

Proactive Release

Date: 1 September 2023

The following Cabinet paper has been proactively released by the Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth

Title	Reference
Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Rino Tirikatene	CAB-23-MIN-0323
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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Rino Tirikatene

Portfolio Trade and Export Growth

On 24 July 2023, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Rino Tirikatene under CAB-23-SUB-0323 on his travel, from 6 to 10 June 2023, to Singapore for bilateral discussions.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth

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Office of the Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Rino Tirikatene

1. I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Singapore from 6 – 10 June 2023.

Report

2. The focus of my visit was to meet with Singapore's Minister of State for Trade and Industry Alvin Tan, to advance New Zealand's trade and export growth interests in areas including supply chain resilience, digital economy and green economy initiatives. This work falls within the Singapore New Zealand Enhanced Partnership Framework, established by former Prime Minister Ardern and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in 2019 (updated in 2022).

3. Discussions focused on the trade and economic strengths of the bilateral relationship, and the opportunities and challenges facing both economies.

4. This included Singapore's domestic context as a hub in Asia for trade, finance and people flows, and also, as it continues to advance its economy, Singapore's labour, carbon and land constraints. To address some of these constraints, Singapore is working to decarbonise its economy, including through expanding its financial centre offerings to carbon credits and seeking greener sources of energy. It has also implemented a "30 by 30 Grow Local" food initiative which seeks to sustainably produce 30% of Singapore's nutritional needs by 2030.

5. This provided a natural opportunity to speak to the strength and capability of the Māori economy, particularly in the primary sector where there is significant scope for the Māori asset base. Minister Tan extended an invitation for Māori business to attend upcoming Singapore-based events in Energy, Fintech and Agri-Food Technology, with a view to using Singapore as a platform to increase Māori business exposure to the ASEAN market.

6. During the meeting, we also discussed our regional partnerships on the ASEAN Australia New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), the upcoming AANZFTA Upgrade, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), as well as ongoing negotiations on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).

7. On CPTPP, we discussed New Zealand's chairing of the Ministerial Commission in July, my role as New Zealand's ministerial representative, and the role of the Chair on next steps for the pipeline of aspirants. We were also able to confirm our mutual agreement on the importance of maintaining a "high bar" for accession processes.

8. An additional focus of my visit was leading a Māori Aquaculture (Land-Based) Investment Feasibility Tour. This supported relationship building between key Māori exporters, iwi, and investors, as well as Singapore agencies and technology entities. It enabled participants to develop an understanding of recent technological advancements in land-based aquaculture, and identify innovative sustainable practices suitable for adaption to the New Zealand context.

9. Comprising of eight senior Māori business representatives, over the course of the three-day programme, the Study Tour observed new technologies from vertical fish farming (and the technology underpinning it); a floating solar farm (which produces 60WMP, enough to power 16,000 four-room households); and a water processing facility (that can process both waste water and grey water, and now accounts for more than 30% of Singapore's current water needs).

10. The tour also participated in presentations from the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), which undertake research that advances scientific discovery, technological innovation, and economic growth in Singapore, including on agri-food innovation; The National Environmental Research Institute at the National University of Singapore; and The Separation Technologies and Applied Research and Translation Centre at Nanyang Technological University.

11. I also attended events to increase the visibility for women-led New Zealand businesses with an interest in the Singapore market, including a session with ANZ's Head of Asia Research, Khoo Goh, an ANZ networking event and an InvestHer Showcase. Held overseas for the first time, InvestHER is designed to promote and support women led New Zealand businesses, with the Showcase event offering participants a platform to grow their businesses by pitching to investors.

12. Discussions with Singapore have remained ongoing since the visit, including following up on an invitation to share and compare industry transformation plans, and assessing bilateral supply chain cooperation opportunities, such as the specifics of Singapore's food strategy needs that might reconcile with New Zealand and Māori producers offerings. Outcomes which further strengthen business-to-business relationships between the two countries, and address the opportunities and challenges facing both countries.

13. My visit achieved its primary purpose of signalling to Singapore the value we place on the relationship, and the willingness of New Zealand exporters and the Māori economy to partner with Singaporean counterparts. It is clear we would not have been able to make the progress we have for Māori business leaders and entrepreneurs without the added mana of Ministerial involvement.

Proactive release

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

Recommendation

20 I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Rino Tirikatene

Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth

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