

# Proactive Release

Statutory Publication Date  
25/09/2023

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister for Trade and Export Growth

<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b><i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O’Connor</i></b>	CAB-23-MIN-0364
<b><i>Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O’Connor</i></b>	

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- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

**Portfolio**                      **Trade and Export Growth**

On 14 August 2023, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Damien O'Connor under CAB-23-SUB-0364 on his travel, from 24 to 29 May 2023, to Detroit, United States of America, to attend the meeting of APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, host a meeting of Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership Ministers, and attend an Indo-Pacific Economic Framework ministerial meeting.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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Office of the Minister for Trade and Export Growth

Chair, Cabinet

## **Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor**

1 I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to the United States (US) from 24-29 May 2023.

### **Report**

2 The focus of my visit was the meeting of APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT) in Detroit. I also hosted a meeting of Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) Ministers, and an Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) ministerial meeting, at which substantial conclusion of the IPEF Supply Chains Agreement was announced.

3 My travel was an opportunity to advance a range of New Zealand's core trade interests, as outlined to the Prime Minister in the prioritisation exercise earlier this year. This included work to improve on existing trade agreements such as CPTPP, to conclude the supply chains pillar of IPEF, and to uphold rules-based international trading systems including through the WTO and APEC.

4 The plenary discussions at the APEC MRT focused on sustainability and inclusion as well as how APEC could support the multilateral trading system. With the WTO Director-General present, Trade Ministers presented a strong case to reinvigorate and reform the WTO, bring into force a fully functioning dispute resolution system, while also recognising the importance of sustainability and inclusion in trade – which the Director-General described as the “most constructive conversations she had heard since she joined the WTO”.

5 Because of an inability to reach consensus on a paragraph referring to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, an MRT Joint Statement was not able to be adopted, and a Chair's Statement released instead. The Chair's Statement nonetheless captured the substance of outputs that had been agreed by consensus, which reflected most of the priorities New Zealand had sought (including a reference to Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform, which required intense negotiating and coalition building by New Zealand).

s6(a)

s6(a)

7 In the margins of MRT, I was able to usefully transact a range of business in a large programme of bilateral meetings with my counterparts from Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia (Ministers Hartarto and Hasan), Japan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, and the US. I also met with Executive Director Government Affairs for the Ford Motor Company International Markets Group, Simonetta Verdi to discuss New Zealand's efforts to encourage importation of low emission EVs and the motor industry's corresponding efforts to adapt to a lower-emissions trajectory.

8 I attended several events that provided an opportunity for outreach or messaging to the US business community and other stakeholders, including a well-attended and interactive discussion led by US Trade Representative Katherine Tai on the US' 'worker-centric' approach to trade policy and negotiations.

9 I hosted a CPTPP Ministers' breakfast meeting on 26 May. This enabled me to outline New Zealand's plans and priorities for the CPTPP Ministerial Commission subsequently hosted in Auckland in July. It further allowed Ministers to have a free and frank in person discussion <sup>s6(a)</sup>

10 I also participated in a meeting of Digital Economy Partnership Arrangement (DEPA) Ministers (New Zealand, Chile, Singapore) together with China's Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao, to discuss progress with China's bid to accede to DEPA. This allowed some useful messages to be delivered regarding the requirement for any applicants to meet and uphold the DEPA's high standards, to acknowledge work done to date on China's accession, <sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup>

11 At the IPEF Ministerial meeting on 27 May, Ministers announced the substantial conclusion of the Supply Chains Agreement - one of four pillars being negotiated within the IPEF initiative launched in September 2022. The Supply Chains Agreement puts in place a range of measures to improve the resilience, efficiency, productivity, sustainability, transparency, diversification, security, fairness, and inclusivity of supply chains involving IPEF countries. Negotiations on the remaining pillars continue <sup>s9(2)(j)</sup>

### **Proactive release**

15 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**

16 I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Damien O'Connor

Minister for Trade and Export Growth

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