



27 November 2023

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For action by

4 December 2023

s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

**BRIEFING** Overview Submission

**PURPOSE** This paper proposes s9(2)(g)(i) of New Zealand's foreign policy s9(2)(g)(i)

### Recommended referrals

|                                      |                    |                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Prime Minister                       | For information by | 15 December 2023 |
| Associate Minister of Climate Change | For information by | 15 December 2023 |
| Minister of Defence                  | For information by | 15 December 2023 |
| Minister for Trade                   | For information by | 15 December 2023 |
| Minister of Climate Change           | For information by | 15 December 2023 |
| Minister of State for Trade          | For information by | 15 December 2023 |

### Contact details

| NAME     | ROLE                          | DIVISION                      | WORK PHONE |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| Ben King | Deputy Chief Executive Policy | Deputy Chief Executive Policy | s9(2)(a)   |

### Minister's Office to complete

- |  |   |                                    |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved            | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted                | <input type="checkbox"/> Referred  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment     | <input type="checkbox"/> Declined             | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events | <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes |                                    |

**Comments**

s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

### Key points

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- New Zealand faces a challenging global outlook characterised by great powers bending or breaking the rules-based international system in ways that cut across our interests; where the impetus for trade and economic liberalisation is receding from its high water mark; where the impacts of climate change are real and with us now; and where our previously benign strategic environment is no more.
- It is increasingly difficult for countries like New Zealand to achieve our foreign policy goals of promoting a safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future for New Zealanders. We are having to work harder and smarter to build our international profile, our reach, and our presence; to ensure that we have a voice at the table and are not mere spectators of regional and global events; and to have agency and influence in relationships and on the issues where New Zealand interests are most acutely engaged.

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)

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s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

• s9(2)(g)(i)



Chris Seed  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

### Recommendations

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It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Agree** that in this challenging global and economic context prioritisation of New Zealand's foreign and trade policy effort is important to achieving outcomes that deliver security, prosperity and sustainability for New Zealanders; **Yes / No**
- 2 **Note** that <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup> **Yes / No**
- 3 **Note** that New Zealand benefits from collectively building out international law, rules and norms through the multilateral system; **Yes / No**
- 4 **Note** that there is value in also supporting mini-lateral and regional initiatives that advance our trade and security networks and capabilities;
- 5 **Note** that the Ministry is <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>
- 6 **Agree** that the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup> **Yes / No**
- 7 **Agree** to officials <sup>s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(g)(i)</sup> **Yes / No**
- 8 **Refer** a copy of this submission to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the Minister for Trade, and the Minister of State for Trade. **Yes / No**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date:        /        /

s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

### Report

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#### Challenging global outlook

1. As highlighted in the Ministry's *2023 Strategic Foreign Policy Assessment*, New Zealand faces a challenging global outlook, clouded by heightened strategic tension and considerable levels of disruption and risk. Many of the assumptions in relation to global and regional affairs that have underpinned New Zealand's foreign policy for a generation or more are under real and sustained pressure.
2. We can no longer rely on the durability of the international rules-based system, including continuing trade liberalisation that has been the foundation of trade and economic policies for decades. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

COVID-19 and its response has contributed to greater inequality and set back development progress in some parts of the world. These issues reduce the international system's capacity to tackle climate change and other human-induced environmental and biodiversity deterioration.

3. This dynamic backdrop evidences three "Big Shifts" occurring in the international order that will affect how New Zealand sees and shapes its place in the world:
  - From rules to power – a shift towards a multipolar world characterised by a period in which rules are more contested and relative power between states assumes a greater role in shaping international affairs.
  - From economics to security – a shift in which economic relationships are reassessed in light of increased military competition in a more securitised and less stable world.
  - From efficiency to resilience – a shift in the drivers of economic behaviour, where building greater resilience and addressing pressing social and sustainability issues become more prominent.
4. New Zealand's foreign policy approach needs to reflect and respond to this new strategic context. <sup>s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>
5. <sup>s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

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### New Zealand's response

6. Other countries are <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup> adapting their stances to address these rising challenges and seize new opportunities.

7. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

8.

9.

10.

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s6(a)

11.

12.

13. The **multilateral system** is essential for promoting collective security, furthering global development and providing stability through international law, rules and norms. When it works well, the processes and democratisation of power afforded by bodies such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) act as “shock absorbers” for small countries against geostrategic challenges that are challenging or impossible to tackle alone.

s6(a)

s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

14. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

15. On trade and sustainability issues, New Zealand has had success progressing issues regionally (through APEC) or plurilaterally (e.g. CPTPP) that we can further build on. The Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability (ACCTS) negotiations <sup>s6(a)</sup>

These initiatives feed into change at the WTO which still provides the basic rules small countries rely on <sup>s6(a)</sup>

### Maintaining global reach

16. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

17. <sup>s9(2)(g)(i)</sup>

18. <sup>s6(a)</sup>



s9(2)(g)(i)

## New Zealand's Foreign Policy

19. s9(2)(g)(i)

We have a professional cadre of agile diplomats with broad-based experience. And New Zealand has a reputation for offering constructive and innovative foreign, trade and development policy solutions which we can rely on to open doors with partners all around the world. s9(2)(g)(i)

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