that New Zealand is serious about increasing our engagement with the region. The visit reinforced that as outward-looking, small states we share similar interests on many trade, environmental and global security issues and in defending the rules-based international system. It was also useful to show through a high-level visit that the new embassy in Stockholm was very much a post that would cover the whole Nordic region and there would be increased capacity to focus on all five relationships, not just Sweden. Our new Ambassador in Stockholm, who in some cases had not yet presented credentials in the countries visited, will also benefit from the high-level interactions to pursue New Zealand's interests in follow-up engagements. The visit confirmed that there are areas where further collaboration, cooperation and exchange would be mutually beneficial given our overlapping interests.

14 A prominent feature of the discussions with all four foreign ministers was the 15 March terrorist attacks in Christchurch and what was considered to be the New Zealand Government's admirable response in the aftermath of the attacks. These conversations served to illustrate how similar New Zealand and the Nordic countries were in our global outlook and the values that we hold dear, providing a strong impetus to collaborate more closely in defence of our common interests. The

discussion in Norway was particularly poignant given that country's July 2011 terrorist attack. Having the chance to meet with the New Zealand families affected by that attack in Norway was a moving addition to the programme. Overall, the trip was a demonstrably successful four-country visit that significantly raised New Zealand's profile in a part of the world where our interests and values often converge.

Proactive Release

15 I plan to release this paper in part within 30 business days. All redactions will be made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

16 I recommend that Cabinet **note** this report.

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs