

Proactive Release

Date: 25 October 2022

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

Title	Reference
<i>Minute of Decision: Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Aupito William Sio</i>	CAB-22-MIN-0378
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Aupito William Sio</i>	



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Aupito William Sio

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 12 September 2022, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Aupito William Sio from New Zealand, from 25 September to 1 October 2022, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, to travel to Manila, Philippines to attend the second stage of the Asian Development Bank Annual Meeting and undertake a bilateral visit;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one staff member;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of \$39,901.00 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **noted** that he will be accompanied by officials from the Treasury and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by their own departments;
- 5 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 5.1 Hon Carmel Sepuloni will act as Minister for Pacific Peoples;
 - 5.2 Hon Kiri Allan will act as Minister for Courts;
- 6 **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Rachel Hayward
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

In Confidence

Office of the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs
Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Aupito William Sio

- 1 I am seeking Cabinet approval for travel from New Zealand to the Philippines to attend the second stage of the Asian Development Bank Annual Meeting, departing on Sunday 25 September 2022, and returning to New Zealand on Saturday 1 October 2022.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle and House leave has been sought from the Party Whip.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 The purpose of this trip is to attend the second stage of the 2022 Asian Development Bank (ADB) Annual Meeting in Manila, Philippines.
- 4 I also intend to undertake a short bilateral visit – the first New Zealand Ministerial visit to the Philippines since 2017.

The ADB provides a vital source of development resource to the region, including the Pacific

- 5 The ADB is a regional development bank set up to deliver social and economic development in the Asia-Pacific region. It assists its members, and partners, by delivering loans, technical assistance, grants and investments to its poorest and most vulnerable developing member countries. It is overseen by a Board of Governors, who are mostly Ministers of Finance from each member country. New Zealand's Governor at the ADB is the Minister of Finance and our Alternate Governor is the Secretary to the Treasury.
- 6 The ADB is critically important to New Zealand, as it is a vital source of development finance to the Pacific, including as a co-financing partner with New Zealand. In 2021 the ADB committed an estimated USD 1.01 billion to Pacific countries.¹

The 2022 Annual Meeting provides an opportunity to re-engage with the ADB and other attendees in person

- 7 The ADB Annual Meeting offers an opportunity for New Zealand to re-engage with the ADB in person and build bilateral relationships with other attendees. The last in-person meeting was held in 2019 in Fiji and Associate Minister of Finance, Hon Shane Jones, led New Zealand's delegation. At this stage, all but one Pacific Island country will be sending a delegation to the Annual Meeting, with most delegations being led by their ADB Governor.

¹ Comprising grants, and regular and concessional loans: ADB (November 2021), *Work Program and Budget Framework*, p. 71.

- 8 The Annual Meeting features a significant emphasis on climate and sustainable finance and provides an opportunity to explore potential collaboration with the ADB on climate issues, including on the implementation of New Zealand's International Climate Finance Strategy. The meeting includes the Governors' Business Session and Governors' Plenary where heads of delegations from each country have the opportunity to provide oral remarks setting out their priorities for the institution. This would provide me with an opportunity to advocate for New Zealand's priorities at the institution, including supporting the Pacific.
- 9 My objectives for the trip include:
- 9.1 **Reconnecting New Zealand with the world:** this will include bilateral engagements with key partners at the ADB Annual Meeting, including heads of delegation from the Pacific; as well as building new links with the Philippines' new administration, and promoting our bilateral and regional trading ties;²
 - 9.2 **Consolidating and leveraging our relationship with the ADB** to strengthen resilience in the Pacific and help lift Pacific countries toward achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; and
 - 9.3 **Promoting New Zealand values and knowledge in support of multilateralism:** this will involve advocating for New Zealand's priorities at the ADB (including effective and sustainable governance, delivering resources to the Pacific, and ensuring diversity on the Board and amongst staff).
- 10 The Minister of Finance supports me attending the ADB Annual Meeting on his behalf. The objectives of my proposed travel aim to complement with New Zealand's development objectives and the objectives of the Minister of Finance's upcoming travel to the United States, where he will attend the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.
- 11 Outside of formal ADB business, I will also seek engagements with ADB management (including the ADB President) and with bilateral counterparts. My bilateral programme will focus particularly on the Pacific and the Philippines. Potential engagements, which are yet to be confirmed, include:
- Pacific ADB Governors (many of whom are either Ministers of Finance or Prime Ministers), and
 - Key personnel from the Philippines Government (including the Philippines' Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo).

Ministerial Party

- 12 I will be accompanied by the Associate Foreign Affairs Private Secretary from my office.

² I note that the ADB expects a significant turnout from Pacific Governors, with at least nine Pacific countries represented by their Governor so far.

- 13 Officials from the Treasury and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will also attend the meeting. Their travel will be funded from within Vote Finance and Vote Foreign Affairs baselines, respectively.

Travel Costs

- 14 The estimated cost of this trip is \$39,901. This will be charged to Vote: Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel, as follows:

Airfares	\$19,136
Accommodation	\$3,315
Gifts	\$600
Breakfast function and evening reception	\$7,400
Other expenses, including meals	\$2,800
Contingency (20%)	<u>\$6,650</u>
Total	\$39,901

Acting Ministers

- 15 For the period of my absence:

15.1 Hon Kiri Allan will be Acting Minister for Courts; and

15.2 Hon Carmel Sepuloni will be Acting Minister for Pacific Peoples.

Proactive release

- 16 I propose to proactively release this paper.

Recommendations

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet:

1.1 Authorise my absence from New Zealand, from 25 September to 1 October 2022, subject to leave from Parliament being secured to travel to Manila, Philippines to attend the second stage of the Asian Development Bank Annual Meeting;

1.2 Agree that I be accompanied by one staff member from my office;

1.3 Approve the estimated expenditure of \$39,901 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party; as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs: [Members of the Executive – Travel];

1.4 note that I will be accompanied by officials from the Treasury and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose travel costs will be met by their own departments;

- 1.5 Agree that in my absence, Hon Kiri Allan will be Acting Minister for Courts and Hon Carmel Sepuloni will be Acting Minister for Pacific Peoples;
- 1.6 Note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Aupito William Sio
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs

Proactively released by the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs