

# Proactive Release

Date: 13 February 2020

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

***Report on Overseas Travel: Minister of Foreign Affairs:***

***(CAB-19-MIN 632 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.

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# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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

**Portfolio**                      **Foreign Affairs**

On 9 December 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-19-SUB-0632 on his travel, from 28 October to 2 November 2019, to Seoul, Korea and Tokyo, Japan for bilateral visits.

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: REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND JAPAN 28 OCTOBER – 2 NOVEMBER 2019**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Seoul, Korea and Tokyo, Japan from 28 October – 2 November 2019.

**Report**

Our travel to North Asia in late October and early November allowed us to engage with two of New Zealand's most important regional partners.

**Korea**

2 The purpose of our visit to Seoul was to reinforce with the Republic of Korea (ROK) our shared values and the need for small and medium-sized countries to work together to protect the rules-based international order and to pursue engagement with the ROK in the Pacific Islands region. This was the first visit to Seoul by a New Zealand Foreign Minister since 2014, and reflected the upswing in the relationship following President Moon's visit to New Zealand in December 2018. It was an excellent opportunity to underline our like-mindedness with Korea at the highest levels on a range of issues of concern to New Zealand.

3 The centrepiece of the Korean visit was a bilateral meeting and lunch with Foreign Minister Kang. Our conversation extended across the breadth of the bilateral relationship, and we also signed a Social Security Agreement, which will facilitate better access to pension entitlements for people who travel back and forth between our countries.

4 Minister Kang opened by commenting on the fundamental values of democracy and market economy shared by our two countries. We responded that the ROK was not just a modern economic success story, but also a modern democratic success story.

5 Commenting on the excellent relationship we have on Antarctic issues, we invited Minister Kang to visit Antarctica via Christchurch. s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

9 We also delivered a speech hosted by the newly inaugurated Center on Oceanian Studies at Yonsei University entitled New Zealand and Korea: A Close Partnership in a Complex Region; and visited the Korean Racing Authority, to discuss deepening engagement between the New Zealand and Korean horse racing sectors.

### ***Japan***

10 Our visit to Tokyo had three high-level engagements: dinner with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Taro Aso; dinner with Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, and a meeting with Defence Minister Taro Kono.

11 Foreign Minister Motegi hosted the New Zealand delegation at an official dinner at the Iikura Guest House. This was Motegi's first time hosting an official dinner since his appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs in September. At the press stand-up before the dinner, Motegi condemned North Korea's missile launch into the Sea of Japan, which had taken place just three hours before, as a violation of UN sanctions. We endorsed Minister Motegi's comments, publicly expressing concern regarding the missile launch.

s6(a)

s6(a)

14 Following the Foreign Ministers' meeting, a Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the Pacific Islands region was issued, which outlines partnership objectives, priority areas, and consultation processes for New Zealand and Japan's policy and development cooperation in the region. It included a suite of new development initiatives in areas such as regional renewable energy training, regional water security, Solomon Islands aviation infrastructure, medical infrastructure and equipment in Kiribati, and disaster risk reduction in Fiji.

15 Deputy Prime Minister Aso hosted the New Zealand delegation at his s6(a)

Over the dinner, we were able to review recent positive developments in the NZ/Japan relationship (including the outcomes of Prime Minister Ardern's visit in September). s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

18 Other elements of the Tokyo programme included:

- A Pacific Reception at the New Zealand Embassy, which was well attended by Pacific Ambassadors. The Dean of the Pacific Diplomatic Corps, Federated States of Micronesia Ambassador John Fritz; and new Special Adviser to Prime Minister Abe for National Security Issues Minoru Kihara MP both delivered remarks.
- A breakfast with five Members of Parliament who are part of the New Zealand – Japan Parliamentarians Friendship League. The wide-ranging discussion touched on the Pacific Islands region; Japan's challenges with an aging society; empowering women in the workforce; election participation and voting rates; rugby; and New Zealand's wine industry.
- A visit to the Toshogu Shrine in Nikko to formally gift a white horse from New Zealand, in front of thousands of visitors at a ceremony conducted by the

Shrine's Chief Priest Inaba. The horse is named Kōmaru, which means 'sheltered' in Maori and 'shining' in Japanese. Kōmaru replaced the previous New Zealand white horse, Kōtuku, which passed away in 2017. This continues a tradition dating back almost 50 years of a New Zealand-raised horse performing sacred duties at one of the most important shrines in Japan.

### **Proactive Release**

19 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**

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

### **Approved for lodgment**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs