



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta

**Portfolio**                      **Foreign Affairs**

On 25 July 2022, Cabinet:

- 1        **authorised** the absence of Hon Nanaia Mahuta from Aotearoa New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 2 to 10 August 2022 to travel to Cambodia and Malaysia for ASEAN-related meetings;
- 2        **s6(a)**
- 3        **agreed** that she be accompanied by one staff member;
- 4        **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$53,675.10 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 5        **noted** that she will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by the department;
- 6        **agreed** that in her absence:
  - 6.1      Hon David Parker act as Minister of Foreign Affairs;
  - 6.2      Hon Kieran McAnulty act as Minister of Local Government;
- 7        **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Rachel Hayward  
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

**Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta**

1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Cambodia for ASEAN-related meetings and Malaysia for a bilateral visit. The dates for travel are 2 – 10 August inclusive.

**Purpose of Travel**

ASEAN and EAS meetings

2 Aotearoa New Zealand has a strategic interest in supporting the maintenance and credibility of ASEAN-led architecture in our wider region. These meetings are critical preparatory dialogue for the EAS Leaders' Summit in November, and to engage ASEAN Dialogue Partner Foreign Ministers in discussion on issues of regional concern and aspects of substantive cooperation with ASEAN.

3 As Chair of ASEAN this year, Cambodia will host the East Asian Summit Foreign Minister Meeting and the ASEAN Regional Forum Foreign Minister Meetings in Phnom Penh. This is the first time these meetings will be held in-person for two years. Not only will they offer important opportunities to highlight Aotearoa New Zealand's perspectives on a range of security and economic issues affecting our region, they are also an opportunity for me to engage with my counterparts in the region.

4 Key components of the Cambodia programme include:

- Bilateral meetings with counterparts, including non-ASEAN members.
- ASEAN-New Zealand Ministerial Meeting: a formal interaction with the 10 ASEAN Foreign Ministers to review ASEAN-New Zealand cooperation and exchange views on regional and international issues.
- East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting: a key element of the agenda being exchange of views on regional and international issues and preparations for the Leaders' level East Asia Summit in November.
- ASEAN Regional Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting: including review of programme of cooperation amongst ARF members and exchange of views on regional and international issues

Malaysia

5 The objectives of this visit would be to:

- Mark the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations and highlight New Zealand's intent for an ongoing, strong multi-dimensional relationship with an important regional partner;
- Reconnect New Zealand and New Zealanders with Malaysia and promote the trade recovery agenda, in particular reinvigorating tourism and education links;
- Profile the indigenous connections between New Zealand and Malaysia, and the opportunities for increased indigenous cooperation.

6 We value Malaysia's shared commitment to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and the insights it can provide us into regional and global dynamics, including from

the perspective of a moderate Islamic nation. Malaysia is an influential player within ASEAN – outspoken on issues such as ASEAN’s role in addressing the Myanmar coup.

7 Malaysia is an important trading partner - our 11th largest and a particularly important market for dairy and meat. We have longstanding people-to-people connections, underpinned by education & tourism links, and Malaysia has expressed enthusiasm for deepening indigenous cooperation with Aotearoa New Zealand.

8 I would meet with Foreign Minister Saifuddin, with the possibility of announcing a new “Strategic Partnership” that would elevate the importance of our relationship with Malaysia by increasing the visibility of our existing bilateral ties and building momentum for further cooperation (e.g. on counter-terrorism, and an upgrade of our bilateral FTA, and indigenous links).

9 I also intend to visit NZ businesses operating in Kuala Lumpur, for example the Fonterra processing factory and Daifuku Oceania, a NZ company who manage baggage handling at KL International Airport.

#### Dates of Travel

10 If my travel is approved, I would be in Cambodia from 2-6 August, and then in Malaysia from 7-9 August, arriving back in New Zealand on 10 August. My travel will be by commercial means. Under the Reconnecting New Zealanders agreed policy settings, I would not be required to isolate upon my return to Aotearoa New Zealand

#### Ministerial Party

11 I would be accompanied throughout the travel by one staff member from my office. Senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will accompany me on the trip. Their costs will be met from the departmental budget.

#### Travel Costs

12 The estimated costs of my travel are:

<b>Flights</b>	36,000 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Accommodation<sup>2</sup></b>	4,050
<b>Representation</b>	2,000
<b>Other transport</b>	1,500
<b>Per diems</b>	574
<b>Gifts</b>	2,400
<b>Covid Testing</b>	150
<b>Subtotal</b>	37,744
<b>Contingency 15%</b>	5,661.60
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$53,675.10

<sup>1</sup> The preferred flights to Cambodia are currently waitlisted. If the wait list clears the budget estimate for flights would reduce to \$27,027 as per the original approval letter to the Prime Minister. The budget figure above represents the cost of a back up route if the wait list does not clear.

<sup>2</sup> Accommodation for the Minister at ASEAN will be provided by the Government of Cambodia

## Acting Ministers

13 I propose that Hon David Parker act as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and my Local Government portfolio be covered by Hon Kieran McNulty, and Three Waters issues be covered by Hon Grant Robertson.

## Proactive Release

14 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO (18) 4 on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. Proactive release is subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

## Recommendations

15 I recommend that Cabinet:

- 15.1 authorise my absence from Aotearoa New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 3 – 10 August 2022 to travel to Cambodia and Malaysia;
- 15.2 agree that I be accompanied by one staff member;
- 15.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$43,405.60 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];
- 15.4 note that I will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by the department;
- 15.5 agree that Hon David Parker and Hon Kieran McNulty will be Acting Ministers in my absence;
- 15.6 note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nanaia Mahuta  
Minister of Foreign Affairs