

# Proactive Release

Date: 28 November 2019

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Fletcher Tabuteau:

***Title of paper:***

***Report on Overseas Travel: Fletcher Tabuteau, Ethiopia and Kenya***

***8-14 September 2019***

***Title of minute: Report on Overseas Travel (CAB-19-MIN-0545 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.

[© Crown Copyright, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)](#)



# 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.*

---

### Report on Overseas Travel: Fletcher Tabuteau MP

**Portfolio**                      **Foreign Affairs**

On 21 October 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Fletcher Tabuteau MP) under CAB-19-SUB-0545 on his travel, from 8 to 14 September 2019, to:

- 1        Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to attend the opening of the New Zealand Embassy's Chancery;
- 2        Kenya to undertake bilateral discussions.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

---

**Hard-copy distribution:**

Prime Minister  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Chair,  
Cabinet

## **REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: FLETCHER TABUTEAU MP**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report concerning the travel that I undertook in my capacity as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Ethiopia and Kenya from 8 - 14 September 2019. The purpose of the visit was to represent the Government at the formal opening of the New Zealand Embassy's Chancery in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and to advance our bilateral relationships with Ethiopia, Kenya, as well as the African Union, which is based in Addis Ababa.

2 In Ethiopia (9 - 11 September), the New Zealand Embassy in Addis Ababa organised a well-attended and successful event to mark the opening of the new Chancery. Alongside the Ethiopian State Minister of Foreign Affairs, I spoke on behalf of the New Zealand Government to officially open the permanent Chancery in Addis Ababa and reaffirm the friendship with Ethiopia, which dates back to 1935. In doing so, we also emphasised that New Zealand's commitment to Africa and the African Union, which is based in Addis Ababa, was enduring following the uptick in engagement during New Zealand's UN Security Council campaign and term.

3 While in Addis Ababa, I met with Ethiopia's State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Markos Tekle, where we discussed opportunities to further develop the cooperation between our countries such as on climate change initiatives, including the Global Research Alliance to reduce agricultural emissions. We also had useful exchanges on our shared commitment to defending the rules-based international system and Ethiopia's views, as a regional leader, on security challenges in its neighbourhood, including South Sudan. I also met with the Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Fekadu Beyene, where we had a detailed and fruitful conversation

on cooperation on climate change action in the lead up to the Climate Action Summit in New York. Additionally, I participated in a small breakfast meeting with the United Nations Undersecretary-General and Humanitarian Coordinator Sir Mark Lowcock who was visiting Addis Ababa at the time. Finally, we undertook a field visit to the World Food Programme's large logistics base outside of the capital city, where we saw first-hand the scale of the WFP's operation, including in airlifting humanitarian supplies to South Sudan. Our delegation underscored the New Zealand Government's continued funding support for the operation, which was particularly appreciated for the flexibility it gave WFP in executing its mandate to provide humanitarian assistance where most required.

4 As home of the African Union, our short stay in Addis Ababa was a useful opportunity to re-engage at the political level with the African Union Commission. New Zealand's ongoing cooperation with the AU on a joint geothermal facility project, as well as our support for the publication of the annual 'African Union Handbook', s6(a)

We had productive meetings with the AU Commissioner for Trade, Albert Muchanga, to discuss prospects for the ambitious Africa Continental Free Trade Area; Director of Energy Cheika Bedda (on the geothermal facility cooperation); and the Director of Information and Communication (reaffirming New Zealand's ongoing support for the AU Handbook).

5 It was clear from these meetings that New Zealand is seen as a valued, albeit relatively small, partner for the AU, and the high-level exchanges were useful in ensuring that New Zealand remains relevant in what is a "crowded market" among partners. This engagement will continue to serve our own longer term political as well as trade and economic interests with the continent. More broadly, this level of active engagement will also help us achieve current objectives in the multilateral sphere (e.g. relating to climate change initiatives, New Zealand candidacies, or acquiring support for one-off initiatives such as the Christchurch Call).

6 In Kenya (12 – 13 September), we had a productive high-level visit, meeting with two members of Kenya's Cabinet. The call with Cabinet Secretary (Minister) for Foreign Affairs Monica Juma was both warm and wide-ranging, building on her

meeting with Minister Peters at CHOGM in 2018. A key theme of our discussion was reinvigorating Commonwealth links and seizing opportunities for closer collaboration in an uncertain international environment. We discussed combatting terrorism, with Secretary Juma underscoring the challenges faced by Kenya in this respect as well as New Zealand's experience and reaction to the 15 March terrorist attacks in Christchurch. This led into an exchange on our shared multilateral objectives, including Kenya's support for the Christchurch Call. We took the opportunity of our visit to Nairobi to hand over a letter from Foreign Affairs Minister Peters announcing New Zealand's support for Kenya's UN Security Council 2021-22 bid. This was visibly appreciated by the Kenyan Minister and her officials, coming only a short time after the African Union had endorsed Kenya's candidature.

7 The call with Cabinet Secretary for Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Hon Peter Munya, was a useful opportunity to reaffirm our common commitment to the multilateral trading system and to advance specific objectives of importance to New Zealand, including fossil fuel subsidy reform. Another productive and worthwhile element of the short programme in Kenya was a meeting with the senior leadership of KenGen, Kenya's public/private generating utility, during which New Zealand's close links to Kenya's geothermal industry were readily apparent and appreciated. Our delegation also undertook a field visit to the avocado processing and packing facility of Olivado – a New Zealand company – and saw first-hand the benefits of the New Zealand Aid Programme's support to Kenya's avocado sector.

### **Comment**

8 The visit to Ethiopia and Kenya was a productive and successful re-engagement at the political level with two of the partners in sub-Saharan Africa that New Zealand has the deepest and most wide-ranging links with. In Ethiopia, the opening of the Chancery was a strong statement of our long-term commitment to the relationship, as well as to New Zealand's engagement with the African Union in Addis Ababa, where our niche collaboration projects ensure that we remain relevant.

9 In Kenya, we received a warm and high-level welcome, with the two Cabinet Secretary meetings both highlighting the importance of our Commonwealth links. It

was regularly observed during the visit that Kenya and New Zealand shared a considerable amount in common, not only our Commonwealth links but shared focuses for instance on agriculture, tourism and renewable energy. There was much to suggest from the visit that the relationship with Kenya is worthy of continued strong commitment from our side.

### **Proactive Release**

10 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**

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

Fletcher Tabuteau MP  
**Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs**

Proactively Released by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary  
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs