

Proactive Release

Due for Publication: 31 October 2023

The following Cabinet paper has been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Title	Reference
Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta	CAB-23-MIN-0444
Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta: New York and Washington D.C., United States – 19-28 September 2023	

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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.

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Portfolio Foreign Affairs

On 18 September 2023, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Nanaia Mahuta from New Zealand, from 19 to 28 September 2023 to travel to the United States of America to attend the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, and the US-Pacific Summit in Washington D.C.;
- 2 **agreed** that she be accompanied by one member of staff;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$84,390.45 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **noted** that she will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose costs will be met by their department;
- 5 **agreed** that in her absence Hon David Parker act as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

~~In Confidence~~

Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta: New York and Washington D.C., United States – 19-28 September 2023

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to the United States to lead Aotearoa New Zealand's delegation to the high-level week segment of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York from 19-23 September 2023, and to represent Aotearoa New Zealand at the US-Pacific Summit to be held in Washington D.C. on 25-26 September.
- 2 Prime Minister Chris Hipkins has approved this travel in-principle.

Executive Summary

- 3 UNGA High-Level Week provides an annual opportunity to advance Aotearoa New Zealand's foreign policy interests through engagement with political and other global leaders and to reaffirm Aotearoa New Zealand's strong commitment to the multilateral system. While in New York, I intend to deliver Aotearoa New Zealand's National Statement during the UNGA General Debate, represent Aotearoa New Zealand in a range of high-level meetings and side events including the signing of the recent UN Global Oceans Treaty on High Seas Biodiversity, and hold bilateral meetings with key counterparts.
- 4 The US-Pacific Summit will be hosted by US President Biden 25-26 September. It follows an initial US Summit hosted for Pacific Leaders in September 2022, as well as a more recent US Summit for Pacific Leaders held in Port Moresby in May 2023. The US is issuing invitations to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, including Aotearoa New Zealand. It is expected that other Pacific Islands Forum members will be represented by either Leaders or by Foreign Ministers.

Programme and Objectives: UNGA, New York

- 5 As part of my substantive programme in New York from 20 – 23 September 2023, I intend to accomplish the following:
 - Attend the opening of the UNGA General Debate, and the delivery of Aotearoa New Zealand's National Statement that sets out our priorities in the multilateral system;
 - Sign the United Nations Global Oceans Treaty on High Seas Biodiversity;
 - Attend key high-level meetings and summits, including the High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, the Climate Ambition Summit, the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting, and the Pacific

Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General;

- Host two side events, on the Impact of Contemporary Security Situations on Women and Girls, and an Indigenous Likemindeds' Roundtable;
- Attend a number of other key side events, including a high-level dialogue on the Canadian Initiative on Arbitrary Detention and other events relating to the key priority areas of the Pacific, women, and Indigenous inclusion at the United Nations;
- Hold bilateral meetings with counterparts in the margins of these engagements, which will provide an opportunity to further important relationships particularly with Ministers whom I have not recently had the chance to engage; and
- Stakeholder and community outreach in New York.

6 My participation in UNGA78 would deliver on the following objectives:

- Demonstrate Aotearoa New Zealand's commitment to international rules based system and multilateralism;
- Support progress on global challenges – particularly climate change, sustainable development, environmental degradation, human rights, global health security, nuclear disarmament, and peace and security;
- Celebrate recent achievements of the United Nations system, including the recent conclusion of the Global Oceans Treaty on High Seas Biodiversity;
- Secure and reaffirm important relationships with world leaders, key partnerships and alliances, including by engaging in bilateral and regional meetings;
- Progress key foreign policy interests, including by amplifying the Pacific voice and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) voices, and focusing on gender and Indigenous issues at other side events.

Programme and Objectives: US-Pacific Summit, Washington D.C.

7 While details for the agenda for the Summit are yet to be confirmed by the United States, the programme is likely to include:

- On Sunday 24 September, coordinated transport from New York and protocol events in both Baltimore and Washington D.C.;
- On Monday 25 September, a lunch and meeting with President Biden, a briefing from the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, and

a dinner hosted by Secretary of State Blinken and US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield;

- On Tuesday 26 September, engagement with organisations and a lunch with Congress on Capitol Hill.

8 Aotearoa New Zealand's participation in US-led Summits with Pacific Islands Forum members highlights the importance of regional engagement and underlines the message that New Zealand is in and of the Pacific. Aotearoa New Zealand's participation also affirms our ^{s6(a)} engagement with Pacific Island countries.

9 My specific objectives are to:

- Demonstrate Aotearoa New Zealand's support for greater US high-level engagement in the region. This includes reinforcing the importance of regional architecture to achieve Pacific priorities, and the value of US' engagement in the region;
- Further embed Aotearoa New Zealand's Pacific Resilience Approach. The Cabinet-mandated approach where New Zealand works in partnership with Pacific countries to build individual and regional resilience to shared challenges. The US provides important support for this work through its Pacific engagement;
- Build personal relationships with Leaders in attendance at the US-Pacific Summit. Meetings with the US Administration and Pacific Islands Forum Leaders will allow Aotearoa New Zealand to reinforce our value as a reliable partner in the region. ^{s6(a)}

Travel

10 If my travel is approved, I will depart Auckland on Tuesday 19 September. The substantive elements of my visit to New York will take place between Wednesday 20 – Saturday 23 September. I would then travel onwards to Washington D.C. on Sunday 24 September for the US-Pacific Summit events. I intend to return to New Zealand on Tuesday 26 September, arriving into Auckland on Thursday 28 September.

Ministerial Party

11 I propose to be accompanied by one staff member paid for by ministerial resources. I will also be accompanied by officials whose costs will be met by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Estimated Costs

12 The estimated costs for this travel are:

	Cost and Comment	Total
Flights	Minister + one staff member @ NZ\$20,479 per person	NZD 40,958
Accommodation	<p><u>New York: Westgate Hotel Grand Central</u> Minister (suite) 7x nights @ NZ\$1455/night (US\$899) Total NZD 10,185</p> <p>Standard room 7x nights @ NZ\$1026/night (US\$615) Total NZD 7,182</p> <p>Note that these rooms were booked prior to confirmation of travel due to the need to secure accommodation in New York close to the United Nations.</p> <p><u>Washington D.C.: St Gregory Hotel (TBC)</u> Minister and official: standard rooms 2x nights @ NZ\$620/night (US\$350) Total NZD 2480</p>	NZD 19,847
Transportation / Airport facilitation	<p><u>New York</u> Airport and train transfers: US\$150 per person, per movement Total US\$600 (NZ\$970) for Minister + staff member Supplementary van rental: US\$500 (NZ\$808) Total NZD 1,778</p> <p><u>Washington D.C.</u> Miscellaneous transport costs NZ\$500</p>	NZD 2,278
Hospitality / events	<u>New York only</u> NZD 7,000	NZD 7,000
Gifts	Contingency gifts if required	NZD 500
Other meals miscellaneous	MFAT per diem rates for business travel: <u>New York and Washington D.C.</u>	NZD 2,800

	US\$125/day (NZ\$200) @ 7 days NZD 1,400 per person NZD 2,800	
Subtotal		NZD 73,383
Contingency 15%		NZD 11,007.45
Total		NZD 84,390.45

Acting Ministers

- 13 If my travel is approved, I propose that Hon David Parker act as Minister for my Foreign Affairs and Disarmament and Arms Control portfolios.

Recommendations

- 14 I recommend that Cabinet:
- 1 Authorise my absence from New Zealand from 19 – 28 September to travel to the United States, to attend the high level week segment of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York from 20 – 23 September and the US-Pacific Summit in Washington D.C. from 24 – 26 September.
 - 2 Agree that I will be accompanied by a member of my staff paid for by ministerial services.
 - 3 Note that I will be accompanied by officials whose costs will be met the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
 - 4 Approve the expenditure of \$84,390.45 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs, Members of the Executive – Travel.
 - 5 Agree that Hon David Parker will be Acting Minister in my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere