

# Proactive Release

Date: 23 October 2019

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

***Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters:***

***Thailand: 30 July – 3 August 2019***

***(CAB-19-MIN-0473)***

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;
- 6(b): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 6(d): to protect the safety of persons.

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# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

**Portfolio**                      **Foreign Affairs**

On 16 September 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-19-SUB-0473 on his travel, from 30 July to 3 August 2019, to Bangkok, Thailand, to attend a series of Asia-Pacific regional meetings, and to conduct bilateral meetings.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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**Hard-copy distribution:**  
Prime Minister  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair

Cabinet

**REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: RT HON WINSTON PETERS: THAILAND, 30 JULY – 3 AUGUST 2019**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Bangkok, Thailand from 30 July – 3 August 2019.

**Report**

2 Our visit to Bangkok had two components: one bilateral, focusing on the Thailand-New Zealand relationship; and one regional, focusing on the various Asia-Pacific regional meetings of which New Zealand is a part.

***Bilateral programme***

3 The bilateral programme included:

- a courtesy call on the Speaker of Thailand's House of Representatives, Chuan Leekpai;
- a call on Ms Khunying Sudarat and Mr Phongthep Thepkanjana, senior leaders of the main opposition *Pheu Thai* Party;
- a discussion with Thailand's Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai;
- a dinner with Deputy Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul;
- an interview with Thailand's only English-language daily newspaper the *Bangkok Post*; and
- the launch of NZTE's Thailand Food & Beverage Market Development Programme.

4 The bilateral calls and the media engagements enabled us to convey the following key messages about the bilateral relationship with Thailand:

- New Zealand welcomed Thailand's recent elections and government formation, s6(a)

s6(a)

- We are keen to look at ways to strengthen our relationships further, including increasing the tempo of visits in both directions.
- We encouraged Thailand to continue to strengthen its democratic institutions. New Zealand would look to build appropriate ties with Parliament, political parties and civil society, s6(a)

s6(a)

- Thailand is a key regional partner for New Zealand, s6(a)

s6(a)

5 s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(b)

s6(b)

6 s6(a), s6(b), s6(d)

7 We asked how we could support Thailand in continuing along its democratic trajectory. s6(a), s6(b)

s6(a), s6(b)

s6(a), s6(b)

8 We also had the opportunity to discuss bilateral topics with Thailand's Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai. s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(b)

9 Newly appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health, Anutin Charnvirakul, hosted a dinner for the New Zealand delegation at his home, s6(a)

s6(a)

10 We raised New Zealand's opposition to the death penalty s6(a)

s6(a)

### ***Regional programme***

11 The major components of the regional programme of our visit to Bangkok were:

- the East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting (EAS);
- the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF);
- New Zealand's Ministerial Consultations with ASEAN (PMC+1); and
- The South West Pacific Dialogue (SWPD).

12 New Zealand's regional objectives for our visit to Thailand were:

- to advance and protect New Zealand's interests on the suite of regional security issues currently under discussion;
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

13 In addition to attending the four regional meetings, we conducted bilateral meetings with counterparts from Cambodia, the European Union, India, Mongolia, Russia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, the United Kingdom, and Viet Nam.

14 s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(b)

s6(b)

15 s6(b)

16 As in previous years, the South China Sea was a principal topic of discussion

s6(b)

17 s6(b)

s6(b)

18 Calls for preservation of the rules-based system came from across the spectrum. s6(b)

s6(b)

19 s6(b)

s6(b)

s6(a)

s6(a)

Cautious optimism s6(a)

s6(a)

was tempered by widespread concern at the DPRK's recent missile launches.

20 On Rakhine, most interventions acknowledged reports of progress and supported the efforts of the ASEAN Secretary General and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA centre). s6(a), s6(b)

s6(a), s6(b)

21 s6(b)

22 The vast majority of partners raised counter-terrorism during their ARF interventions, with s6(b) Ministers directly referencing the Christchurch terrorist attacks. ARF Ministers adopted a statement co-sponsored by New Zealand on “preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism”. New Zealand’s three proposed ARF initiatives for the next year were all approved: co-chairing the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) work stream and its sub-group meetings on countering violent extremism; co-hosting a workshop on countering terrorist use of the internet; and co-hosting a workshop on preventive diplomacy and conflict mitigation.

23 s6(a)

### **Proactive Release**

24 I plan to release this paper in part within 30 business days. All redactions will be made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

### **Recommendation**

25 I recommend that Cabinet **note** this report.

### **Approved for lodgement**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs