

Proactive Release

Date: 3 April 2024

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Minister for Trade:

Title	Reference
Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay - January 2024	CAB-24-MIN-0035
Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay - 23 February to 3 March 2024	

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis.

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay - January 2024

Portfolio

Trade

On 19 February 2024, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Todd McClay under CAB-24-SUB-0035 on his travel, from 23 to 28 January 2024, to Geneva, Switzerland and Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to contribute to preparations for the 13th World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference.

Diana Hawker
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister for Trade

~~Restricted~~

Office of the Minister for Trade

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Todd McClay - January 2024

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Geneva, Switzerland, and Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the UAE from 23 January to 28 January 2024 in my capacity as Minister for Trade. The primary purpose of my travel was to contribute to preparations for the 13th World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC13) taking place in Abu Dhabi from 26-29 February, and for which I will be a Vice-Chair.

Report

Geneva/WTO

- 1 In Geneva I had a busy programme of meeting with key WTO interlocutors to inform my approach to MC13. This included meetings with the WTO Director General; WTO Deputy Director; the Chairs for Fish and Agriculture negotiations (Iceland and Türkiye respectively); as well as the Chair of the WTO General Council (Botswana) and various WTO Members (including the Cairns Group, African Group, Pacific Group, Ecuador, and India); and Pacific Ambassadors.
- 2 As well as being informed of the progress of core negotiations of interest to New Zealand, including on Agriculture, E-commerce, and the Fish Subsidies agreement, I was able to reinforce New Zealand's commitment to the WTO and, as Vice Chair, to work with others to deliver a successful MC13.

UAE

- 3 I then travelled to Dubai for a bilateral programme with the UAE Trade Minister who is chairing MC13; the UAE's Minister for Environment and the UAE Minister for State (with responsibility for New Zealand). I also undertook a virtual meeting with the other MC13 Vice Chairs (Cameroon and Panama), the WTO DG and the General Council Chair.
- 4 During the bilateral programme I emphasised the importance of our relationship with the UAE - one of New Zealand's strongest in the region – and noted the importance of the connectivity provided by Emirates' direct air services. Key issues of discussion are outlined below.

UAE Trade Minister, Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi

- 5 Dr Thani and I agreed there was untapped potential in the trade and economic relationship ^{s6(a)}

s6(a)

I emphasised the Government was very focused on delivery for New Zealanders and achieving a high quality, comprehensive agreement swiftly with excellent market access for goods and services from day one would be important. I offered my full support and assistance to Dr Thani and his team toward achieving a successful MC13 next month in Abu Dhabi.

UAE Minister of State, Ahmed Al Sayegh

- 6 In addition to covering opportunities in the bilateral relationship, I took the opportunity to discuss the impact of the Israel-Hamas conflict, as well as the Houthis' current actions in the Red Sea, which I noted were having an impact on New Zealand exporters. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

UAE Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Dr Amna Al Shamsi

- 7 My meeting with the new UAE Environment Minister, Dr Amna Al Shamsi focused opportunities to strengthen food security cooperation, including under the 2022 NZ-UAE Food Security Partnership arrangement. Al Shamsi's key focus was identifying new collaboration areas, building upon the Partnership and Memorandums of Understanding that underpin MPI and MOCCA's well-established relationship. I noted potential for New Zealand agritech and high quality food production could be relevant to the UAE.
- 8 Overall, this visit presented key opportunities to have first-hand exchanges and to build relationships with key individuals before the Conference and gave me useful insights ahead of MC13.

Proactive release

- 9 I propose to release this paper proactively in part.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Todd McClay

Minister for Trade