

He waka eke noa

We are all in the waka together

Wok bung wantaim

Working together

This Statement of Partnership sets out the shared principles, priorities and understandings that will guide cooperation and engagement between our respective governments with a view to further strengthening our partnership, deepening our bilateral relationship and expanding our dialogue.

Our Shared Context

In coming together under this Partnership, we recognise first and foremost our shared geography and history as Pacific nations, our longstanding political, economic, democratic, cultural and social connections.

We reaffirm the strong and long-established bilateral relationship between New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, and its legacy of mutual respect and collaboration built over five decades.

We acknowledge Papua New Guinea’s Medium Term Development Plan IV, and its focus on achieving national prosperity through growing the economy.

We also acknowledge New Zealand’s emphasis on engagement, partnerships, collaboration, and people-to-people connections with a goal for a peaceful, stable, prosperous, and resilient Pacific.

As fellow members of the Pacific Islands Forum, we reiterate our commitment to Pacific-led regional architecture and in working together as a region for *kōrerorero*, *toktok* and *talanoa* – to share our perspectives on policy issues, to engage effectively on the shared challenges we all face and to reinforce Pacific priorities on the global stage.

We therefore reaffirm the critical importance of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent as the Pacific’s own articulation of our region’s collective vision, direction, and ambition for the next three decades – a long term guide to all within the region and those beyond who wish to engage and support.

We highlight the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a shared horizon for our work to strengthen our peace and security, to improve the lives of our peoples, to pursue economic development and prosperity, to safeguard the planet (and our part of it), and to build our overall partnership.

Our Vision

At a time of increased complexity and challenge, both globally and within our region, we share a vision to not only sustain the existing partnership between our two countries, but to also harness the mutual benefits possible from an even stronger one.

This shared vision is for a partnership of increased breadth and depth – of greater cooperation across a full range of actors and policy interests, as well as high-value results in the areas of our uppermost priority. It is for a relationship in which New Zealand and Papua New Guinea contribute as equal partners to bring our countries closer together; to deliver tangibly against Papua New Guinea’s development challenges and opportunities; and to achieve benefits for both our peoples, our region and beyond.

We will therefore pursue a New Zealand-Papua New Guinea Partnership strengthened across five areas:

- **Partnership and Dialogue** - in which our leaders, governments and institutions engage frequently to exchange ideas and perspectives and collaborate more actively to achieve priorities in our two countries, our region and the world.
- **People and Communities** – in which we invest in and expand the connections between our peoples and communities in support of human development and human rights.
- **Economic Development and Prosperity** – in which we grow our trade, economic, labour mobility and business links in support of strong, resilient, inclusive and connected economies.
- **Peace and Security** – in which we advance the peace and security of our two countries, our region and beyond; and
- **Environment and Planet** – in which we deepen our collaboration on climate change and environment to better face the challenges and take up the opportunities that lie ahead.

To this end, over 2025 - 2029 we will work together to further strengthen key areas of our bilateral relations. We will look to broaden and deepen cooperation in our many areas of common interests; strengthen the architecture of our engagement; support each other during difficult times; and improve the linkages between our institutions, economies, cultures, and peoples — all in pursuit of our respective national development priorities, and a stronger New Zealand — Papua New Guinea Partnership.

Our Priorities

Partnership and Dialogue

As likeminded Pacific countries, we recognise the importance of relationships, engagement and dialogue at all levels, including between our Ministers, Parliamentarians, officials, businesses and communities.

Such engagement underpins our cooperation and we will continue to pursue opportunities that further build these linkages, including through:

- **Regular political engagement** – by prioritising ongoing engagement between our Ministers, including through bilateral visits as well as more effectively utilising our shared memberships of regional forums such as the Pacific Islands Forum, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and the South Pacific Defence Ministers’ Meeting.
- **Sustained policy engagement** – through ongoing dialogue between our policymakers and our respective High Commissions.
- **Deepening foreign policy collaboration** – through regular engagement on our respective foreign policy priorities, including by strengthening exchanges on topical policy issues of interest and identifying opportunities for stronger collaboration in regional and international forums.
- **Joining forces for the Pacific** – working closely to strengthen the PIF, and to embed the concept of PIF Centrality, which reinforces Pacific countries as the driving force in articulating and shaping the character of our own region.

People and Communities

As long-standing Pacific partners, we welcome the friendships and connections that have developed between New Zealanders and Papua New Guineans from all walks of life, including in government, business, sport, religion, education, and community engagement.

We therefore recognise the continuing importance of human and institutional development to support the aspirations of our nations and peoples, and to grow vibrant and inclusive societies whose members benefit from inclusive and sustainable development, the protection and promotion of individual human rights, and well-governed institutions that support improved standards of living for all.

As a result, we will endeavour to further grow people-to-people links, and improve the quality of life of our peoples and communities by:

- **Addressing critical skill gaps** – including through delivery of targeted scholarship and tertiary education programmes that enable leadership and professional capability development and contribute to educational exchanges.
- **Sharing policy and innovation** – including by supporting targeted engagement between our respective public sector agencies, with a view to sharing experiences and lessons learned on respective policy approaches.
- **Improving access to quality healthcare in Papua New Guinea** – with an immediate focus on working together to expand access to childhood vaccinations, sexual and reproductive health services, and specialist eye care.
- **Promoting good governance at all levels** – including by working together to combat corruption in all forms given its corrosive effect on societies, and by supporting the social protection of the most vulnerable groups in our communities.

- ***Empowering women and enhancing their status and voice in our respective countries*** – including by working together to ensure equal participation by women citizens in all political, economic, social, sporting, and religious activities.

Economy and Prosperity

Given that economic prosperity underpins our respective national development, we emphasise the importance of building strong, inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient economies as we transition to net zero economies, which deliver the opportunity and livelihoods needed by our peoples, especially women and youth.

As trade-oriented economies, we reaffirm our support for open markets and the rules-based international trading system with the WTO at its core, and for trade and investment policies that advance the interests of small open economies.

We also acknowledge the important role that effective practical cooperation can play in shaping economic transformation in our respective economies as we transition to net zero emission economies (including in shared priorities such as agriculture, economic reform, and state-owned enterprises), particularly where complemented by greater economic cooperation, trade and investment flows, and business linkages. We therefore recognise the potential for enhanced engagement between our economies, businesses, and policymakers, in support of economic and national development.

To this end, we will redouble our efforts to strengthen economic engagement, including through the development of a Comprehensive Economic Plan of Action that supports ongoing cooperation in the following priorities:

- ***Targeting sustainable economic growth*** - cooperating in areas with high potential to stimulate long-term, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth in our respective countries, including enabling infrastructure and services in Papua New Guinea.
- Pursuing ***stronger trade and economic engagement*** – exploring opportunities to strengthen bilateral trade and investment flows, improve trade facilitation, and trade and economic policy capacity (especially in priority areas such as state-owned enterprises, economic reform, and private sector development)
- ***Working together in the economic forums that matter*** – expanding dialogue and cooperation in international forums that promote regional and international economic engagement, including the World Trade Organisation, APEC, and the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers Meeting.
- ***Maximising labour mobility opportunities*** – including by working together to expand Papua New Guinea’s participation in and benefits from New Zealand’s Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme and other labour mobility programmes.
- ***Strengthening cooperation in agriculture*** – working together to improve agricultural productivity and quality, and to grow agricultural exports in both directions, including by exploring new programmes that promote agricultural development in Papua New Guinea,

- ***Investing in youth and women*** – pursuing initiatives that grow economic opportunities for Papua New Guinea women and young people, including through continued investments in food marketplaces and supply chains that provide a safer environment for women and other vulnerable people and contribute to increased economic stability and prosperity.
- ***Accessibility to energy*** – improving access to clean, reliable and affordable energy, through the PNG Electrification Partnership to support Papua New Guinea’s electrification goals.
- ***Growing business connections*** – promoting business engagements, facilitating two-way trade missions, and supporting the work of our respective business councils.
- ***Supporting private sector development*** across our respective economies – working together to build the business capabilities of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), including indigenous businesses and improve their access to affordable finance.

Peace and Security

We reaffirm that peace is a base condition for development, and that a safe, secure, and peaceful region is integral to the shared prosperity and development we seek. We also recognise that we are facing an increasingly complex regional security environment, driven by sharpening geostrategic dynamics and multifaceted security challenges, including the growing impacts of climate change.

To that end, we reaffirm our shared commitment to peace and security in the region, including to an expanded concept of security as set out in the *Boe Declaration* and the importance of the international rules-based system in safeguarding the sovereignty of all states. We recognise that peace and security are critical for ensuring national development and acknowledge the important role that law and order and peacebuilding efforts play in achieving this across Papua New Guinea.

We reaffirm the importance of disarmament, arms control, and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including our commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We will therefore continue to jointly promote peace and security both domestically and within our region by:

- ***Enhancing our security cooperation*** – working together to strengthen our respective national security strategies and capabilities, including through strengthening engagement to support the capability of key institutions such as the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, the Papua New Guinea Department of Defence, the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (especially the Bougainville Police Service), and the National Disaster Centre.
- ***Leveraging our defence cooperation*** – maximising the impact of the long-standing and close cooperation and engagement between our respective defence forces and civilian defence institutions by exploring opportunities to further develop the bilateral defence architecture.
- ***Promoting peace and the rule of law*** - supporting the joint promotion of the rule of law, and the implementation of peacebuilding efforts in areas of potential or actual conflict.

- ***Sustaining peace and development in Bougainville*** - Continuing to work together to support economic development and the maintenance of peace and stability in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.
- ***Strengthening collaboration on regional and global security challenges*** - enhancing our efforts to address regional and global security challenges through cooperation and by strengthening our cooperation in multilateral engagements that promote peace and security, including in the context of the United Nations, the Pacific Islands Forum, and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Environment and Planet

As political leaders, we acknowledge the critical role we play as stewards of the environment in our respective countries, and the importance of ensuring that our natural resources and environment are conserved and managed for the collective benefit of all, and for the benefit of future generations.

We also recognise the challenges posed by climate change, as the single greatest threat to our livelihoods, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific; and reiterate our commitment to implementing the Paris Agreement including the goal of limiting global average temperatures to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrials levels.

As a result, we will look to strengthen our cooperation on climate action, environmental protection, conservation, and sustainable management of natural resources, including in key areas such as:

- ***Limiting and responding to the impacts of climate change*** – working together on climate action, including by supporting capacity-building in Papua New Guinea in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and exploring potential areas of collaboration to support climate change mitigation.
- ***Supporting renewable energy*** – including by investing in Papua New Guinea’s production of renewable energy and regulatory efforts, including through the development of a 6MW solar plant in Bougainville.
- ***Supporting the development of climate-smart agriculture*** – working together to develop climate-smart agricultural practices that build the resilience of Papua New Guinea farmers and food systems to the impacts of climate change and protect food security, while also strengthening institutional links between our respective agricultural scientific research institutions to build capacity on climate change adaptation.
- ***Sustainable fisheries management*** – exploring options to strengthen engagement in fisheries management systems and processes, protection of the marine environment and ecosystems, and stock assessments, including to address Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing.
- ***Protecting unique Pacific biodiversity*** – working together to protect biodiversity, including by leveraging New Zealand’s contribution to the Biodiversity and Climate Fund and advocating at relevant global forums for the swift implementation of the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement).
- ***Pursuing our joint environmental priorities internationally*** – including by strengthening our cooperation consistent with the vision of the Forum Leaders in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue

Pacific Continent, and for effective multilateral responses to reduce the impact of climate change and prepare for its future effects, and to respond to biodiversity loss and pollution.

Our Implementation and Approach

We recognise that *how* we work together is just as important as *what* we work together on.

To that end, we commit to continuing to work together as equal partners, who operate in a spirit of trust and collaboration, and in the context of a friendship that is based on honesty, empathy, trust, and respect.

We will seek sustainable success, focusing on our respective long-term goals, and a results-driven approach that prioritises ongoing dialogue, tangible cooperation, and a joint commitment to building our partnership.

Under this Statement of Partnership, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea will therefore work together to:

- We seek to meet regularly for Foreign Ministerial Meetings to review implementation of this Statement of Partnership, and refresh priority areas considering major developments and emerging issues.
- Hold High Level Consultations annually to discuss progress made towards advancing the priorities outlined in this Statement and to oversee the operationalisation and implementation of specific areas of focus.
- Strengthen working level engagements as appropriate, including developing or reinvigorating sector-level technical working groups (to support the High-Level Consultations) in Peace and Security (Foreign Affairs, Defence, Police), Inclusive and Sustainable Development (National Planning), Economy and Trade and other areas as and when required.

For New Zealand

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister of New Zealand

For the Independent State of Papua New Guinea

Hon James Marape
Prime Minister of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea