

# Proactive Release

Date: 18 October 2019

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute has been proactively released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade:

***Report on Overseas Travel:  
Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth: Hon Damien O'Connor  
Beijing, China 1 to 8 August 2019  
(CAB-19-MIN-0457 refers)***

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
- 9(2)(j): to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)

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# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

**Portfolio**                      **Trade and Export Growth**

On 9 September 2019, the Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Damien O'Connor under CAB-19-SUB-0457 on his travel, from 1 to 8 August 2019, to Beijing, China, to attend a Ministerial meeting of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement negotiations and to hold bilateral meetings.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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**Hard-copy distribution:**

Prime Minister  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Hon Damien O'Connor

Office of the Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth

Chair, Cabinet

## **Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Beijing from 2 to 7 August 2019, where I represented New Zealand at a Ministerial-level negotiating meeting of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement and undertook bilateral calls with my Chinese agriculture and trade counterparts.

### **Report**

#### *RCEP*

1 The RCEP meeting focussed on delivering progress on the pledge made by Leaders at the RCEP Summit in November 2018 - that countries were “determined to conclude a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial RCEP in 2019.” s9(2)(j)

2 s9(2)(j)

3 The most important development in my bilateral meetings occurred with China, where I had a pull-aside meeting with Minister Zhong Shan, and full bilateral with Vice Minister Wang Shouwen. s6(a) and s9(2)(j)

#### *Bilateral agricultural programme*

4 During my bilateral programme as Minister of Agriculture and Minister for Food Safety, I signed a Food Safety Cooperation Arrangement with the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR), China’s domestic food regulator, which replaces a similar arrangement MPI had with China’s previous food safety regulator, the China Food and Drug Administration. The

Arrangement establishes a MPI-SAMR Joint Food Safety Commission, which will create an annual high-level forum for the two agencies to meet, discuss topics of interest, and set bilateral priorities.

- 5 I also met with Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) Vice-Minister Zhang Taolin. In a friendly call, we briefly surveyed the cooperation activities under way between MPI and MARA, and discussed rural development and the challenges of attracting young people to agricultural careers. On China's successful campaign for UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Director-General, <sup>s6(a)</sup>

and that Qu now had a role to help all countries promote the food system and food and agriculture professions.

- 6 My visit featured two business engagement events. The first was an evening reception hosted by the Ambassador where I had the opportunity to meet with Chinese and New Zealand agriculture and food businesses. The second was a lunch with in-country representatives of Fonterra, Synlait Milk, Tatua, and Zespri where we discussed market challenges and opportunities in depth.

#### **Proactive release**

- 7 This 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](#).

#### **Recommendation**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Damien O'Connor

Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth