

# Proactive Release

Date: 13 March 2024

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

| Title   | Reference       |
|---|-----------------|
| Minute of Decision: Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Dr Shane Reti - February 2024 | CAB-24-MIN-0017 |
| Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Dr Shane Reti - February 2024                     |                 |

Proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

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### Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Dr Shane Reti - February 2024

**Portfolios** Foreign Affairs / Health / Pacific Peoples

On 30 January 2024, the Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Dr Shane Reti from New Zealand, from 6 to 10 February 2024, to travel to Tonga, Cook Islands and Samoa for bilateral visits;
- 2 **agreed** that they be accompanied by two staff members from Mr Peters' office and one staff member from Dr Reti's office;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$23,447 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **noted** that they will also be accompanied by:
  - 4.1 officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, and the Ministry of Health, whose travel costs will met by their respective Votes;
  - 4.2 a media delegation, whose costs will be met by their outlets;
- 5 **noted** that Mr Peters will also be accompanied by his spouse, whose travel costs will be met by him personally;
- 6 **agreed** that in their absence:
  - 6.1 Hon Todd McClay act as Minister of Foreign Affairs;
  - 6.2 Hon Andrew Bayly act as Minister for Racing;
  - 6.3 Hon Matt Doocey act as Minister of Health;
  - 6.4 Hon Tama Potaka act as Minister for Pacific Peoples;
- 7 **noted** that the House is not sitting during their absence.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

**~~Restricted~~**

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Office of the Minister for Pacific Peoples and Minister of Health

Chair, Cabinet

**Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Shane Reti:  
Tuesday 6 February – Saturday 10 February 2024 inclusive**

- 1 We seek Cabinet approval to undertake official travel to Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa from Tuesday 6 February to Saturday 10 February 2024, as the Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Pacific Peoples and Minister of Health.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle.

**Purpose of Travel**

- 3 Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa are critical partners to New Zealand in our home region. New Zealand enjoys a high level of standing and influence amongst these partners and our visit seeks to reaffirm the importance New Zealand places on these relationships.
- 4 Tonga will host the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) this year. The PIF is the pre-eminent Pacific-led regional mechanism, and is the core platform for Pacific countries to discuss and build consensus on shared challenges. Our visit to Tonga will provide the opportunity to reaffirm New Zealand's desire to support Tonga to successfully host the PIF this year.
- 5 The Cook Islands, as part of the New Zealand Realm, has a close constitutional relationship with New Zealand. It is important that one of my initial multi-country engagements within the region include one of our Realm partners.
- 6 Samoa will host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in October. This visit will be an opportunity to reaffirm New Zealand's support to Samoa in successfully hosting CHOGM, and in leading the Association of Small Island States, in 2024.
- 7 The Pacific has become a theatre for increased strategic competition and all three countries are facing pressures as a result. Polynesia is also the part of the Pacific where New Zealand has strongest people-to-people links, and connections between our health systems. New Zealand should be well positioned to be a constructive partner to support these countries in navigating the various challenges they face. We will use the opportunity of visiting Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa to:

- Build New Zealand's relationship with the political leadership of the Governments of Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa – from a strategic, foreign policy, people-to-people and health perspective.
- Reinforce New Zealand as a key partner for Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa – particularly in upcoming endeavours to host regional fora and international events.
- Discuss key issues related to the PIF and within the Indo-Pacific region.
- Highlight the important role the New Zealand International Development Cooperation programme plays supporting Tonga, Cook Islands, and Samoa to deliver on their long-term development goals, including in the health domain.

### **Outline of Proposed visit**

- 8 During our visit to Tonga, we intend to meet:
- Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Samiu Vaipulu
  - Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon Fekitamoeloa 'Utoikamanu
  - Minister of Health, Hon Dr Saia Piukala
- 9 During our visit to Cook Islands, we intend to meet:
- Prime Minister, Hon Mark Brown
  - Leader of the Opposition, Tina Browne
  - Minister of Health, Hon Rose Toki-Brown
- 10 During our visit to Samoa, we intend to meet:
- Head of State, Tuimaleali'ifano Va'aleto'a Sualauvi II
  - Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Fiame Naomi Mata'afa
  - Leader of the Opposition, Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi
  - Minister of Health, Hon Valasi Luapitofanua Toogamaga Tafito Selesele
  - Director-General of South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Sefanaia Nawadra
- 11 If time permits, we will also visit New Zealand development projects in each country.
- 12 If travel is approved, we will depart for Tonga on Tuesday 6 February via an NZDF Boeing 757. We will then travel to Cook Islands and Samoa, returning to New Zealand on Saturday 10 February via the same asset. This scheduled visit will not affect our attendance at any Cabinet or Cabinet Committee meetings.

## Ministerial Party

- 13 If this travel is approved, Minister Peters will be accompanied by his spouse, with costs associated with her travel covered by himself. He will also be accompanied by his Chief of Staff and Senior Specialist Ministerial Advisor. Minister Reti will be accompanied by his Private Secretary (Pacific Peoples). Travel costs of this official delegation will be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel. We will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples and the Ministry of Health. Their costs will be covered by the relevant Ministries.
- 14 In addition, we propose to invite the following members of the New Zealand media to accompany us on the visit. Accompanying media will cover their own costs. The proposed composition of the media delegation, if approved, will be (though noting this is subject to change):

|                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Matt Manukuo and Eroti Navuku      | Pacific Media Network |
| Barbara Dreaver                    | TVNZ                  |
| Sam Sachdeva                       | Newsroom              |
| John Pulu and Anauli Karima Fai'ai | Tagata Pasifika       |
| Sanjesh Narain                     | Radio Tarana          |
| Koroi Hawkins and Moera Tuilaepa   | Radio NZ Pacific      |
| Aaron Ryan                         | Whakaata Maori        |
| Herewini Waikato                   | Mairanga Media        |
| Moana Makapelu Lee                 | Te Karere             |

## Travel Costs

- 15 The estimated costs of the travel would be:

| <b>ITEM</b>              | <b>COST</b>               |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Flights                  | Nil. Cost covered by NZDF |
| <b>Cook Islands</b>      |                           |
| Accommodation (1 night)  | NZ\$ 2,904                |
| Transport                | NZ\$ 1,012                |
| Waitangi Reception       | NZ\$ 2,000                |
| Gifts                    | NZ\$ 729                  |
| Cook Islands total       | NZ\$ 6,645                |
| <b>Tonga</b>             |                           |
| Accommodation (1 night)  | NZ\$ 2,340                |
| Transport                | NZ\$ 1,200                |
| Gifts                    | NZ\$ 825                  |
| Tonga total              | NZ\$ 4,365                |
| <b>Samoa</b>             |                           |
| Accommodation (2 nights) | NZ\$ 4,552                |

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Transport          | NZ\$ 200           |
| Waitangi Reception | NZ\$ 2,367         |
| Meals              | NZ\$ 500           |
| Gifts              | NZ\$ 910           |
| Samoa total        | NZ\$ 8,529         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>    | <b>NZ\$ 19,539</b> |
| Contingency 20%    | NZ\$ 3,908         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>NZ\$ 23,447</b> |

## Acting Ministers

**16** If travel is approved:

**16.1** Hon Todd McClay will cover Minister Peters' Foreign Affairs portfolio;

**16.2** Hon Andrew Bayly will cover Minister Peters' Racing portfolio;

**16.3** Hon Matt Doocoy will cover Minister Reti's Health portfolio; and

**16.4** Hon Tama Potaka will cover Minister Reti's Pacific Peoples portfolio.

## Proactive release

**17** This Cabinet paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO(18) 4, on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. Proactive release is subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

## Recommendations

**18** We recommend that Cabinet:

**18.1** authorise our absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from Tuesday 6 February to Saturday 10 February 2024 to travel to Tonga, Cook Islands and Samoa for a high-level visit;

**18.2** approve the estimated expenditure of \$23,447 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs - Members of the Executive – Travel;

**18.3** agree that we be accompanied by two members of staff from Minister Peters' office and one member of staff from Minister Reti's office;

**18.4** note that we will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry for Pacific Peoples and the Ministry of Health, whose travel costs will be a charge to Vote: Foreign Affairs, Vote: Pacific Peoples and Vote: Health;

**18.5** note that we will be accompanied by a delegation of media, whose costs will be met by their media organisations;

18.6 agree that in our absence from Tuesday 6 February to Saturday 10 February 2024:

18.6.1 Hon Todd McClay will cover the Foreign Affairs portfolio

18.6.2 Hon Andrew Bayly will cover the Racing portfolio;

18.6.3 Hon Matt Doocey will cover the Health portfolio; and

18.6.4 Hon Tama Potaka will cover the Pacific Peoples portfolio.

18.7 note that the House is not sitting during my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hon Shane Reti

Minister for Pacific Peoples

Minister of Health

Proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs