

Proactive Release

Date: 29 July 2019

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

Titles of papers:

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: Fiji, 14-16 May 2019

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters: Fiji, 14-16 May 2019

Title of minutes:

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

Report Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

(CAB-19-MIN-0218 and 0292 refer)

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;



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: Rt Hon Winston Peters

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 13 May 2019, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters from New Zealand, from 14 to 16 May 2019, to travel to Fiji to attend a summit between Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and the United Nations Secretary General;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff from his office;
- 3 **approved** the expenditure of up to \$6,812 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 4.1 Hon David Parker act as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control;
 - 4.2 Hon Dr David Clark act as Minister for State Owned Enterprises;
 - 4.3 Hon Shane Jones act as Minister for Racing;
- 5 **noted** that the House is not sitting in the period of his absence.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair
Cabinet

PROPOSED OVERSEAS TRAVEL: RT HON WINSTON PETERS: FIJI, 14-16 MAY

I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Fiji from 14-16 May to attend a summit between Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders and the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres. The Prime Minister, who is not able to attend due to competing international commitments, has given in-principle approval for my travel.

2 Mr Guterres' visit to New Zealand and the Pacific (he will also travel to Tuvalu and Vanuatu) is the first time a UN Secretary General has been in the Pacific region for almost 20 years. As such, it sends a strong signal about his wish to engage with Pacific Island countries.

Programme

3 As well as attend the summit between PIF Leaders and the UNSG, I intend to:

- engage with relevant Pacific Leaders – including Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama, who was out of country when I last visited Fiji; and
- attend a meeting being convened by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, to prepare for this year's Pacific Islands Forum in Tuvalu.

Objectives

4 The Pacific Islands region is a priority for New Zealand. Objectives for my visit include:

- Help shape conversations between the UNSG and the Pacific, so that UN engagement in the region is constructive and supportive of New Zealand and Pacific objectives;

- Help prepare for the Pacific Islands Forum in Tuvalu in August, which will be logistically challenging for the host country; and
- Continue to build relationships with Pacific Island leaders.

Travel

5 I propose to depart New Zealand at 3.55pm on Tuesday 14 May and return to New Zealand at 11.40am on Thursday 16 May 2019. This travel takes place during a recess week; and I would not miss any Cabinet meetings during this time.

Ministerial Party

6 I will be accompanied by the Senior Foreign Affairs Adviser from my office.

Acting Ministers

7 If Cabinet approves my travel, Hon David Parker will act in my Foreign Affairs, and Disarmament portfolios, Hon Dr David Clark will act in my State Owned Enterprises portfolio, and Hon Shane Jones will act in my Racing portfolio.

Costs of Travel

8 The projected costs of the proposed travel are as follows:

Airfares	\$2880
Accommodation:	\$1832
Hospitality and gifts:	\$0
Meals	\$600
Contingency	\$1500
Estimated Total	\$6812

9 Expenditure of up to \$6812 for travel expenses is proposed to be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel.

Proactive Release

10 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

11 I recommend that Cabinet:

- a) **approve** my proposed travel to Fiji from 14-16 May 2019;
- b) **note** that I will be accompanied by one staff member from my office;
- c) **approve** expenditure of up to \$6,812 for travel expenses for the official delegation as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel;
- d) **agree** that Hon David Parker will act in my Foreign Affairs and Disarmament portfolios, Hon Dr David Clark will act in my State Owned Enterprises portfolio, and Hon Shane Jones will act in my Racing portfolio.

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 17 June 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-19-SUB-0292 on his travel, from 14 to 16 May 2019, to Fiji to attend the United Nations – Pacific Islands Forum Dialogue.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:
Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Proactively released by the
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair

Cabinet

**REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: RT HON WINSTON PETERS: FIJI, 14–16
MAY 2019**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Fiji from 14 – 16 May 2019.

Report

The United Nations-Pacific Islands Forum Dialogue

2 Following a successful visit to New Zealand in early May 2019, the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres undertook a three-country tour of the Pacific Islands region, with stops in Fiji, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The New Zealand Defence Force helped to facilitate this Pacific tour by flying the Secretary-General and his party between Auckland and Nadi, and then between Port Vila and Sydney. This NZDF travel facilitation was greatly appreciated by the Secretary-General, and allowed me to spend a further evening with him as we flew together from New Zealand to Fiji.

3 The Prime Minister, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, was invited to attend the capstone of the Secretary-General's visit to the Pacific: a High Level Political Dialogue between the Secretary-General and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders in Suva. However, due to her existing commitments in Europe, I attended in the Prime Minister's place. The High Level Political Dialogue was an opportunity for the Pacific Islands region as a whole to convey to the Secretary-General the urgency and importance of the challenges that the Pacific faces.

4 The Dialogue was presided over by the PIF Chair, Nauru's President Baron Waqa, and supported by PIF Secretary General Dame Meg Taylor. President Waqa opened the Dialogue by drawing a link between the impact of climate change and the struggle of Pacific states for their independence. Used as "unsinkable aircraft carriers in someone else's war" pre-independence, Pacific states were now on another front line, combatting an environmental phenomenon they were not responsible for creating. The "hyper-competitive world" they now inhabited did not

operate in the “best interests of small isolated nations”. Consequently, Pacific states had become strong supporters of the multilateral system. There was no doubt that climate change was “the greatest threat to our independence”, and “those [states] creating our vulnerability are the ones driving climate change”.

5 In his response, Secretary-General Guterres told Leaders he was in the Pacific to focus on two fundamental challenges: climate change; and the threats to oceans and seas. He acknowledged that Pacific states were on the frontline. They were therefore allies in the quest to convince all countries of the need to address these challenges. The Secretary-General praised Pacific countries for their efforts at the forefront of climate negotiations. They had been effective at keeping the 1.5 degree target at the centre of global advocacy, and were responding to climate change impacts with adaptation and mitigation measures.

6 The President of Palau, Tommy Remengesau, highlighted the climate and finance challenge facing Pacific Island countries. The financing gap was significant to meet the region’s adaption and mitigation needs. He requested UN leadership to implore donors to provide pledged amounts. The President of the Marshall Islands, Hilda Heine, focussed on the central role of women and youth in combatting climate change. She urged an inter-generational dialogue between youth and Leaders and called for global mechanisms to include women and youth in climate action.

7 The President of Kiribati, Taneti Mamau, highlighted the nexus between climate and resilience, suggesting the traditional resilience mechanisms had been undermined. Samoan Prime Minister Tuilaepa proposed strengthening data innovation for disaster management and climate in the region, and urged the global community finance models to be de-coupled from income status and political situations and instead recognise vulnerability in considering finance and development needs.

8 Fijian Prime Minister Bainimarama said Pacific countries would lead by example and highlighted various national renewable energy targets from PIF members, and the active consideration of innovative financial instruments such as blue and green bonds. Cook Islands Prime Minister Henry Puna focussed on the Pacific’s connection with the ocean. He posited that the Cook Islands’ multiple-use marine protected area (Marae Moana) was an example of an instrument to sustainably manage the oceans for future generations.

9 Tuvaluan Prime Minister Enele Sopoanga was complimentary of New Zealand’s Pacific Reset and Australia’s Step-Up initiatives, regarding these as representing the contemporary and modern partnership to tackle issues such as climate change. He mused that the UN might like to follow our examples and come up with a UN ‘Pacific remix’ strategy.

10 New Zealand’s comments in the Dialogue highlighted the scale of the challenge in our region and the need for action now. We noted that transformative action was possible even in the smallest nations in the world, and outlined our domestic climate action, including the zero carbon bill, and our partnerships in the region, including the \$300m commitment over four years for climate related-support.

11 In closing remarks, Secretary-General Guterres said the discussion with Leaders had left him with four main conclusions:

- Pacific Island countries had the moral authority to tell the world that climate change needed to be tackled, and was leading by example.
- “We are not yet winning the battle”, and were not on track to reach the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees by 2100. Achieving this would require greater political will.
- Climate change was inter-linked with other global challenges, including development, and peace and security. Therefore, there was a need for us all to mobilise the whole multilateral system.
- It was important to join efforts and bring together all actors, including the private sector, civil society and cities for example.

Other visit components

12 My visit to Fiji also provided the opportunity for bilateral engagements with the Leaders of Palau and Fiji.

13 Palau’s President Remengesau sought New Zealand’s support for s6(a)
s6(a)

We observed that it was necessary for the region to speak together in order for its voice to be heard. Whilst climate change was the immediate challenge, geostrategic competition had not gone away. The region needed to stand united on these challenges if its voice was to be heard. s6(b)

14 Fijian Prime Minister Bainimarama warmly welcomed the New Zealand delegation to Suva. He expressed condolences for the Christchurch terrorist attack and commended Prime Minister Ardern’s “exemplary” leadership, noting that there was “much the world could learn” from her example. He commended New Zealand for the establishment of an independent climate change commission, and the introduction of the zero carbon bill, which he posited could be replicated globally.

15 We took the opportunity to outline to Prime Minister Bainimarama the objectives of the Pacific Reset, and the implications of it for Fiji, including in terms of funding (such as climate change), the way New Zealand approached its Pacific relationships, and the investment in human capital in the region in order to deliver.

s6(b)

16 The New Zealand delegation also took the opportunity to visit the BlueScope Pacific steel plant which is partially owned by New Zealand Steel. The visit included a tour of the plant where steel billets (produced at the Glenbrook steelworks) are converted into reinforcing bars, as well as discussions on business climate in Fiji, the challenges of steel tariffs, and BlueScope’s community activities in Fiji.

Conclusion

17 The Dialogue between Secretary-General Guterres and Pacific Leaders exceeded expectations. It came together well and the region delivered a largely united message to the Secretary-General. Common messages from Leaders to the Secretary-General included the resilience and strength of the region; the need to act now; a call for the Secretary-General to use his moral authority to get the major polluters to increase their ambition and political will; and, the need for finance, knowledge and innovation to speed up the responses and support transformational change.

18 s6(a)

Through his Pacific tour, he has done much to improve the standing and reputation of the UN in the region.

19 The Dialogue was notable for a couple of other milestones. Several delegations mentioned that this was the first PIF Leader-level meeting at the Secretariat for 17 years, and it was the first PIF meeting Fiji had attended at Leader level since it was suspended from the organisation in 2009 – representing Fiji's full re-integration into the PIF family after a decade of interruption.

20 New Zealand's presence at this important Pacific meeting at a senior level was noticed, and appreciated – thereby helping to reinforce our Pacific Reset messaging about our lift in investment and commitment to the region.

Proactive Release

21 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

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

Approved for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs