

Proactive Release

Date: 28 January 2020

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Proposed overseas travel: Fletcher Tabuteau:

Germany, Poland, Austria and Spain (9-18 December 2019)

(CAB-19-MIN-0635 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;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

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Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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.

Proposed Overseas Travel: Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 2 December 2019, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Fletcher Tabuteau MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 9 to 18 December 2019, to travel to:
 - 1.1 Germany, Poland and Austria for bilateral meetings;
 - 1.2 Madrid, Spain, to attend the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers' Meeting and bilateral meetings;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff from the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- 3 **approved** expenditure of up to \$41,114 for the travel expenses of the travelling party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel).

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:

Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Chair
Cabinet

PROPOSED OVERSEAS TRAVEL: FLETCHER TABUTEAU: GERMANY, POLAND, AUSTRIA AND SPAIN (9 – 18 DECEMBER 2019)

I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Germany, Poland, Austria and Spain from 9 – 18 December 2019, in my capacity as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The objectives of the proposed visit are to advance New Zealand's political and trade interests in central Europe with important European Union members, and then to represent New Zealand at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) in Madrid, Spain. The Prime Minister's approval has been given in principle.

Travel Objectives

2 The overall rationale for the proposed visit is Europe's importance to New Zealand's interests. We share a strong commitment to the same set of basic values, and the European Union (EU) is the world's largest donor as well as the seventh largest development partner in the Pacific. The EU is our third largest trading partner and second largest inward investor.

3 With 2019 seeing a period of significant change in Europe, s9(2)(j)

s9(2)(j)

June saw the election of a new European Parliament (with 61% new membership) and a new European Commission is expected to begin its five-year term in December. National elections have taken place in several countries, including Poland and Austria. These developments, of course, also come against the backdrop of Brexit (now scheduled to take place on 31 January 2020) and the changes that brings with it for New Zealand's interests in the region.

4 Specifically, the objectives for the **German** leg (10 December) include undertaking bilateral meetings with senior representatives of the German Government and attending, on behalf of Rt Hon Winston Peters, the international conference: "Advocating Human Rights in the 21st Century." This conference is one of the work streams under the German created "Alliance for Multilateralism" - a network of countries that advocate for strong and effective multilateral co-operation. Given Germany is a very important partner for New Zealand, attendance at this conference will provide an opportunity to reinforce to Germany the two countries shared values, including the mutual focus on upholding the international rules-based order and human rights framework.

5 The objectives for the **Poland** leg (11 December) are to meet with senior representatives of the incoming Government, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Development (responsible for International Trade Policy and Negotiations) and EU Funds. These meetings are an opportunity to reinforce the value that New Zealand places on the bilateral relationship and exchange views on contributors to regional development. The visit to Warsaw will also provide a useful opportunity to meet with key contacts to reiterate New Zealand's views on the EU-New Zealand FTA.

6 The objectives for **Austria** (12-13 December) are to meet with the senior representatives of the caretaker Government to reinforce the importance of the bilateral relationship to New Zealand. This would follow the expected upcoming visit of the Austrian State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Wellington two weeks prior.

s9(2)(f)(iv)

7 On our trade and economic interests, a proposed meeting with the Acting Federal Minister for Digital and Economic Affairs will be an opportunity to underline the case for an EU-New Zealand FTA, s6(a), s9(2)(j)

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

I would also have the opportunity to gain insights from Austria on regional development by undertaking a visit to Burgenland's Regional Development Agency. In terms of our multilateral

interests in Vienna, a proposed call on the Executive Director of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Disarmament and Arms Control, would serve to register New Zealand's strong support for the organisation.

8 My proposed participation at the **ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting** on behalf of Rt Hon Winston Peters during 15 – 16 December is the principal driver for the trip at this time. s6(a) it is a platform for bilateral meetings with a wide range of partners in a short time frame. In particular, this includes with smaller European and Central Asian partners whom we do not tend to see in other fora. (By way of brief background, ASEM is made up of 53 member states, including 30 European and 21 Asian countries. New Zealand joined ASEM in 2010. The Foreign Ministers' Meeting is held every two years – I represented New Zealand at the equivalent meeting in Myanmar in 2017 – and the leaders' level summits are held in alternate years.)

9 Bilateral meetings in the margins of ASEM s6(a) s6(a) are an opportunity to strengthen our relationships and advance our priorities, including an EU-New Zealand FTA, with some of the less prominent EU Member States s6(a) This year's ASEM FMM is also an opportunity to demonstrate New Zealand's commitment to revitalising the multilateral system. We would aim to provide a New Zealand voice and ensure consistent messaging on key international and regional issues, s6(a)

s6(a) Finally, the meeting would be an opportunity to speak in support of finding a resolution to the WTO dispute mechanism impasse and encourage other ASEM members to reaffirm the value of the dispute settlement function.

Travel

10 I propose to depart New Zealand on the evening of Monday 9 December and return to New Zealand immediately after ASEM, arriving on Wednesday 18 November 2019.

Under-Secretary's Party

11 I propose to be accompanied by a Foreign Affairs Private Secretary in the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Under-Secretary's Responsibilities

12 If the travel is approved, I propose that the Minister of Foreign Affairs cover my Foreign Affairs responsibilities and that the Minister for Regional Economic Development cover my Regional Economic Development responsibilities.

Costs of Travel

13 The projected costs of the proposed travel for the travelling party are:

Airfares:	\$32,178
German leg of visit:	\$1,100
Poland leg of visit:	\$1,550
Austria leg of visit:	\$2,066
Spain (ASEM) leg of visit:	\$2,262
Contingency (5%):	\$1,958
Total	\$41,114

Proactive Release

14 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

15 I recommend that Cabinet:

- a) **approve** in principle my travel to Germany, Poland, Austria and Spain from 9 – 18 December 2019 in my capacity as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs;
- b) **note** that I would be accompanied by one staff member from the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- c) **approve** expenditure up to \$41,114 for the travel expenses of the travelling party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel; and
- d) **agree** that my Foreign Affairs and Regional Economic Development responsibilities be covered by the respective Ministers from 9 - 18 December 2019.

Approved for lodgement

Fletcher Tabuteau MP
Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs