



New Zealand Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Manatū Aorere

26 September 2024

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OIA 29587

We refer to your email of 1 August 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*"Please supply all formal briefings provided for, and all formal reports arising from, an overseas visit to Laos by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt Hon Winston Peters in July 2024."*

On 15 August 2024, you agreed to refine your request to be for:

*"Please supply from the following briefings for a visit to Laos by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt Hon Winston Peters in July 2024:*

1. *Master Briefing – Minister of Foreign Affairs visit to Laos 24-28 July 2024: Briefing pack*
  - a. *the visit high level overview;*
  - b. *the following meeting briefs on ASEAN, Japan, Philippines, United Kingdom and Singapore;*
2. *Master Briefing – Minister of Foreign Affairs visit to Laos 24-28 July 2024: Vol. 2 Background*
  - a. *the following background briefs on the Geostrategic environment, Indo-Pacific geostrategic trends, South China Sea, Regional trends, Artificial Intelligence, Regional nuclear-related issues, ASEAN relations, and New Zealand Defence engagement with ASEAN."*

On 10 September 2024, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 20 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)(a) and (b) of the OIA refers).

In relation to part 2 of your request, please note that "Regional Trends" is the title of a section, rather than an actual background briefing, so has not been included in your request.

The information relevant to your request is attached. Some information has been withheld 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): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

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/](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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NEW ZEALAND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE  
Manatū Aorere



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**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
RT HON WINSTON PETERS**

VIENTIANE, LAOS

24 – 28 JULY 2024

**BRIEFING PACK**

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**OVERVIEW**

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## Visit Overview and Objectives

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1. Your visit to Lao PDR (Laos) supports the government's plan to increase New Zealand's focus and resources on our relationships with ASEAN and the <sup>s6(a)</sup> Southeast Asia countries identified in the foreign policy reset.

Ensuring we retain an active and credible seat at the Indo-Pacific regional decision-making table remains fundamental to our national interests. This visit will complement your bilateral travel to the region this year, which has sought to revitalise these relationships and underscore to our partners that New Zealand is a serious contributor to security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

2. Bilaterals with your counterparts in the margins of these formal meetings will also help advance relationships both with ASEAN Member States and wider partners.

### *Objectives for your visit*

- Advance New Zealand's ambitions to establish a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with ASEAN <sup>s6(a), s9(2)(j)</sup>
- Reassert New Zealand's profile and influence <sup>s6(a)</sup>
- Register New Zealand's positions on the core issues affecting the rules-based order and strategic environment in our region, articulating the Government's foreign policy reset and a desire for an Indo-Pacific order underpinned by principles, rules and norms which protect and advance the interests of all states.

### *The ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meetings*

3. The three ASEAN-hosted Foreign Ministers' Meetings you were invited to are:

- **ASEAN - New Zealand Ministerial Meeting (known as the Post-Ministerial Conference +1 or "PMC+1")**: This annual Foreign Ministers' Meeting is our highest-level annual bilateral engagement with the ten ASEAN Member States as a group. The meeting provides an opportunity to take stock of our relationship with ASEAN as a whole, directly convey our views on key regional issues, and discuss our priorities for engagement.
- **East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting**: The EAS – which includes ASEAN Member States and their eight strategic partners - is the only Leaders' led forum in the region with a mandate to discuss strategic issues and risks across the political, security and economic spectrum. Participation in the

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EAS is much coveted by non-members <sup>s6(a)</sup>  
given the small number of partners invited.

- **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Foreign Ministers' Meeting:** The Foreign Ministers' Meeting is the main event in the ARF calendar in which priorities are set for the year ahead. The membership is wider than the EAS and includes participation from the European Union, Canada, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and several South Asian countries. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is also a member of the ARF but does not always attend at Ministerial level.

*Laos as ASEAN Chair*

4. Laos is the group's poorest nation and one of its smallest. <sup>s6(a)</sup>  
it has proven itself  
to be effective and efficient at Chairing the regional set pieces, and a gracious host.  
<sup>s6(a)</sup>

5. Laos has chosen the theme 'Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience' for its year as Chair, recognising both traditional and non-traditional security issues as pressing regional and global challenges. The theme is said to also encapsulate Laos' vision of becoming "the battery of Southeast Asia" through the development of hydropower energy and its transformation from "land-locked to land-linked".

6. Sandwiched between China and Viet Nam, Laos has historically seen Viet Nam as its closest ally and a "big brother" figure, with China fulfilling a role as its main economic partner. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

*Geostrategic Backdrop*

7. Laos assumed the ASEAN Chair in 2024 with numerous challenging issues on the agenda. The ongoing conflict in Myanmar and actions by the military regime impact on ASEAN's internal cohesion <sup>s6(a)</sup> ; this remains the issue of most concern to ASEAN counterparts. Other issues include increasing tensions in the South China Sea, the Israel/Hamas conflict (<sup>s6(a)</sup>)

and Russia's invasion  
of Ukraine <sup>s6(a)</sup>

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8. The economic backdrop is no less daunting as the region faces the longer-term economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on food and energy security, and increasingly frequent natural disasters. This sets a difficult stage for this year's Meetings. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

*Bilateral elements*

9. The bilateral components of your programme are an opportunity to confirm our international development cooperation commitments with Laos. You will meet with Manaaki New Zealand scholarships alumni, highlighting New Zealand support for skills development in Laos. And there is an opportunity to announce a NZ\$12.5 million climate resilience activity which will mitigate the risk and impacts of flooding in vulnerable urban communities.

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**BILATERAL MEETING BRIEFS**

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Bilateral Meeting with Japan: Yoko KAMIKAWA, Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Time and date:** TBC



Yoko KAMIKAWA (born in 1953) was appointed Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs in September 2023. She is a member of the Liberal Democratic Party. Minister Kamikawa was first elected to the Diet in 2000. In 2014, 2017, and 2020 she served as the Minister of Justice. In 2007 she served as the State Minister for Gender Equality and Social Affairs. She is widely considered to be a possible contender for the Liberal Democratic Party internal presidential election in September, and therefore for Prime Minister.

<b>Population:</b> 124.4 million	<b>(PPP, per capita):</b> \$54,184	<b>Inflation (%):</b> 2.2
<b>NZ exports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$4.19 billion (March 2024)	<b>NZ imports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$5.46 million (March 2024)	<b>Key exports:</b> Dairy, aluminium, fruits and nuts, meat, wood
<b>NZ development spend (\$/yr):</b> N/A	s6(a)	<b>Next elections:</b> by 31 October 2025

**Key objectives**

- Emphasise the importance of New Zealand's partnership with Japan and our shared assessment of the strategic environment.
- Reiterate New Zealand's ambition for strengthening our relationship.

**Discussion points**

*Bilateral relationship*

- Emphasise that Japan is one of New Zealand's closest and most likeminded partners in Asia, as reflected in our Strategic Cooperative Partnership.
- Welcome PM Luxon's successful visit to Japan and warm meeting with PM Kishida last month, with Trade Minister McClay and a business delegation.
- Reiterate New Zealand's alignment with Japan in our assessment of the strategic environment and our ambition for further strengthening our cooperation to progress our common interests and values.
- Welcome substantive conclusion of our bilateral Information Security Agreement, which is a concrete demonstration of our strengthening defence and security relationship.

- Note that we look forward to doing more bilateral and multilateral exercises with Japan, including in the margins of our next deployment to Japan to monitor sanctions evasion by North Korea. The HMNZS Aotearoa will be making two port visits to Japan from late August as part of the deployment.

- s6(a), s9(2)(j)

and  
send a strong signal that our defence and security interests are aligned.

- Reiterate your invitation for Minister Kamikawa to visit New Zealand.

#### *Pacific*

- s6(a)

- Note that we would welcome a contribution from Japan to the SPC research vessel and the Pacific Resilience Facility, as well as follow through with Japan's formally announced contribution to the undersea cable in Tuvalu. These projects contribute to identified priorities for the region as outlined in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

#### *Regional and global issues*

- Reiterate the value we see in the Indo-Pacific 4 (IP4),<sup>s6(a)</sup>  
PM Luxon was pleased to host the IP4 leaders meeting in Washington last week.
- Welcome strengthening of relations between Korea and Japan, and strengthening cooperation between the US, Japan, and Korea.
- Note New Zealand shares Japan's deep concern at the increasing frequency of destabilising actions in the South China Sea, particularly by China.

Note shared concerns about Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and the Israel-Hamas conflict. We are strong supporters of the rules-based international order that deters countries from using force to resolve disputes.

- Share concerns about North Korea and its growing cooperation with Russia.

- s6(a)

## Bilateral Meeting with Philippines: Enrique MANALO, Secretary of Foreign Affairs

**Time and date:** 12:00 – 12:30, Friday 26 July 2024



Enrique A. MANALO is a 40-year career diplomat, who assumed the Foreign Secretary role in July 2022. You recently met Secretary Manalo during your visit to Manila in June this year.

<b>Population:</b> 116.4 million	<b>(PPP, per capita):</b> 10,755	<b>Inflation (%):</b> 3.9
<b>NZ exports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$1.01 billion (March 2024)	<b>NZ imports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$390.9 billion (March 2024)	<b>Key exports:</b> Dairy, travel, meat
<b>NZ development spend (\$/yr):</b> \$31.1 million (2021-2024)	s6(a)	<b>Next elections:</b> May 2025

### Key objectives

- Continue to build the relationship with Secretary Manalo, following on from the visit to the Philippines last month
- s6(a), s9(2)(j)
- Reiterate New Zealand’s aspirations to seek an upgrade of its relationship with ASEAN to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) during our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2025.

### Discussion points

#### *Bilateral relationship*

Note appreciation for the warm reception extended to your delegation during your recent visit to Manila.

- s6(a), s9(2)(j)

- As we discussed last month, Filipinos make a significant contribution to New Zealand's economy and society. Note New Zealand was pleased to host earlier this month the Joint Labour Committee Meeting under our bilateral Labour Agreement and discuss migrant worker issues of mutual concern.
- Convey New Zealand's appreciation at finalising the Mutual Logistics Supporting Arrangement and affirm our intention to conclude the Status of Visiting Forces Agreement in 2024.
- Given our shared goal to lift two-way trade by 50 percent by 2030, welcome the progress made in eliminating barriers to trade, <sup>s6(a), s9(2)(j)</sup>

### *Regional issues*

- New Zealand views maritime security as fundamental to the maintenance of peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.
- Seek an update from the Secretary on the Philippines' recent talks with China on West Philippines/South China Sea issues. Note New Zealand's continued support for international law and the importance of upholding UNCLOS in the South China Sea and for collective action. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade issued a statement on 12 July, the 8th anniversary of the Arbitral Award, reiterating our support for the ruling as final and binding on both parties.
- Acknowledge the Philippines' proposed bilateral Maritime Dialogue with New Zealand will be a useful mechanism to share views and identify opportunities for cooperation.
- As discussed last month, New Zealand is pleased to engage in the Group of Friends of International Law (GoFIL) initiative, given the importance of international rules that support a stable, secure, prosperous, and resilient Indo-Pacific.
- Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to seeking an upgrade of our relationship with ASEAN to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2025, when New Zealand will celebrate 50 years of dialogue partnership with ASEAN.

### *Pacific region*

- Welcome the Philippines' attendance at the upcoming Pacific Islands Forum Partner Dialogue in Tonga in August. Reiterate support for closer links between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum, including as part of the Philippines' chairing of ASEAN in 2026.

## Bilateral Meeting with Singapore: Vivian BALAKRISHNAN, Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Time and date:** 17:00 – 17:30, Thursday 25 July 2024



Minister Vivian BALAKRISHNAN [pron. Bala-krish-nan] has been Singapore’s Minister for Foreign Affairs since 2015, and a Member of Parliament since 2001. You last met Balakrishnan in Auckland in November 2023 after New Zealand’s general election. You last visited Singapore in March 2024 where you met Singapore’s Defence Minister Ng and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs Maliki.

<b>Population:</b> 5.92 million	<b>(PPP, per capita):</b> 133,740	<b>Inflation (%):</b> 3.1
<b>NZ exports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$2.47 billion (March 2024)	<b>NZ imports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$7.6 billion (March 2024)	<b>Key exports:</b> Mineral fuels and oils, dairy, travel, transportation
<b>NZ development spend (\$/yr):</b> N/A	s6(a)	<b>Next elections:</b> No later than 23 November 2025 s6(b)(i)

### Key objectives

- Reaffirm our commitment to elevating the New Zealand-Singapore Enhanced Partnership.
- Exchange views on the geostrategic environment in the region, seeking Singapore’s insights into ASEAN’s priorities and intra-ASEAN dynamics.
- Reiterate New Zealand’s aspirations to seek an upgrade of its relationship with ASEAN to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) during our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2025.

### Discussion points

#### *Bilateral relationship*

- Outline the Government’s foreign policy reset and focus on Southeast Asia and reaffirm our commitment to elevate the New Zealand-Singapore Enhanced Partnership in 2025.

- s6(a), s9(2)(j)

Note  
the good connections were reinforced by Singapore Public Service Head  
Leo Yip's early July visit to Wellington.

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

*Geostrategic environment*

s6(a)

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Bilateral Meeting with United Kingdom: David LAMMY, Foreign Secretary

**Time and date:** TBC



David LAMMY was appointed Foreign Secretary on 5 July. A lawyer by training, he entered Parliament in 2000. Lammy served nine years as a Minister in the last Labour government and, in Opposition, held the Shadow Justice portfolio before being appointed Shadow Foreign Secretary in November 2021. Lammy visited New Zealand in 2022 for social justice-related calls. Lammy is married to portrait painter Nicola Green. They have two sons and a daughter.

<b>Population:</b> 68 million	<b>(PPP, per capita):</b> 75,141	<b>Inflation (%):</b> 3.3
<b>NZ exports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$2.95 billion	<b>NZ imports (NZ\$/yr):</b> \$3.46 billion	<b>Key exports:</b> Wine, red meat, honey, travel, business services
<b>NZ development spend (\$/yr):</b> N/A	s6(a)	<b>Next elections:</b> 2027

**Key objectives**

- Note you look forward to future two-way visits, <sup>s9(2)(f)(iv)</sup> and a standing invitation for the Foreign Secretary to visit New Zealand.
- Register key areas of cooperation: our FTA; the Pacific (including CHOGM); and Ukraine/the Middle East.
- s6(a)

**Discussion points**

*Bilateral relationship*

- Note recent successes: our FTA; UK accession to CPTPP; security cooperation; engagement in the Pacific; upgraded people movement and science cooperation.
- There is a more we can do in this space: both expanding CPTPP but also considering what other plurilateral architecture might benefit from UK

membership; and cooperation through our bilateral science arrangement and Horizon.

- s9(2)(f)(iv)
- Reiterate a standing invitation for the Foreign Secretary to visit New Zealand. Ask whether Mr Lammy and PM Starmer are planning to attend CHOGM and invite both to consider stopping over.

*Geostrategic environment*

- Welcome Mr Lammy's reflections from his recent travel (NATO; Poland, Sweden and Germany).
- s6(a) and thank the UK for its leadership role supporting Ukraine, including because it allowed New Zealand to dock in with our own support.
- s6(a)
- Note that, while fiscal challenges require difficult choices, New Zealand is determined to be more active on the international stage. Working with the UK, bilaterally and as part of Five Eyes, is a huge part of that.

*Pacific region*

- Welcome the UK's engagement in the Pacific as a strategically important and likeminded partner. s6(a)
- s6(a)
- Thank the UK for its support for Sāmoa's hosting of CHOGM.



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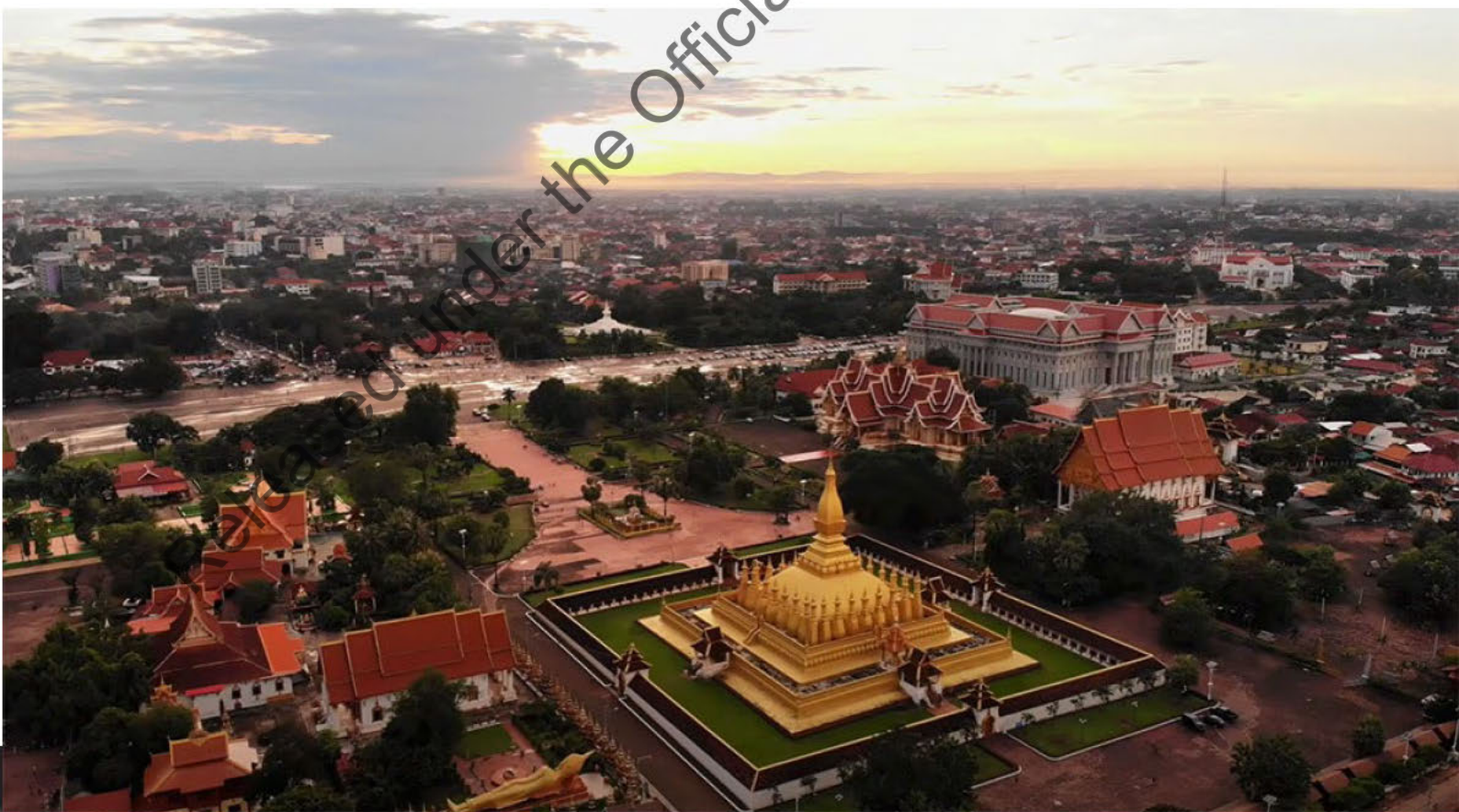
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**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
RT HON WINSTON PETERS**

VIENTIANE, LAOS  
24 – 28 JULY 2024

**Vol. 2 – BACKGROUND**

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# ISSUES BRIEFS

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**GEOSTRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

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Indo-Pacific geostrategic trends

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s6(a)

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s6(a)

*And a proliferation of other actors*

5. ASEAN has been successful in supporting peace and economic development in the Indo-Pacific. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

ASEAN released the “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific” (AOIP) in 2019 to advance its own vision for the region (which aligns closely with our own). <sup>s6(a)</sup>

6. Beyond ASEAN, the Indo-Pacific reflects a fundamental geographic and strategic reality for regional middle powers Australia and Japan. Both are stepping up engagement on a range of regional issues through respective Indo-Pacific initiatives and their investment in the Quad. Japan, Korea, and Canada have also recently offered updated visions for the region through national level Indo-Pacific approaches/strategies. Outside the Indo-Pacific, the EU, France, and the UK recognise the critical importance of the region to their interests and are seeking to grow their presence and influence. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

*New Zealand’s approach to the Indo-Pacific*

7. The overall trajectory in the Indo-Pacific is of deep concern to New Zealand. Facing a worsening strategic environment, our approach to the region is based on supporting those drivers that have long served to underpin its stability and prosperity - adherence to international law; openness and inclusivity; ASEAN centrality; open markets; transparency; and respect for sovereignty. In pursuing this objective, New Zealand invests heavily in the regional (ASEAN-centred and PIF) architecture. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

## South China Sea

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1. Tensions in the South China Sea are a key concern for New Zealand. While New Zealand does not take a position on the respective territorial claims, we do have fundamental interests at stake - in regional peace and stability, in upholding international law (in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)), and in maintaining the freedoms of navigation and overflight enshrined in UNCLOS upon which our trade routes depend. We consistently call on all claimants to refrain from actions that escalate tensions, and to resolve disputes peacefully in accordance with UNCLOS.

2. s6(a)

3. s6(a)

The US, Japan and the Philippines recently established a trilateral maritime dialogue following a trilateral Leader-led Summit in April 2024.

4. s6(a)

5. s6(a)

s6(a)

6. s6(a)

ASEAN and China continue negotiations toward a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, <sup>s6(a)</sup>

7. In December 2023 ASEAN Foreign Ministers released a Statement on Maintaining and Promoting Stability in the Maritime Sphere in Southeast Asia. While the content of the statement largely reflected existing ASEAN language, the promulgation of an agreed ASEAN position on maritime stability was a helpful signal of continued ASEAN solidarity in this important area. Laos as ASEAN Chair in 2024 has not thus far indicated that another statement on this topic is forthcoming this year.

8. Reflecting our interests in the South China Sea, New Zealand – as a number of other countries have – has publicly clarified our legal position on how UNCLOS applies in the Sea. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

Since August 2023, New Zealand (via our Embassy in Manila's X/Twitter account) has made a number of public statements expressing concern over China's escalating actions towards the Philippines. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

9. New Zealand also maintains a regular defence presence in the Sea, including to support UNCLOS and regional stability. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

10. It is important that New Zealand and likeminded partners maintain efforts to ensure UNCLOS is upheld in the South China Sea, against the backdrop of increasing tensions and destabilising activities. <sup>s6(a)</sup>



**REGIONAL TRENDS**

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## Artificial Intelligence

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1. New Zealand recognises the immense potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance and create new opportunities for countries to prosper. We also recognise that the technology amplifies existing threats and presents new risks, including deepfakes.
2. New Zealand's National Security Strategy 2023-2028 identified 'Emerging, critical and sensitive technologies' as a core issue for which AI is a key focus area. New Zealand is currently considering our policy settings for AI. We want to address the risks that the technology presents, while not closing off opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship, and trade.
3. On 8 July, Cabinet considered a paper that establishes a domestic policy position on AI. The paper proposed that Cabinet agrees a light touch, 'proportionate and risk-based' approach, rather than seeking to regulate AI through standalone new legislation. The paper also encourages government agencies to adopt AI for its benefits (while managing the risks). In New Zealand, AI adoption is relatively low.
4. Over the past year, we have seen a proliferation of international initiatives seeking to harness the opportunities presented by AI while mitigating its risks. As a small country with a developing domestic AI sector, we recognise the value of a coordinated international response. We know it will help us, and many other countries, to harness the potential of AI in a safe way.

### *AI in Asia*

5. In June, ASEAN launched its Guide on AI Governance and Ethics to serve as a practical tool to facilitate the design, development, and responsible deployment of AI technologies in the region. At the same time, ASEAN established the Working Group on AI Governance, aimed at addressing issues of AI governance and fostering safe, responsible, and ethical use of AI.
6. In March, the Republic of Korea hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Summit for Democracy with a particular focus on AI and digital technologies. Minister of Internal Affairs van Velden represented New Zealand in person, and Prime Minister Luxon gave a pre-recorded address. In addition to New Zealand, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Singapore signed the Summit's Ministerial statement.
7. In December 2023, the first Workshop on the Emerging Policy Approaches to Generative AI in ASEAN was held. The workshop provided a platform for participants from over 70 countries (including ASEAN Member States) to exchange and deliberate on strategies for the ethical advancement and use of generative AI.

## Regional nuclear-related issues

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### *Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ)*

1. New Zealand is a strong supporter of nuclear weapon-free zones, as a reaffirmation of State parties' rejection of nuclear weapons and support for non-proliferation. We value our cooperation on zones with ASEAN countries, as part of our long-standing advocacy for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

2. Like the other nuclear weapon-free zones, the 1995 South East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ or the Treaty of Bangkok) has a Protocol open for signature by the five NPT nuclear-weapon states (China, France, Russia, UK and US). If signed, the Protocol would oblige each NWS to undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any of the parties to the Zone, and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons within the Zone.

3. Negotiations continue between ASEAN Member States and the NWS to get the latter to sign the Protocol. <sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup>

4. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

5. In the margins of these meetings, there is a meeting of the SEANWFZ Commission (ASEAN only).

### *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)*

6. Uptake by ASEAN Member States of the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is strong. Six of the ten ASEAN Member States are parties. We encourage the Treaty's universalisation – Brunei, Indonesia and Myanmar are signatories but have not yet ratified <sup>s6(b)(i)</sup>, and Singapore has not yet signed it. New Zealand works closely with Malaysia as TPNW co-chairs.

*Southeast Asian views on AUKUS*

7. There remains a spectrum of views on AUKUS across the Indo-Pacific. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

8. <sup>s6(a), s6(b)(i)</sup>

9. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

As such, we expect the AUKUS partners to continue to work closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to determine and implement robust safeguards and verification measures for managing the nuclear aspects of Pillar One, and to meet obligations under international law. The AUKUS partners continue to emphasise that they will remain in full compliance with all obligations.

10. <sup>s6(a)</sup>

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**ASEAN RELATIONS**

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## New Zealand Defence Engagement with ASEAN

1. The ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM-Plus) is New Zealand's principal forum for multilateral defence engagement in Asia. New Zealand Defence engages with ASEAN through the ADMM-Plus, including Experts' Working Group (EWG) meetings. ADMM-Plus meetings encompass all working levels, including Ministerial.

- The ADMM-Plus promotes understanding and entrenches dialogue, with an emphasis on practical mil-mil cooperation.
- Further cooperation and dialogue reduce misunderstanding and promotes trust amongst members, providing opportunity to discuss key regional security issues: climate change, the South China Sea, Myanmar, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

### *Experts' Working Group co-chairs*

2. There are seven Expert Working Groups (EWGs) in the ADMM-Plus. Each of the EWGs bring together working level representatives from ADMM-Plus militaries several times a year for practical training, exercises, and to exchange ideas on best practice. EWG co-chairing cycles are three years, with the current cycle commencing in 2024.
3. New Zealand is co-chairing the EWG on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) with Singapore for the 2024-2027 cycle.

Experts' Working Group	2021-2024 Co-Chairs	2024-2027 Co-Chairs
<b>Maritime Security</b>	Thailand/United States	Philippines/Japan
<b>Counter-Terrorism</b>	Myanmar/Russia	Malaysia/India
<b>Humanitarian Assistance &amp; Disaster Relief</b>	Indonesia/India	Singapore/New Zealand
<b>Peacekeeping Operations</b>	Viet Nam/Japan	Brunei/China
<b>Military Medicine</b>	Brunei/Australia	Indonesia/United States
<b>Humanitarian Mine Action</b>	Cambodia/China	Laos/Russia
<b>Cyber Security</b>	Malaysia/ROK	Cambodia/Australia

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4. New Zealand has regular defence engagement with ASEAN Member States in addition to the EWGs, including hosting working level engagement: the Defence Policymakers' Course (most recently in July 2024) and the Future Leaders' Workshop (planned for November 2024). These activities include participants exclusively from ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste at the working level. Myanmar is not invited to these activities.

*If raised: ASEAN and ADMM-Plus membership*

5. New Zealand respects ASEAN's right to consider membership expansion based on its own regional benefits. New Zealand welcomes Timor-Leste's pathway to ASEAN and ADMM-Plus membership. New Zealand intends to include Timor-Leste in all New Zealand hosted ADMM-Plus activities going forward.

6. s6(a)

7. New Zealand supports states with direct and demonstrated commitment to the region being involved in ASEAN architecture.

*If raised: Myanmar*

8. ASEAN members determine ASEAN participation, and New Zealand acknowledges the decision to have non-political representation from Myanmar at high-level meetings. New Zealand will not invite Myanmar – whilst under military rule – to ADMM-Plus activities hosted in New Zealand.

*If raised: Engagement with Russia in multilateral forums*

9. s6(a)