

25 July 2024

195 Lambton Quay
Private Bag 18-901
Wellington 6160
New Zealand

Personal details removed for
proactive release

T +64 4 439 8000
F +64 4 472 9596

OIA 29458

Personal details removed for proactive release

We refer to your request to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), partially transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) on 13 June 2024, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

all written advice, briefings, aides-memoire, notes, and reports, provided for and arising from, an overseas trip to Niue and Fiji by Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, from 4 June 2024 to 7 June 2024.

On 11 July 2024, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 13 working days because responding to your request necessitated the review of a large quantity of information, and due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1) of the OIA refers).

On 26 June 2024 we contacted you seeking your agreement to refine your request to be for:

1. The overview of the Prime Minister's trip to Niue and Fiji 4-7 June 2024.
2. The overall visit objectives for the Prime Minister's trip to Niue and Fiji 4-7 June 2024.
3. The specific visit objectives for the Prime Minister's trip to Niue.
4. The specific visit objectives for the Prime Minister's trip to Fiji.
5. The formal report on the Prime Minister's trip to Niue.
6. The formal report on the Prime Minister's trip to Fiji.

On 3 July 2024, you agreed to this refinement.

The information relevant to your request is attached. We have withheld some information under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b)(i) and 6(b)(ii): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 7(b)(i) and 7(b)(iii): to avoid prejudicing the relations between any of the Governments of New Zealand; and the self-governing State of Niue; and
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, we have identified no public interest in releasing the information that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Visit Overview and Objectives

The Pacific region: A Strategic Priority

Your visit to two of New Zealand's closest Pacific partners, Niue and Fiji, sends a clear message about the priority the Government places on the Pacific region.

2. In line with the Foreign Policy Reset, the Government is prioritising the Pacific through sustained and comprehensive focus and engagement. ^{s6(a)}

3. ^{s6(a)}

4. This approach also recognises the importance of Pacific countries as economic partners, including with opportunities for New Zealand businesses – something that is often overlooked. The Pacific diaspora in New Zealand is engaged and interested in how the government manages its relationships with counterpart Pacific governments.

5. We recommend that the key objectives for your visit be:

- To celebrate Niue's 50th anniversary of self-government in free association with New Zealand, and through that, reinforce our special and enduring role in the region;
- To engage on critical issues impacting the region with leaders in Niue and Fiji, and the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum, and send a strong signal about your Government's orientation towards the Pacific;
- To explore opportunities for New Zealand businesses in the Pacific and highlight the importance of our economic links; and
- To reinforce, through targeted announcements, the important role the New Zealand International Development Cooperation programme plays in supporting Niue and Fiji to deliver on long-term social and economic goals.

*Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia & Pacific Polynesia and French Pacific Divisions
May 2024*

Key Visit Messages

The below are proposed high level messages that can be woven through all engagements, including official meetings, speeches, media interviews, events and deliverables. Country-specific 'stump speech' points to be used in Niue and Fiji are included in Master Brief Volumes 2 and 3.

Key Visit Messages

- Niue and Fiji are two of New Zealand's closest partners in the Pacific.
- New Zealand is committed to sustaining deeper, and more comprehensive relationships with Pacific partners; relationships underlined by shared interests and values, and meaningful engagement on the issues that matter most to Pacific countries.
- This is enhanced by our own strong Pacific identity – New Zealand is home to over 380,000 people of Pacific-origin, and more than 8% of our population identify as being of Pacific origin.
- New Zealand plays an important role in supporting Pacific partners to meet their respective development aspirations in areas including health, economic resilience, climate and disaster resilience, security, and governance. We invest over 60% of our development funding in the region.
- Strengthening New Zealand's economic links in, and with, the Pacific will further enhance our shared resilience. We want to explore more pathways for trade to lift economic growth.
- The Pacific is becoming increasingly contested and complex, and this visit is an opportunity to reaffirm New Zealand's position as a close and trusted partner.
- It is an opportunity to exchange views with Pacific leaders on their priorities, and on shared approaches to responding to regional and geopolitical challenges.

*Communications and Media Division
May 2024*

Niue Overview and Objectives

Niue: A special constitutional partner

New Zealand has a constitutional relationship with Niue and other Realm partners. This relationship is fundamentally different from other Pacific relationships and requires a different level of management and sustained effort. Our relationship is underpinned not only by our constitutional obligations and shared citizenship, but also our cultural connections, the interdependence of our systems and the reliance Niue has on New Zealand as its closest partner.

2. Your visit comes at a significant moment as Niue marks 50 years of self-government in free association with New Zealand during 2024. For Niue this anniversary celebrates its history and its journey of self-government, but it is also a milestone in our bilateral relationship. Your visit early in the anniversary year, and the first by a New Zealand Prime Minister in six years, demonstrates New Zealand's special status as Niue's constitutional partner.

3. Our bilateral relationship with Niue is warm and in great shape. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s9(2)(g)(i)

Given the interconnectedness of our societies, (e.g. Niue uses NCEA and relies on New Zealand for the majority of its tertiary healthcare), and the breadth of our support to all sectors, New Zealand is Niue's partner of first thought and choice.

4. New Zealand provides critical annual budget support, and has supported construction of much of Niue's significant infrastructure over the last 50 years (including, recently, the airport runway resurfacing) s6(a), s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

5. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

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6. Your visit to Niue will centre on the following objectives:

- To celebrate Niue's 50th anniversary year and s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii) through making Niue your first Pacific country visit (not counting Australia) and demonstrating respect for Niue's culture and people through attendance at the King's Birthday Reception and village lunch;
- To deliver key messages about New Zealand's expectations at leader level, through your official meeting with Premier Tagelagi s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

To emphasise New Zealand's commitment to supporting economic, environmental, and cultural resilience in Niue, including through visiting New Zealand-funded initiatives, officially opening the airport runway; and

- To demonstrate New Zealand's point of difference and respect for the culture by how we engage s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s9(2)(g)(i)

7. The key deliverables from your visit to Niue will include:

- A Joint Statement to be released with Premier Tagelagi during your visit which reaffirms our position as Niue's critical partner and speaks to our shared priorities and relevant announcements, and;
- Agreement with Premier Tagelagi to issue a political statement later this year which elevates the relationship and speaks to what it means after 50 years.

*Polynesia and French Pacific Division
May 2024*

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Fiji Overview and Objectives

Fiji: a regional leader and influential partner for New Zealand

Fiji receives a steady stream of senior ministerial visits. The most recent official visit by a New Zealand Prime Minister was for the Pacific Islands Forum in July 2022.

2. s6(a)

3. Fiji is a critical partner for New Zealand. It plays an important regional leadership role and is a hub for its neighbours. It is one of the region's largest economies s6(a)
By prioritising Fiji in your first Pacific trip, you are signalling that New Zealand recognises the importance of this partnership. The removal of transit visas for Fijians is another demonstration of this.

4. The Fiji-New Zealand bilateral relationship is warm and full of potential – built by concerted effort (on both sides) in recent years after a rift following Fiji's 2006 military coup. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

5. Critical to this development is our economic relationship with Fiji. Fiji is focussed on enhancing trade ties with New Zealand – evidenced by the first trade mission of the new Fiji Government being to Auckland and Wellington in March 2023. Two-way trade with New Zealand already sits at NZ \$1.3 billion for the year ended December 2023 (favouring New Zealand exports by over NZ\$300 million). This is a significant growth from the previous year – and resulted in Fiji being our 24th largest trading partner overall, and our largest partner in the Pacific.

6. With a thriving tourism industry, relatively high growth and a diverse economy by regional standards, there are increasing opportunities for New Zealand businesses. s6(a)

7. The programme elements on the Fiji leg reflect the protocols of a formal State visit, provide opportunities to build relationships with key decision-makers in Fiji and highlight economic opportunities. You will meet with Fiji Prime Minister Hon Sitiveni Rabuka and other senior Ministers, Fiji's President Ratu Wiliame Katonivere and the newly-appointed Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Baron Waqa. You will visit the University of the South Pacific – a critical regional institution which has educated many political and business leaders from across the Pacific.

8. In Nadi, you will provide the keynote address at a joint Fiji-New Zealand Business Council conference and meet key private sector players. You will visit important New Zealand-linked businesses operating out of Fiji and attend a Fiji-New Zealand joint venture signing.

9. Your visit to Fiji has been framed around the following objectives:

- Reinforce New Zealand as a natural partner for Fiji. Reciprocate warmth and demonstrate the importance the Government places on issues that matter to Fiji and other Pacific Island countries, including climate change and regional security.
- Deepen the trade and economic relationship with Fiji, by highlighting the economic opportunities in Fiji for New Zealand businesses and encouraging the Fiji Government to join the PACER Plus regional trade and development agreement.

s9(2)(g) (i)

Highlight the important role the New Zealand International Development Cooperation programme plays in supporting Fiji to deliver on its long-term goals.

s6(a)

*Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division
May 2024*

From: NIUE
To: PACPF; PACMM; PACREG; ALL POSTS (FM); ...POLICY DIVISIONS; CEO; DCE; DCE PO; DS AAG; DS EMA; DS MLG; DS PDG; DS TEG; s6(a) FM.DPMC (Seemail); FM.DPMC (FPA) (Seemail); FM.Education Ministry (Seemail); FM.P/S MFA (Seemail); FM.P/S Associate MFA (Seemail); FM.Defence (Seemail); DEVECO; AMER; FM.P/S Police (Seemail); FM.Police (Seemail); FM.Government House (Seemail)
Cc: NIUE
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: NIUE: PRIME MINISTER LUXON'S VISIT TO NIUE – 3-4 JUNE 2024
Date: Saturday, 15 June 2024 7:20:40 am
Attachments: NZ - Niue Joint Statement - 4 June 2024_FINAL.pdf
5 June 2024 - RNZ article Joint Press Conference.pdf
5 June 2024 - Press Release.pdf

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ĀPITI HANGA – ATTACHMENTS

- Joint Niue-New Zealand Statement from Premier Tagelagi and Prime Minister Luxon
- RNZ article (5 June) following Press Conference
- PM Press release (5 June) attaching Joint Statement

SUMMARY

In his first travel to the Pacific, Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, accompanied by Mrs Amanda Luxon visited Niue on 3 and 4 June 2024. From the welcome formalities at the airport on arrival, including the standout *takalo* (formal challenge), the King's Birthday Reception, the village lunch and concluding with the official opening of the recently resurfaced airport runway, Niue did itself proud.

The visit was an opportunity to send clear messages about our expectations of how we work together as Realm partners. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

The Prime Minister departed Niue with an understanding of the ambitions and challenges that are unique to Niue.

In recognition of Niue's 50th anniversary of self-government in free association with New Zealand, the Prime Minister made a \$20.5 million renewable energy announcement and committed NZD 2 million to the Niue and Ocean Wide Trust (NOW) which supports long term ocean conservation.

HOHENGANGA – ACTION

- **All – For information.**
- **DEVECO (Murison)** – s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii) and action to follow up while in country in the coming weeks.
- s6(a)

PURONGO – REPORT

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, accompanied by Mrs Amanda Luxon visited Niue from 3 to and 4 June. The Prime Minister's visit to Niue centred on the following objectives:

- To celebrate Niue's 50th anniversary year and consolidate New Zealand's status as Niue's primary partner, including making announcements to commemorate this important milestone;
- To deliver key messages about New Zealand's expectations at leader level, including releasing a Leaders' Joint Statement;
- To emphasise New Zealand's commitment to supporting economic,

environmental, and cultural resilience in Niue; and

- iv. To demonstrate New Zealand's point of difference and respect for Niue culture by how we engage.

2. This was the Prime Minister's first visit to the Pacific since becoming Prime Minister. It was also the first occasion in which Mrs Luxon has accompanied the Prime Minister on an overseas visit programme. Niue's Premier, Hon Dalton Tagelagi, took an active interest in the planning and structure of the visit including attending the rehearsals.

Programme elements spotlighted our constitutional relationship...

3. The Prime Minister was welcomed upon arrival by a *takalo* (a welcoming ceremony) at the airport, and attended a King's Birthday Reception at the New Zealand Official Residence in the evening. The Reception was co-hosted with Premier Tagelagi, and provided an early opportunity to highlight the value New Zealand places on the relationship with Niue.

4. During remarks at the Reception, Premier Tagelagi reflected on Niue's journey over the last 50 years and signalled the importance of Niue continuing to look forward. Niue's Speaker, Hima Douglas, also delivered poignant remarks on the breadth of Niue's relationship with New Zealand and put into context the connections with New Zealand through people-to-people links, political connections and economic support.

5. The Prime Minister and Mrs Luxon also visited the *Fale Fono II* (Parliament building), Niue Assembly Chamber, the following day. He was met by Speaker Douglas and toured the Chamber which featured the Vice Regal Chair donated by New Zealand (during an April visit by the New Zealand Speaker). This was followed by a brief tour of *Fale Tau Taoga Niue*, the Museum, where the Prime Minister was struck by Niue's involvement in the Great War, reminding of Niue's early commitment to supporting New Zealand.

...and illustrated New Zealand's point of difference in 'how' we engage.

6. Adverse conditions prevented a planned trip on the New Zealand-funded Search and Rescue boat. Fortunately, prior to arrival the RNZAF flight had circled the island, giving the Prime Minister and delegation a good sense of Niue's isolation and exposure to the elements.

7. In another example of Premier Tagelagi's personal investment in the visit programme, he took Prime Minister Luxon on a *takai* (road tour) of key amenities, which included the primary and secondary schools, power station and waste management facility. New Zealand part-funded most of these, apart from the waste management facility. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii), s9(2)(g)(i)

8. Niue Primary School hosted Mrs Luxon during Prime Minister Luxon's bilateral meeting and *takai* with Premier Tagelagi. Mrs Luxon's programme included meeting the students, a discussion with the teachers about the curriculum and also met with parents of special needs students. The gift of sports equipment was well-received, and Mrs Luxon undertook to follow up on providing some musical equipment.

9. The villages of Avatele and Tamakautoga combined to host a lunch for the Prime Minister and Mrs Luxon. The lunch was a great opportunity for the Prime Minister and Mrs Luxon to experience Niue hospitality, engage with community and appreciate the importance of village engagement in Niue. The Prime Minister planted a coconut palm to commemorate the occasion and the villages honoured the Prime Minister with a feast, singing and dancing.

The Prime Minister's meeting with Premier Tagelagi was pivotal in reinforcing mutual expectations...

10. s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

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Released under the Official Information Act

... and both leaders showed a warm and united front during press conference.

28. During their joint press conference, the **leaders released a Joint Statement** (attached). Both emphasised the enduring nature of the constitutional relationship, and signalled their intention to further enhance the relationship, including through the **development of a high-level political declaration** during the anniversary year and **formalising an annual leaders' meeting**. ^{s9(2)(g)(i)}

29. To commemorate Niue's 50th anniversary of self-government in free association with New Zealand, Prime Minister Luxon announced: New Zealand's investment of **NZD 20.5 million for a new, large scale renewable energy project** in Niue, and a **NZD 2 million contribution to the Niue's Ocean Wide Trust (NOW)** to help ensure long term ocean conservation and climate resilience.

The official 'opening' of the airport runway, a positive conclusion to the visit.

30. Before departing for Fiji, the Prime Minister attended a 'ribbon cutting' ceremony to officially open Niue's Hanan International Airport runway. The project was lauded as an excellent example of New Zealand and Niue working effectively together with the private sector (Downer and GHD), to deliver a significant infrastructure project (worth NZD 41.7 million) that has already had a positive impact on Niue. Downer crew lived locally and employed/upskilled 12 local workers, with some retaining employment with Downer.

TĀKUPU – COMMENT

31. The Prime Minister's visit was hugely significant in Niue, and met all key objectives. The fact that Niue was chosen as the Prime Minister's first port of call in the Pacific emphasised the value New Zealand places on our unique relationship with Niue. Both Prime Minister Luxon and Mrs Luxon really leant in on engagement in all aspects of the programme, with the Premier and Ministers, and especially with the community. This was not lost on the people of Niue who pulled out 'all the stops' to make the Prime Minister's visit a special and memorable experience.

s7(b)(i), s7(b)(iii)

MUTU – ENDS

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From: SUVA
To: PACMM; PACREG; PRD; ECO
Cc: ALL POSTS (FM); ...POLICY DIVISIONS; CEO; DCE; DS PDG; DS TEG; DS AAG; DS EMA; DS MLG; s6(a)
FM.DPMC (Seemail); FM.DPMC (FPA) (Seemail);
FM.P/S MFA (Seemail); FM.P/S Associate MFA (Seemail); FM.P/S Trade (Seemail); FM.Defence (Seemail);
FM.NZTE (Seemail); FM.Immigration NZ (Seemail); FM.Police (Seemail); FM.Customs Service (Seemail);
FM.MPI (Seemail); s6(a)
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: FIJI: PRIME MINISTER LUXON'S VISIT TO FIJI: 5-7 JUNE 2024
Date: Wednesday, 12 June 2024 10:55:00 pm
Attachments: [20240606_FJ-NZ PMs Joint Statement 6 June 2024.pdf](#)
[20240606_PM Luxon visit to Fiji key announcements.pdf](#)
[20240607_PM Luxon Speech to Fiji New Zealand Joint Business Council Conference 7 June 2024.pdf](#)
[20240611_Fiji Times Full Page Feature on PM Luxon Police Dog Centre Visit.pdf](#)

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ĀPITI HANGA – ATTACHMENTS

- Joint Fiji-New Zealand Statement from Prime Ministers Rabuka and Luxon
- List of New Zealand Announcements for Prime Minister Luxon's visit to Fiji, 6 June
- Prime Minister Luxon's Speech to Fiji-New Zealand Joint Business Council Conference, 7 June
- Fiji Times full page feature on PM Luxon's visit to the Fiji Police Dog Centre, 11 June

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

The Fiji-New Zealand relationship has been enhanced and energised following Prime Minister Luxon's formal visit to Fiji from 5-7 June. During his first official visit to the Pacific, Prime Minister Luxon met Fiji's President Viliame Katonivere, Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka, and new Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Baron Waqa in person for the first time. s6(a)

To the delight of the business community, the two Prime Ministers set an ambitious new two-way trade goal of NZD \$2 billion by 2030. Opportunities to increase cooperation on climate change adaptation and response were also identified. The removal of New Zealand transit visa requirements for Fijian nationals was recognised for its political significance and warmly welcomed. s9(2)(g)(i)

The visit also showcased the strong links between our militaries, police, businesses, academic and sporting institutions.

HOHENGĀ – ACTION

s6(a)

s6(a)

WSH – please pass on to US government counterparts as you see fit.

PŪRONGO – REPORT

From 5 to 7 June, Prime Minister Luxon and Mrs Amanda Luxon visited Fiji as part of their first official visit to the Pacific. The visit was accorded full State protocols by the Fijian Government. The hospitality and state pageantry displayed care, investment in our bilateral relationship and meticulous attention to detail. In Suva, Prime Minister Luxon met with Fiji's President Katonivere; Prime Minister Rabuka; the new Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Baron Waqa; the Chair and CEO of New Zealand's Tower Insurance; Fijian Ministers for a security-themed lunch and Police Dog Centre visit; and University of the South Pacific Vice Chancellor Pal Ahluwalia.

2 In Nadi, Prime Minister Luxon discussed tourism recovery and opportunity with Deputy Prime Minister Gavoka and tourism CEOs; addressed a large New Zealand-Fiji business delegation across two events; witnessed the start of the joint venture between Fletcher's and two Fijian investors (including Fiji's sovereign wealth fund – FNPF); watched a NZDF vs RFMF rugby 7's game; and visited Douglas Pharmaceuticals' high end manufacturing plant.

Leadership, Governance and Partnerships

3 In accordance with protocol, a call with Fiji's President Viliame Katonivere was the first formal meeting of the Prime Minister's visit. Alongside a message of welcome and his evident pride in Fiji and its people, s6(b)(i)

4 s6(a)

5 Prime Minister Luxon's formal meeting with Prime Minister Rabuka allowed for a recommitment to our strong bilateral connections, and a visible demonstration of strengthened links s6(a) s6(b)(i)

6 The removal of New Zealand transit visa requirements for Fijian nationals was warmly welcomed by Prime Minister Rabuka and continues to receive significant positive local media attention. There was widespread recognition of the political significance attached to this removal s6(a)

7 s6(a)

s6(a)

8 s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(i)

9 s6(a)

10 Prime Minister Luxon said New Zealand had an independent foreign policy and we acted in our national interest, but we sought to work closely with partners that shared our values. s6(a)

11 There was much discussion on transnational crime and drugs across of the Prime Minister's engagements. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

12 s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

Regional Issues

13 During separate meetings with Prime Minister Rabuka and PIF Secretary General Baron Waqa, the Prime Minister delivered a clear and consistent message about the importance of PIF centrality in addressing regional challenges and emphasised the leadership role the PIF can play regarding New Caledonia. s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

14 s6(a), s6(b)(i)

15 s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

16 A visit to the University of the South Pacific Laucala Bay Campus allowed for a wreath-laying ceremony to acknowledge the RNZAF connection to the site, a chance to interact with regional Manaaki Scholars, and an opportunity to meet Vice Chancellor Pal Ahluwalia and acknowledge USP's contribution as the central tertiary education provider for the region. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

Trade, Economic and Business engagement

17 Prime Ministers Luxon and Rabuka publicly committed New Zealand and Fiji to an ambitious two-way trade goal of \$2 Billion from the current \$1.36 Billion, and Prime Minister Luxon challenged the New Zealand – Fiji business communities to help make that happen. s9(2)(g)(i)

18 s6(b)(i)

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

Prime Minister Luxon publicly invited Fiji to join during a speech to the New Zealand-Fiji and Business councils: "It's a deal that significantly liberalises trade in goods, a deal that makes it easier for businesses to provide services, a deal that protects investors and supports labour mobility... I hope Fiji will seize the opportunity to do so because it is a critical piece of the regional trade and economic architecture".

19 s6(a)

s9(2)(g)(i)

20 In Nadi, Prime Minister Luxon witnessed the signing of a significant partnership between Fletchers, a New Zealand infrastructure company, and two key Fijian institutional investors, the Fiji National Provident Fund (Fiji's sovereign wealth fund) and Fiji Holdings Limited. These two Fijian companies signed an MOU with the intention of taking a 50% share in Fletcher Higgs Fiji. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

21 Throughout the visit, Prime Minister Luxon described Fiji's tourism sector publicly and privately as 'world class', while acknowledging that the sector had rebounded much more quickly in Fiji than it had in New Zealand post-COVID-19. In an informal dinner in Denarau with Fiji's Tourism and Civil Aviation Minister (and Deputy Prime Minister) Viliame Gavoka and a handful of Fiji's key tourism and aviation sector leaders from the public and private sectors, Prime Minister Luxon discussed common opportunities and challenges for the tourism sector in both Fiji and New Zealand, including the importance of quality supporting infrastructure, greater foreign investment, and business-friendly tax settings.

Climate Change and Environment

22 Prime Minister Luxon's visit to the Tower Insurance's Fiji Hub office showcased a long-standing investment (150 years) by a New Zealand Company in Fiji and one that is finding innovative ways to provide surety for households in an uncertain and climate affected world. Tower profiled its work on parametric insurance in response to increased weather events in the Pacific. Managers at Tower Insurance showed Prime Minister Luxon how its 300 employees supported New Zealand customers following the Auckland floods and Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023 (noting that Suva had been a good base to provide support and customer service with staff who understood natural disasters but were not living through the event at the time), and described how parametric insurance is becoming a key part of climate adaptation in the Pacific.

23 Prime Minister Luxon referred to Tower's climate innovation throughout his subsequent calls, noting that it was a good example of climate cooperation between New Zealand and Fiji. He outlined New Zealand's NZ\$ 3.6 million commitment to Fiji's Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund, and said New Zealand had a lot to learn from Fiji's climate change adaptation policies.

Sports Diplomacy

24 The Prime Minister profiled the strong sporting connections between New Zealand and Fiji by meeting with Dame Valerie Adams and the New Zealand Athletics team who were in Suva to compete in the Oceania Athletics Championships. He also watched a 7's Rugby Game between teams from the New Zealand Defence Force and Republic of Fiji Military Forces. Separately, in the days leading up to the game the NZDF and RFMF 7's teams conducted skills training clinics for local primary and secondary schools. This engagement and outreach was very popular, and reinforced the value of sports diplomacy as a means of connecting people and countries.

25 With Fiji's love of rugby on full display during the visit, s9(2)(g)(i) During a local media interview, Prime Minister Luxon was asked whether New Zealand could organise an All Blacks test match against the Flying Fijians in Fiji. Prime Minister Luxon replied that unfortunately he did not run the New Zealand Rugby Union, and that it would be for the unions to decide. s9(2)(g)(i)

Community and CSO Engagement

26 The visit also provided an opportunity to highlight New Zealand's work with Fiji on its human development priorities, s9(2)(g)(i) Engagements with some of our civil society partnerships focused on improving socio-economic outcomes for women, children, and vulnerable groups. Mrs Luxon met with the Empowering Women in Fiji (Solo Mums) Project, Empower Pacific (delivering essential psycho-social support) and the Koroipita social housing project.

27 These visits highlighted the transformative impact our support and partnership has had on the lives of vulnerable and marginalised groups. s9(2)(g)(i)

TĀKUPU – COMMENT

28 s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

29 There was significant media attention from the Fiji side on the visit (alongside the output of the travelling New Zealand media pack), and the large number of varied engagements during the visit (17 programme elements) has resulted in a continuing flow of diverse media content across both print and social media platforms (see the attached Fiji Times full page feature on the visit to Fiji's New Zealand-supported Police Doq Centre). s9(2)(g)(i)

MUTU – ENDS

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6 June 2024

Joint Statement by the Prime Ministers of Fiji and New Zealand

1. Prime Minister Hon Sitiveni L. Rabuka hosted Prime Minister Rt Hon Christopher Luxon on an Official Visit to Fiji from 5-7 June 2024.
2. Both Prime Ministers recognised the deep and broad historical, cultural, and people-to-people connections that bind our two countries together. They acknowledged the ongoing value of our partnerships across a wide range of sectors and initiatives at the bilateral level, as part of our shared future in the Blue Pacific Continent, and in global and multilateral fora.
3. They acknowledged with celebration that the year 2025 will mark 55 years of diplomatic relations between Fiji and New Zealand.

New Zealand – Fiji Duavata Partnership

4. The Prime Ministers reinforced their respective government's full commitment to the *Duavata Partnership* that guides our engagement over the 2022-2025 period. They reaffirmed their belief in the importance of the fundamental shared values that underpin the *Duavata Partnership*.
5. The Prime Ministers encouraged continued extensive engagement between ministers, officials, other high-level delegates, and representatives from across all elements of civil society, to further our shared objectives under the *Duavata Partnership*.
6. Recognising that the *Duavata Partnership* will reach maturity at the end of 2025, the Prime Ministers committed to refreshing the Partnership during 2025 to ensure that it is reflective of the strength of the relationship as well as the opportunities for enhanced collaboration. The Prime Ministers further noted that officials are expecting to convene High-Level Consultations later this year.

Partnership, democracy, and values

7. The Prime Ministers recognised with fondness and appreciation the long-standing connections between our peoples and institutions through many avenues including familial links, arts and culture, sport, education, and business. They encouraged these to flourish further into the future, acknowledging that both countries are deeply enriched through the breadth and abiding nature of these partnerships.

8. Acknowledging the complex and challenging geopolitical environment facing our region and the world, the Prime Ministers committed their respective governments to pursue greater coordination on our respective foreign policy priorities, including

regular sharing of information and insights. This includes deepened coordination on bilateral, regional, and multilateral priorities.

9. Both Prime Ministers recognised the fundamental importance of strong, transparent, and accountable systems of democratic governance in their own countries and around the world. They welcomed New Zealand's ongoing support to Fijian counterparts to strengthen Fiji's key democratic institutions including the judiciary, civil service, parliament, elections, and other governance and oversight institutions.
10. Acknowledging both the unique role that indigenous peoples play in our nations, and the value that other ethnic communities bring to our nations, the Prime Ministers welcomed ongoing cooperation and connections between New Zealand and Fiji on indigenous cultural and economic matters as well as on inter-ethnic and society-wide cohesion.
11. Prime Minister Luxon was pleased to inform Prime Minister Rabuka that the New Zealand Government will remove the requirement for transit visas for Fijian nationals travelling through New Zealand. Prime Minister Luxon noted that once this change is implemented, Fijian nationals will be able to transit New Zealand with a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA), and that this change will reduce transaction costs for Fijian travellers who transit New Zealand for onward international travel. Prime Minister Rabuka thanked Prime Minister Luxon for this change, and further highlighted Fiji's longstanding request for New Zealand to consider a 'visa on arrival' policy for visiting Fijian nationals.

Economic resilience

12. The Prime Ministers recognised the shared economic and social challenges that countries around the world, including both New Zealand and Fiji, experienced during and since the COVID-19 pandemic and as countries sought a green recovery. They acknowledged the strong spirit of collaboration between New Zealand and Fiji during and since the pandemic that enabled our countries to avoid its worst economic and social impacts.
13. Stimulating sustainable and inclusive economic growth through economic reforms is a top priority for both Prime Ministers and their governments. Prime Minister Rabuka welcomed New Zealand's financial support aligned with Fiji's priority economic reforms through its multi-donor policy reform-based budget support operation. With the Fiji Government having recently successfully completed the current phase of reforms, Prime Minister Luxon was pleased to inform Prime Minister Rabuka that New Zealand will contribute further budget support payments totalling NZ\$ 7.5 million to Fiji as part of a multi-year NZ\$ 10 million programme supporting Fiji's priority economic reforms, which is additional to a NZ\$ 10 million budget support payment that New Zealand provided to Fiji in 2023 to support the Fiji Government's priorities.

14. The Prime Ministers strongly encouraged private sector stakeholders in the region and beyond to capitalise on the significant and growing economic, trade, and investment opportunities that exist between New Zealand and Fiji, and in the Pacific region more generally. They noted with pride that two-way trade between New Zealand and Fiji reached an all-time high of NZ\$ 1.36 billion in 2023, and pledged to support the necessary reforms and support to grow that figure to NZ\$ 2 billion by 2030.
15. They acknowledged the vital role that businesses and investors, as well as the New Zealand-Fiji Business Council and the Fiji-New Zealand Business Council, play in furthering economic and social progress, and encouraged ongoing wide-ranging cooperation between public sector and private sector stakeholders towards common objectives.
16. Acknowledging the strategic importance to both New Zealand and Fiji of deepening regional economic integration, Prime Minister Luxon warmly welcomed Prime Minister Rabuka's intention for Fiji to review the potential benefits and positively consider joining the PACER Plus regional trade and development agreement, and Prime Minister Luxon noted that New Zealand stands ready to support Fiji through this process.
17. Recognising other valuable areas of international trade cooperation between New Zealand and Fiji, the Prime Ministers welcomed continued progress on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework of which both countries are part as a way to deepen economic integration and cooperation amongst partner economies across the Indo-Pacific region. They also noted the close ongoing work between New Zealand, Fiji, and other partners on World Trade Organisation priorities, particularly, concluding the negotiations on subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing. Prime Minister Luxon also expressed keenness to welcome Fiji back into the Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability in future, should Fiji be in a position to re-join the Agreement.
18. Prime Minister Rabuka welcomed ongoing support from New Zealand towards strengthening Fiji's economic resilience, including support on micro, small, and medium enterprises development, the private sector enabling framework, the digital economy, and fisheries. Both Prime Ministers were pleased to acknowledge agriculture sector cooperation, including New Zealand's new regional programme led by New Zealand Plant and Food Research to support farmers adapt to the impacts of climate change on production, as well as New Zealand's recent contribution towards the upgrading of the High Temperature Forced Air (HTFA) facility at Nadi Airport that will boost Fiji's horticultural exports. Both Prime Ministers also welcomed ongoing partnerships between New Zealand, Fiji, and other regional countries on scholarships and regional tertiary education support, including through the University of the South Pacific.

19. Both Prime Ministers acknowledged the valued contribution to both countries of Fijian seasonal workers who work in New Zealand under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, and Prime Minister Rabuka welcomed the additional labour mobility support that New Zealand has committed over the next five years. They committed to ensuring that the RSE scheme continues to provide benefits for workers and their families and communities in Fiji, as well as filling critical labour shortages in New Zealand.

Security

20. Both Prime Ministers recognised the extensive history of bilateral and regional security sector cooperation involving New Zealand and Fiji. They affirmed that responses to regional security needs and challenges could be found within the Pacific and commended New Zealand and Fiji's partnership in this area. They emphasised their commitment to the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, and reaffirmed that climate change remains the greatest threat facing the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific. They further recognised that the increasingly complex strategic environment in our region requires greater collaboration between Pacific partners on shared challenges.
21. The Prime Ministers agreed that New Zealand and Fiji will continue to strengthen security sector cooperation, including through high-level policy cooperation at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels, wide-ranging military and policing initiatives, and cooperation on cyber security, customs, border security, transnational crime, and maritime security.
22. The Prime Ministers highlighted the strong defence links that exist between the New Zealand Defence Force and the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, and welcomed the recent entry into force of the bilateral Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Defence and the Status of Visiting Forces. They noted the long-standing mutual benefit to both New Zealand and Fiji from shared training opportunities, exercises, and capacity building, increasing our ability to jointly address regional issues. They also highlighted the strong and significant ongoing areas of cooperation that exist between both the New Zealand and Fijian civilian defence ministries, and New Zealand and Fiji Police forces.

Social well-being

23. The Prime Ministers acknowledged the importance of social well-being as a priority area both in our respective countries and in our bilateral cooperation. Prime Minister Rabuka thanked Prime Minister Luxon for New Zealand's NZ\$ 20 million health system support programme with Fiji during and in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, including the refurbishment of local health centres and nursing stations.

24. The Prime Ministers updated each other on their respective education sector reform agendas, and acknowledged positive Pacific regional collaboration on education strengthening initiatives.
25. Recognising the need to continuously strengthen women's empowerment and participation across all aspects of society, the Prime Ministers welcomed New Zealand's contributions on this important area through Fiji's *Marama Ni Viti* programme.
26. The Prime Ministers acknowledged that housing is another important area of focus in our respective countries, and welcomed New Zealand's ongoing support to Fiji on housing sector priorities, including initiatives to upgrade informal settlements and support formalised settlement communities.
27. Both Prime Ministers recognised the valued role that civil society organisations play in delivering and promoting social well-being outcomes, and welcomed continued collaboration between New Zealand and Fijian civil society organisations.

Climate change and disaster resilience

28. Both Prime Ministers recognise the need to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and support the global economic transition that is under way as part of their shared commitment to implement the Paris Agreement. They acknowledge the unique climate vulnerabilities faced by Pacific island countries and other small island developing states.
29. The Prime Ministers welcomed continued bilateral cooperation on climate mitigation and adaption, including through New Zealand's substantial financial and technical support towards Fiji's national climate priorities. They highlighted the value of ongoing bilateral cooperation relating to domestic relocation of peoples and communities who are displaced as a result of climate change. Prime Minister Rabuka thanked Prime Minister Luxon for New Zealand's recent decision to contribute an additional NZ\$ 3.6 million to Fiji's Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund.
30. Both Prime Ministers acknowledged the significant impacts that natural disasters have on individuals, communities, and economies, in our region. Prime Minister Luxon thanked Prime Minister Rabuka for Fiji's disaster response and recovery assistance to New Zealand following Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023. Prime Minister Rabuka thanked Prime Minister Luxon for New Zealand's ongoing support towards strengthening Fiji's disaster resilience capabilities, and Prime Minister Luxon reiterated New Zealand's unwavering commitment to providing Fiji with disaster response and relief support in future.

Pacific regional developments

31. Both Prime Ministers underscored the importance of the Pacific regional architecture, including the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). They highlighted the importance of working through the PIF and other Pacific-led regional organisations to secure the future of our region and deliver on our priorities as articulated in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. The Prime Ministers further emphasised the centrality of the PIF and its critical role in amplifying the Pacific's voice on the global stage and bolstering the region's engagement with international partners. They agreed to work together to ensure the PIF remains an influential and unified institution, capable of facilitating collective action on shared challenges. The Prime Ministers acknowledged this year's PIF Leaders Meeting in Tonga in August as another important opportunity to further strengthen Pacific regionalism.
32. Prime Minister Rabuka outlined his vision for an Ocean of Peace across our Blue Pacific Continent, which both Prime Ministers look forward to discussing further alongside other regional leaders at this year's PIF Leaders Meeting in Tonga.
33. Both Prime Ministers expressed their deep concern regarding the ongoing situation in New Caledonia and affirmed the role of the Pacific Islands Forum in supporting constructive and respectful dialogue between the relevant parties in alignment with the Nouméa Accord. They also acknowledged with sympathy the recent tragic landslide in the Enga province of Papua New Guinea, and expressed their condolences to the families and friends of those who have lost their lives and to the Government of Papua New Guinea during this sad time.

Global developments

34. The Prime Ministers acknowledged the importance of multilateralism in addressing the serious and complex challenges facing our world, and expressed support for the international rules-based system, with the United Nations at the core. They emphasised the importance of a well-functioning rules-based international order and its significance for global, regional, and national stability.
35. In this context, they shared deep concern regarding Russia's illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. They reiterated their support for a comprehensive, just, and durable peace in Ukraine in accordance with the UN Charter. They noted the convening of a Global Peace Summit in June organised by the Ukrainian government, in Switzerland.
36. Reflecting on the ongoing conflict in Gaza, the Prime Ministers called for the parties to urgently agree to a humanitarian ceasefire and the release of all hostages by Hamas, and a significant increase of aid into Gaza to avoid further humanitarian catastrophe. The Prime Ministers urged Israeli and Palestinian leaders to establish a pathway to an enduring peace within the framework of the two-state solution.

37. In the maritime domain, the Prime Ministers reaffirmed the right of freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the seas as recognised under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They further affirmed the need to respect states' ability to conserve, sustainably develop, and effectively manage their maritime natural resources in a manner that is consistent with international law, in particular UNCLOS which is the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.
38. The Prime Ministers also affirmed the importance of acting consistently with the relevant Standards and Recommended Practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the relevant instruments and conventions of the International Maritime Organization.
39. The Prime Ministers noted that both New Zealand and Fiji are signatories to the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement). They recognised the importance of the Agreement entering into force as soon as practicable.
40. The Prime Ministers also welcomed the adoption of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), at the 4th International Conference of SIDS in Antigua and Barbuda. ABAS outlines SIDS' priorities for the next decade, and replaces the SAMOA Pathway 2014. The Prime Ministers recognised the need for collaboration and partnership towards the implementation of the ABAS.
41. The Prime Ministers considered upcoming multilateral engagements that would require close collaboration, including the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Summit of the Future, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and the 29th UN Climate Conference, amongst others.
42. Both Prime Ministers underscored that New Zealand and Fiji are staunch supporters of international law and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter. They agreed that New Zealand and Fiji will continue to work together to uphold international law and the multilateral system, and to stay in close contact on regional and global issues of concern. The Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen existing cooperation advocating for the interests of our Pacific region and of small states in multilateral fora, including through the UN and the Commonwealth.

FIJI-NEW ZEALAND BUSINESS COUNCILS CONFERENCE SPEECH

FRIDAY 7 JUNE 2024

Introduction

Bula Vinaka, Namaste, Assalaamu-Alaykum, Kia ora tatou, and good morning everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to come and join you this morning and can I acknowledge:

- Both heads of the two Business Councils - Chandar Sen and James Trusler – thank you for your leadership and championing of the Fiji-NZ relationship.
- My good friend and former colleague – Simon Bridges.
- But can I especially thank Prime Minister Rabuka for the wonderful way in which he has hosted myself, Amanda and our whole delegation over these last few days in Fiji.

I thought NZ was rugby mad, but Fiji I reckon is next level. I'll be honest with you that I was privately hoping the Drua would lose on the weekend so my beloved Crusaders could make the playoffs. But if then we could have had a major diplomatic incident and a grumpy PM Rabuka. I think he took too much pride gifting me a Drua jersey yesterday!

Importance of Business

It's important for me to be here with you today, because I want to amplify the very important work that you as a business community to bring prosperity to our two nations.

I believe there are three actors in any society – government, business and community. They each have different, but complementary roles governments cannot do it on our own. We need the business community to be set up for success and driving the growth of our economies.

Because without an economy that is thriving and growing, Governments can't invest in the services our people rightly expect. Things like healthcare, education and critical infrastructure.

So, it's a real privilege to be here this morning, because all of you in the room are making a real difference in varied ways – be it as an employer of others, as entrepreneurs, as innovators and service providers.

Thank you all for what you do.

Fiji-NZ Relationship

I wanted to take this opportunity to cover off three things.

1. Firstly, I want to outline my Government's thinking about the Pacific generally, and Fiji in particular.
2. I want to provide some detail on what we hope to achieve on the trade and economic front.
3. And finally, I'll set out some of my ambition for our bilateral trading relationship.

Comprehensive engagement in the Pacific

The Pacific is and always will be front and centre in New Zealand's international engagement.

That's not just about geography, but it is about embracing a shared Pacific destiny through our people, economies and security.

Nearly 10% of New Zealand's population are of Pacific origin, and our society, economy and culture is greatly enriched by our Pacific People.

Both Fiji and New Zealand have been enriched by the multi-ethnic communities who have made their homes in our countries, while also recognising the unique place of our indigenous peoples.

Second, with two-way trade with the Pacific valued at nearly NZ\$4 billion our economies gain vital goods and services from one another, underlining our interdependence, while our people love visiting one another's countries, either as tourists or to see friends and family.

Fiji is by far and away our largest trade partner in the Pacific, with over \$1.3 billion per year in two-way trade.

That's creating great jobs and higher incomes for people here in Fiji and back home in New Zealand.

Many of those jobs created are right here in Denarau – a result of the 220,000 Kiwis that visited Fiji last year.

Third, Fiji and New Zealand have a collective interest in maintaining a stable and resilient Pacific.

We work together to play our part in support of our Blue Pacific, whether we are responding to a volcanic eruption in Tonga, supporting an election in Solomon Islands, or helping our people get home following civil unrest in New Caledonia.

Our people, our economies and our security are bound together.

There are over 30 New Zealand government agencies that have some form of regular engagement with their Pacific counterparts.

And, by the end of this month, we aim to have provided \$1.8 billion in development assistance to the Pacific over the last three years.

Building on that commitment, my Ministers and I want to be even more engaged here in the region.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Winston Peters, has committed to visiting all 17 PIF member countries this year, and indeed has already visited seven Pacific countries in the last five months. That demonstrates the respect we have for the leaders in the Pacific family.

Fiji is at the centre of our Pacific region, not only geographically but also economically.

But being central to our region's future is also a choice Fiji has made: Prime Minister Rabuka showed exceptional leadership last year in bringing the Pacific Islands Forum back together, and I want to pay tribute to him for that.

This week, I have learnt a lot in my discussions with Prime Minister Rabuka and his Government, reinforcing for me the strength of our partnership and what Fiji has to offer the world.

Three aspects stand out for me:

First, PM Rabuka's vision of an "Ocean of Peace" here in the Pacific, namely a region that looks towards each other first and foremost for our security needs, while entrusting the Pacific to resolve differences as they arise.

This is the kind of statesmanship that we have come to expect from PM Rabuka, a man as committed to strengthening the institutions of cooperation in the region as he is to strengthening the institutions of democracy at home.

Second, Fiji, like New Zealand, faces a huge challenge navigating the impacts of climate change. We all face the realities of increasingly frequent extreme weather events, which can have devastating impacts on the lives of our people.

I'm grateful that Fiji sent Military Forces and emergency responders to help New Zealand with the response to Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle last year.

In turn, we are pleased to be supporting Fiji's climate adaptation efforts, with \$3.6 million announced yesterday to, amongst other things help twenty villages relocate from rising sea levels.

Third, as a sign of the way in which our relationship is strengthening and following the urges of Prime Minister Rabuka, my Government is this week committing to make it much easier for Fijians to travel around the world by waiving the requirement to have a transit visa when they come through New Zealand.

New Zealand and Fijian businesses growing prosperity together

A further area that PM Rabuka and I talked a lot about is how we can boost our economic relationship.

One in four New Zealanders jobs depend on trade, and exporting firms offer their workers higher wages.

Seeking out more of those jobs, more of the prosperity that comes from trading together, PM Rabuka and I agreed yesterday that we will aim to lift our two-trade from \$1.3 billion today to \$2 billion by 2030.

How are we going to get there?

We need to first get our settings right at home, and that means making it easier for businesses to do business.

Then we need to ensure we are investing in one another's economies; and finally promoting optimal conditions to enable our businesses to trade together.

I want to talk about each in turn.

First, getting the economic settings right at home.

Since coming to Government 6 months ago, my Government has been relentlessly focused on repairing the economy by getting inflation down and the books back in order.

But ours is also a Government that is laser focused on growth and realising all our potential as a country, and that means making New Zealand a better place to do business.

And we will do that by focusing on 5 things:

1. World Class Education -> our kids to access higher paying jobs.
2. Embrace Technology & Innovation -> higher value goods/services.
3. Modern Reliable Infrastructure -> eco/social/environmental benefits.
4. Remove Red Tape -> smart regulation & no obstruction economy.
5. Stronger International Connections -> double exports, investment.

Here in Fiji, your Government, too, is focused on getting the economic settings right.

That starts with effective institutions of democratic governance that give businesses confidence to invest.

It includes the work PM Rabuka is leading on a series of structural reforms to stimulate business growth by strengthening SOEs and ensuring fiscal sustainability and updating private sector regulations.

New Zealand supports the Fiji Government in making those changes, including by making a NZ\$4 million contribution to support the next phase of the economic reform initiatives.

Second, if we are to hit that \$2 billion goal, we need to be invested in one another's economies.

I have been impressed by the level of sophistication of Fiji's economy and its business leaders. This is something Kiwi businesses are capitalising on.

Yesterday, I visited Tower Insurance in Suva, a New Zealand company developing some truly innovative insurance products.

Today, my next stop is a New Zealand company, Douglas Pharmaceuticals, which has chosen Nadi for its high-quality manufacturing facility.

This speaks volumes about the potential for Kiwi businesses to invest here.

There are enormous upsides for Fijian and Kiwi businesses from doing more deals together, whether in tourism, business process outsourcing, and agriculture, to highlight just a few.

Third, we have got to get the conditions right to do more trade between ourselves.

Make no mistake, we have good trade relationships and arrangements between Fiji and New Zealand. But PM Rabuka and I want to ensure they are fit for the 21st Century.

At the practical level, if we are to work towards NZ\$2 billion in two-way trade, Fijian exporters are going to have to do a lot of the heavy-lifting. We want more of your exports in on New Zealand shelves.

That's why I'm pleased to announce today further support for the Heat Treatment Facility at Nadi airport to support Fiji produce exporters in meeting the requirements for New Zealand and in Australia.

New Zealand is proud to support targeted investment like these that are focused on delivering growth.

At the policy level, we are also working closely together to establish the institutional arrangements to grow our trade.

We are delighted that Fiji and New Zealand were both able to sign-up to the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) in San Francisco last year, a new tool to help one another ensure supply chain security.

While IPEF will do more to make trade easier, there is another agreement that will make business operations in the Pacific considerably easier, and that's PACER Plus.

It's a deal that significantly liberalises trade in goods; a deal that makes it easier for businesses to provide services; a deal that protects investors and supports labour mobility.

PM Rabuka and I discussed the upside opportunity for Fiji in joining PACER Plus. I hope Fiji will seize the opportunity to do so, because it is a critical piece of the regional trade and economic architecture.

Conclusion

I am confident that, working together, Fiji and New Zealand, government and business both, will absolutely hit our goal of \$2 billion in two-way trade by 2030.

That's because both governments have the right economic agenda, we're invested in one another's economies, and we're committed to improving conditions for trade.

Most importantly, however, it will be the exceptional enterprises, skills and linkages between the businesspeople and communities represented here in this room that will carry and grow our trade relationship.

We look forward to working alongside you on his journey. I thank you for your contributions to the Fiji-New Zealand trading relationship.

Thanks to the organisers and Prime Minister Rabuka for inviting me to speak here today.

Vinaka Vaka-Levu.

Key New Zealand announcements during Prime Minister Luxon's visit to Fiji, 5-7 June 2024

Transit visa waiver for Fijian citizens

- New Zealand will remove its Transit Visa requirements for Fiji.
- This change will be done by placing Fiji on New Zealand's list of transit visa waiver countries. This requires amendments to New Zealand's immigration regulations. This work is expected to be completed in the coming months. In the meantime, Fiji nationals transiting New Zealand will still need a transit visa.
- Once the transit visa waiver is implemented Fiji nationals will need to apply for a New Zealand Electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA) to transit New Zealand. The fee for an NZeTA is NZ\$23 for online applications, or NZ\$17 if using the free app. NZeTA requests are processed within 72 hours and are valid for two years.
- Fiji nationals intending to visit, study, or work in New Zealand will still need to apply for the appropriate visa.

Reform-linked budget support

- New Zealand will be contributing a further NZ\$ 7.5 million in direct budget support grants to Fiji to support Fiji Government's priority economic reforms. The contribution will be made in two payments: NZ\$ 4m in July 2024, and NZ\$ 3.5m towards future agreed reform progress.
- New Zealand is pleased to support the Fiji Government's priority economic reforms, in partnership with Australia, the European Union, Asian Development Bank, and World Bank.
- We understand that Fiji's economic reform priorities are focused on economic resilience, private sector development, and fiscal sustainability.

Climate Relocation funding

- New Zealand will contribute a further NZ\$ 3.6 million to Fiji's Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund, which supports development of housing, infrastructure, and livelihoods to enable the relocation of communities impacted by rising sea levels and climate change.
- This investment should enable the completion of relocation for Nabavatu in Vanua Levu, for which we understand there is a current shortfall.
- New Zealand has previously provided NZ\$ 1.5 million to this Fund.

Fiji agriculture support

- New Zealand will contribute NZ\$ 0.5m for an upgrade to the High Temperature Forced Air (HTFA) Facility at Nadi Airport, to help Fijian horticultural exporters meet New Zealand's strict biosecurity requirements.
- New Zealand will also contribute NZ\$ 15.3 million across five Pacific countries (including Fiji) for a New Zealand Plant and Food Research-led programme to support farmers to adapt to the impacts of climate change on production.



Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, visits the Fiji Police Dog Centre last week.



Fiji Police Dog Centre personnel stands at Police Dog Centre in Suva last week.



Five of their breeders during the visit of New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon.



Fiji police dog breeders with their dogs during the New Zealand PM's visit to the Police Dog Centre last week.



New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon talking to a dog at the Police Dog Centre last week.

New Zealand PM visits Fiji unit

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and his party arrived in Suva last week for a visit to the Fiji Police Dog Centre. The visit was part of a broader diplomatic mission. Luxon met with various officials and participated in several activities. The visit was highly successful and strengthened ties between the two countries.



New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon with Assistant Minister for Police Affairs Pita Thakalakibi, Fiji Police officers and their New Zealand counterparts.



New Zealand High Commissioner Charlotte Dalton, MP, with Amanda Looi and a NZ police officer.