



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Phil Twyford

**Portfolio**                      **Disarmament and Arms Control**

On 5 September 2022, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Phil Twyford under CAB-22-SUB-0359 on his travel, from 30 July to 6 August 2022, to New York, United States of America, to attend the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty Review Conference.

Rachel Hayward  
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister  
for Disarmament and Arms Control

[Restricted]

Office of the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control  
Chair, Cabinet

### **Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Phil Twyford**

1 I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to New York City, United States from 30 July to 6 August 2022. The primary purpose of the travel was to attend and demonstrate support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) 10<sup>th</sup> Review Conference in New York. I also met with a large number of ministers and senior officials from other NPT member states and multilateral organisations.

#### **Report:**

- 2 The NPT Review Conference ran for four weeks, between 1-26 August 2022. I attended the opening week, which saw a significant number of ministers and senior officials gathering in New York.
- 3 My trip to New York came at a crucial moment for the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The geostrategic backdrop complicated matters for the Review Conference, particularly Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the various nuclear aspects to this conflict.
- 4 It is widely acknowledged that the Treaty is under unprecedented strain, across three pillars - nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The lack of progress on nuclear disarmament is particularly problematic.
- 5 Russia's reckless behaviour surrounding the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine has the potential to upend long-standing principles around the safe and secure use of nuclear energy, and more pressingly creates serious risks at Europe's largest nuclear power plant.
- 6 Disarmament gains secured during, and following the end of the Cold War, have stalled and are beginning to be reversed, with arsenals being expanded and upgraded. Non-proliferation norms are being challenged by Iran's continued non-compliance with its non-proliferation obligations for supervision and monitoring and by North Korea's nuclear weapons programme. New issues, including nuclear naval propulsion programmes such as that proposed by AUKUS, are adding to the challenges of nuclear non-proliferation.
- 7 These risks have been compounded by a legacy of inaction at previous Review Conferences in recent decades, particularly on the Treaty's disarmament pillar. The trend has been either an inability to achieve a consensus outcome, as happened in 2005 or 2015, or failure to follow up and implement outcomes in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

- 8 At the Review Conference in New York New Zealand played an important role in encouraging (ultimately unsuccessful) efforts to agree a final outcome, reflecting our international reputation as a constructive player in disarmament and arms control efforts.
- 9 Attendance at ministerial level was an important way to demonstrate our commitment to the NPT, and gave New Zealand a high level of access and influence within the Review Conference. My attendance was also an important opportunity to argue for strengthening multilateral institutions and the rules-based international order at a time where both are being challenged and undermined.
- 10 In my address to the Review Conference, I made clear that while progress on all pillars of the Treaty was important, New Zealand's primary concern was a credible outcome on disarmament, and urged states to reject the logic of the nuclear weapons states that the current global insecurity and instability render us incapable of taking steps to increase security and stability.
- 11 Attending the Review Conference also allowed me to attend bilateral and multilateral meetings and speak informally with a wide range of ministers, heads of delegation, civil society representatives, think tanks, and international organisations. This included a group meeting hosted by US Secretary of State Blinken, and a working breakfast I hosted at the New Zealand Permanent Mission for like-minded disarmament partners.
- 12 Other key individuals I met with included:
- **Japan:** Minoru Terada, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister on Nuclear Disarmament
  - **Indonesia:** Tri Tharyat, Deputy Foreign Minister
  - **Kyrgyzstan:** Dinara Kemelova, Deputy Foreign Minister
  - **Australia:** Senator Tim Ayres, Assistant Minister for Trade
  - **Ireland:** Hildegard Naughton, Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and at the Department of Transport
  - **United Kingdom:** Graham Stuart, Minister of State
  - **Norway:** State Secretary Eivind Vad Petersson
  - **Jordan:** Ayman Al Safadi, Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister
  - **Switzerland:** Ignazio Cassis, President and Minister of Foreign Affairs
  - **Sweden:** Ann Linde, Foreign Minister
  - United Nations Under Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu
  - **United States:** Under-Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, Bonnie Jenkins
  - **Egypt:** Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, Osama

Abdelkhalek

- **Brazil:** Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, Ronaldo Costa Filho, Special Representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Flavio Damico, Permanent Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Carlos Duarte
- **South Africa:** Permanent Representative to the UN, Mathu Joyini

- 13 I attended a reception hosted by Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama, and hosted Pacific delegates for a reception at the New Zealand Residence. I also met with the Marshall Islands Ambassador to the UN.
- 14 A Parliamentary delegation comprising of Hon Todd McClay and Hon Jenny Salesa accompanied me to the Review Conference. Their presence was valuable in demonstrating the strong support across our Parliament for nuclear disarmament.
- 15 Unfortunately, the widely held pessimism on the prospect of an outcome being achieved from the Review Conference was borne out on the final day, when Russia decided to block adoption of a consensus outcome.
- 16 While the draft outcome blocked by Russia fell well below our national aspirations for nuclear disarmament, it did include several important elements from New Zealand's perspective, including on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and enhanced transparency and accountability mechanisms that would be built into the Treaty - efforts which New Zealand, along with Ireland, played a leading role in developing.
- 17 The constructive approach taken by the United States throughout the conference, including comments on the eve of its first day from President Biden in which he expressed willingness to negotiate a new arms control agreement with Russia and to enter into talks with China, was another positive to take from the conference.

### **Proactive release**

- 18 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 redactions as appropriate under the Official Information act (1982).

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Phil Twyford

Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control