

Proactive Release

Date: 12 February 2020

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

***Report on Overseas Travel: Minister of Foreign Affairs:
(CAB-19-MIN 656 refers)***

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; and
- 6(b): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis.



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 9 December 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-19-SUB-0656 on his travel, from 14 to 15 November 2019, to Washington DC, United States of America to attend the Defeat ISIS Small Group Ministerial meeting and conduct bilateral talks.

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: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 14-15 NOVEMBER

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to the United States from 14 – 15 November 2019.

Report

Defeat ISIS Ministerial

We made a brief (i.e. 36-hour) visit to Washington DC in mid-November to take up the invitation of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to attend the Defeat-ISIS Coalition Small Group Ministerial Meeting in Washington.

s6(a); s6(b)

s6(b)

s6(b)

5 s6(a) there was a recognition among Coalition members of some significant collective achievements, including most recently the successful operation targeting Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. There was also a clear recognition of the precarious nature of the situation and the need for Coalition members to keep the pressure on ISIS – both in Iraq/Syria, as well as further afield, especially in West Africa and the Sahel.

s6(a); s6(b)

7 On the margins of the Defeat-ISIS meeting, we met with the Foreign Ministers of Turkey, Finland, Denmark and Sweden. The bilateral meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu allowed us to maintain friendly relations with a country s6(a); s6(b) s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a) and Minister Çavuşoğlu was warm in his praise of the New Zealand's Government response to the March 15 attacks. The three bilaterals with relatively new Foreign Ministers from Nordic countries allowed us to continue the Government's efforts to strengthen relations with Scandinavia.

Bilateral engagements

8 We took advantage of being in Washington for the Defeat-ISIS meeting to undertake a number of engagements aimed at promoting the bilateral relationship between New Zealand and the United States. In particular, we had meetings with Secretary of State Pompeo and the recently appointed National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien. Our key bilateral objectives were to reinforce the s6(b) case for the US to be prepared to initiate a FTA focused process with New Zealand, while charting next steps; and to emphasise the importance of our strong partnership with the US, particularly in the Pacific.

s6(b)

s6(a); s6(b)

s6(a); s6(b)

11 The meetings with Secretary Pompeo and NSA O'Brien also reaffirmed the value of the closer cooperation between New Zealand and the US, as well as with other partners, to increase profile and impact in the Pacific. s6(a)
s6(a)

12 We also attended a brief ceremony at Georgetown University to formalise the presentation of a grant by MFAT of NZ\$1m for the promotion and encouragement of New Zealand and Pacific studies at the university.

Proactive Release

13 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

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

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs