

# Proactive Release

1/09/2023

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b><i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta</i></b>	CAB-23-MIN-0320
<b><i>Report to Cabinet: Minister of Foreign Affairs’ Visit to Brussels and Stockholm: 2-9 April 2023</i></b>	

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Key to OIA redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis.



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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*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.*

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta

**Portfolio**                      **Foreign Affairs**

On 24 July 2023, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Nanaia Mahuta under CAB-23-SUB-0320 on her travel, from 2 to 9 April 2023, to:

- 1        Brussels, Belgium to attend the NATO AP4 Summit;
- 2        Stockholm, Sweden for a bilateral visit.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Cabinet

## **Report to Cabinet: Minister of Foreign Affairs' Visit to Brussels and Stockholm: 2-9 April 2023**

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Brussels and Stockholm, 2-9 April 2023.

### **Report**

- 2 The focus of my visit to Brussels over 4-5 April was to attend the NATO AP4 (New Zealand, Australia, Japan and Korea) Summit and to make use of the summit as a platform for engaging with a range of NATO and AP4 partners. My bilateral visit to Sweden 6-7 April was an opportunity to meet the Foreign Minister Billström, build on people-to-people connections, including between Māori and Sámi.
- 3 My visit to Belgium and Sweden delivered on the following objectives:
  - Reiterate New Zealand remains in lock step with NATO and AP4 partners in supporting Ukraine's self-defence in response to Russia's illegal invasion.
  - Signal New Zealand's clear concern about the deteriorating geostrategic environment and the importance we place on working with our like-minded partners to provide collective security, uphold the international rules-based order, and maintain a strategic environment that is consistent with our shared interests and values.
  - Reiterate the importance that New Zealand places on our long-standing relationship with NATO as a valued and like-minded partner. This is an opportunity for high-level engagement with NATO as we work to renew our formal bilateral partnership agreement this year <sup>s6(a)</sup>
  - Continue to deepen our values-based partnership with Sweden and thank Sweden for its steadfast support for the NZ-EU Free Trade Agreement, including in the context of the likely signature by the Prime Minister in July (after the end of Sweden's Presidency).
  - Reinforce the close connections and shared values between Sweden and New Zealand, including by strengthening the relationship between Māori and Sámi.

### **Brussels: 3-5 April**

- 4 The centrepiece of my time in Brussels was to participate in the NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting, together with NATO Partner Foreign Ministers from Australia, Japan, Korea (AP4) and the EU. The purpose of the visit was to signal Aotearoa New Zealand's concern about the deteriorating global geostrategic environment and to reinforce our intention to work with likeminded partners to uphold a strategic landscape that is consistent with our shared values and interests.
- 5 The dominant message from the meeting was that <sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup>
- 6 The theme of *whanaungatanga* (interconnectedness) – between Ukraine, Europe and the Indo-Pacific, and between past, present and potential conflicts – echoed strongly throughout the visit. Overall, the visit served as an opportunity to strengthen key NATO and EU relationships ahead of the NATO Leaders' Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania in July.
- 7 NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg met with the four Indo Pacific representatives, and I was honoured with the second speaking spot in the NATO meeting – immediately after Secretary Blinken. My intervention focused on Aotearoa New Zealand's determination to support the rules-based international system and the implications of the "three shifts" (rules to power, economics to security, and efficiency to resilience).
- 8 I also participated in a public think tank event with the European Policy Centre, and conducted a busy programme of bilateral engagements with ministerial counterparts, including key meetings with US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, and the German, Norwegian, Slovenian, Spanish and Ukrainian Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

#### Sweden: 6-7 April

- 9 The focus of my short visit to Stockholm was a lunch hosted by Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs Billström, at which <sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup> <sub>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sub> were key topics of discussion.
- 10 Sweden emphasised the importance of interregional collaboration on these issues by likeminded countries. In that context, they encouraged high-level New Zealand attendance at the Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum Sweden subsequently co-hosted with the EU on 13 May (note: NZ participated at Ambassador level). <sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup>
- 11 I also met with Sámi representatives to exchange perspectives on indigenous issues. The discussion highlighted the long history and importance of Māori and Sámi interaction, and collaboration in multilateral fora.

12 s6(a), s6(b)(i)

## **Proactive Release**

13 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.

## **Recommendations**

The Minister of Foreign Affairs recommends that Cabinet:

1. note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minita Take Aorere / Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Minister of Foreign Affairs