

Proactive Release

3/4/2024

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

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report of the Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee: Period Ended 16 February 2024</i>	CAB-24-MIN-0033
<i>Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee – Minute of Decision – New Zealand’s Foreign Policy</i>	FPS-24-MIN-0002
<i>New Zealand’s Foreign Policy</i>	

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 OIA). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the OIA 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 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
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.



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.

Report of the Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee: Period Ended 16 February 2024

On 19 February 2024, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee for the period ended 16 February 2024:

FPS-24-MIN-0002 ^{s9(2)(g)(i)} **New Zealand's Foreign Policy** CONFIRMED
Portfolio: Foreign Affairs

Diana Hawker
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

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Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee

Minute of Decision

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s9(2)(g)(i)

New Zealand's Foreign Policy

Portfolio Foreign Affairs

On 13 February 2024, the Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee:

- 1 **noted** that New Zealand faces a challenging global outlook characterised by three big shifts:
 - 1.1 from rules to power;
 - 1.2 from economics to security;
 - 1.3 from efficiency to resilience;
- 2 **noted** that in this context, it is increasingly difficult to achieve the Government’s foreign policy goals of promoting a safer, more prosperous, and more sustainable future for New Zealanders, ^{s6(a)}
- 3 **noted** that other countries are ^{s6(a)} adapting their stances to address the rising challenges and seize new opportunities, ^{s6(a)}
- 4 **agreed** to align diplomatic resources, and guide broader NZ Inc. effort, behind ^{s9(2)(g)(i)} New Zealand’s foreign policy ^{s6(a)}

5 ^{s6(a)}

6 ^{s6(a)}

7 ^{s6(a)}

8 s6(a)

9 s6(a)

10 s6(a)

11 s6(a)

12 **agreed** to adopt a coordinated and mutually supportive approach across Ministers and NZ Inc. to ensure efficient and effective delivery of this foreign policy ^{s9(2)(g)(i)} while recognising Ministers and agencies have their own priorities that shape their international engagement.

Jenny Vickers
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Rt Hon Winston Peters (Chair)
Hon David Seymour
Hon Nicola Willis
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Judith Collins
Hon Mark Mitchell
Hon Todd McClay

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Officials Committee for FPS

Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Cabinet Foreign Policy and National Security Committee

^{s9(2)(g)(i)}

NEW ZEALAND'S FOREIGN POLICY

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks agreement to align our diplomatic resources, and guide broader NZ Inc. effort, behind ^{s9(2)(g)(i)} New Zealand's foreign policy ^{s6(a)}

Relation to Government Priorities

- 2 The Speech from the Throne recognised that to achieve our shared ambitions the Coalition Government should not focus its efforts only within New Zealand's borders. In order for New Zealand to seize the opportunities to make more of its potential and to manage the risks in an increasingly complex and contested world, we require an active foreign, defence and trade policy agenda:
 - that enhances our security;
 - that signals that New Zealand is open for business and outwardly engaged;
 - that makes us a participant in major global and regional developments, not a spectator; and
 - that sees us working tirelessly to grow trade and prosperity.

Executive Summary

- 3 New Zealand's foreign policy approach needs to reflect and respond to the challenging strategic context we find ourselves in. ^{s6(a)}

Other countries are ^{s6(a)} adapting their stances to address the rising challenges and seize new opportunities, ^{s6(a)}

- 4 ^{s6(a)}

s6(a)

- 5 The work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade – with its global network of relationships – will be critical to delivering on the above goals. But a coordinated and mutually supportive approach across Ministers and NZ Inc. will ensure that the Government is delivering efficiently and being effective in achieving a safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future for New Zealanders. A focussed set of foreign policy goals will help to guide broader NZ Inc efforts, while recognising agencies and Ministers have their own priorities that also inform their international engagement.

Background

- 6 Recent assessments of the strategic global environment by New Zealand agencies have highlighted a challenging global outlook, clouded by heightened strategic tension and

considerable levels of disruption and risk.¹ 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.

- 7 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.^{s6(a)}

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

- 8 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; and
 - **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.

Analysis

Focusing New Zealand's Response to the Big Shifts

- 9 As progress in this intensely disrupted environment becomes harder across the board, prioritisation will be increasingly important.^{s6(a)}

10 ^{s6(a)}

¹ Relevant 2023 assessments and Government policy papers include: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2023 Strategic Foreign Policy Assessment; the NZSIS Threat Environment Report; the National Security Strategy; and the Defence Policy and Strategy Statement.

s6(a)

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s6(a)

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s6(a)

- 18 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 geopolitical challenges that are challenging or impossible to tackle alone.^{s6(a)}

s6(a)

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s6(a)

Next Steps

- 23 The work and decisions of this Cabinet committee going forward should reflect the priorities outlined in this paper. We should be spending most of our time addressing issues or assessing new initiatives that have a bearing on New Zealand's national interest and are of significance to the health of our relationships with key partners.
- 24 The set of actions needed to achieve each of the goals, and how impact will be measured, will require further elaboration,^{s6(a)}

Financial Implications

- 25 An energetic, high intensity foreign, defence and trade policy will require prioritisation of New Zealand's diplomatic resources, and a coordinated and mutually supportive approach across Ministers and NZ Inc.
- 26 Projecting New Zealand's interests and values offshore may at times require additional frontline investment by agencies in order to maximise opportunities and manage the risks needed to deliver on the Coalition Government's ambition.^{s6(a)}

Other Implications

- 27 There are no legislative, population, climate change, cost of living, human rights, or external contractor implications arising from this paper.

Consultation

- 28 This paper was consulted with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Customs, the New Zealand Defence Force, the Ministry of Defence, the Treasury and the New Zealand Intelligence Community. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has been informed.

Proactive Release

- 29 There are grounds for withholding the release of large sections of this Cabinet paper under 6(a) given the potential of its content to prejudice the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.

Recommendations

The Minister of Foreign Affairs recommends that the Committee:

- 1 note that New Zealand faces a challenging global outlook characterised by three Big Shifts:
 - from rules to power;
 - from economics to security; and
 - from efficiency to resilience.
- 2 note that in this context it is increasingly difficult to achieve our foreign policy goals of promoting a safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future for New Zealanders,^{s6(a)}
- 3 note that other countries are already adapting their stances to address the rising challenges and seize new opportunities, leaving New Zealand behind;
- 4 agree to align our diplomatic resources,^{s6(a)} and guide broader NZ Inc. effort, behind a New Zealand's foreign policy^{s6(a)}

5 ^{s6(a)}

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^{s6(a)}

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12 agree to adopt a coordinated and mutually supportive approach across Ministers and NZ Inc. to ensure efficient and effective delivery of this foreign policy^{s6(a)} while recognising Ministers and agencies have their own priorities that shape their international engagement.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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