



## Proactive Release

The following document has been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Prime Minister:

### **Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Todd McClay - June 2024**

The following documents have been included in this release:

**Title of paper:** Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Todd McClay - June 2024 (CAB-24-SUB-0243 refers)

**Title of minute:** Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Todd McClay - June 2024 (CAB-24-MIN-0243 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 section of the Act that would apply has 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:**

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand
- section 6(b)(i), to protect the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion

Office of the Prime Minister

Chair, Cabinet

**Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon and Hon Todd McClay – Japan, 16-20 June 2024**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel with Hon Todd McClay to Japan, from Sunday 16 June to Thursday 20 June.

**Report**

- 1 In our reset of New Zealand's foreign policy, we agreed to significantly increase our focus on and resources applied to Asia, including Japan.
- 2 Japan lives in a difficult neighbourhood, adjacent s6(a) [redacted] Russia (a country with which it has a territorial dispute) and North Korea (which regularly launches ballistic missile tests over Japan). A US Ally, Japan lies at the heart of the emerging latticework of Indo-Pacific security cooperation, including the Quad and the US-Japan-ROK trilateral. s6(a) [redacted]
- 3 Economically, Japan is the world's fourth largest economy and our fourth largest export destination and fourth largest source of foreign direct investment. Traditionally, a premium market, Japan is important to our primary exporters, as well as tourism and education suppliers. As we look to diversify exports and grow foreign investment, this is a key market on which we should focus efforts.
- 4 Against that background, the objectives of this trip were achieved by:
  - 4.1 *Deepening the relationship.* In addition to Prime Minister Kishida, I connected with 15 Members of Parliament, including a former Prime Minister, the serving Defence Minister and his deputy, s6(a) [redacted]. We also demonstrated to the Japanese that New Zealand is relevant to their strategic circumstances by (i) concluding the Information Sharing Agreement; and (ii) announcing our enhanced NZDF deployment intended to detect and deter North Korea's sanctions evasion activities.
  - 4.2 *Reinvigorating core economic interests.* With elements of our trade relationship not having recovered from COVID (e.g. tourism at 60% of 2019 numbers), we worked with the 29-strong business delegation to promote opportunities in our traditional markets: food and beverage, tourism and education. We also met with longstanding investors in the New Zealand forestry and fisheries sector, providing them assurance that the Government values the partnership with them.
  - 4.3 *Leveraging emerging opportunities.* With Japan a major source of innovation, this mission had a focus on new opportunities. For example, we promoted New Zealand's space industry, connected with renewable energy investors, and profiled rugby as an emergent commercial opportunity. As well as

announcing some new investment deals, we encouraged major institutional investors to take another look at New Zealand's potential.

**Government-to-Government**

5 s6(b)(i) [Redacted]

6 Bilaterally, that flowed through to two areas of emphasis:

6.1 s6(b)(i) [Redacted]  
s6(a) [Redacted]

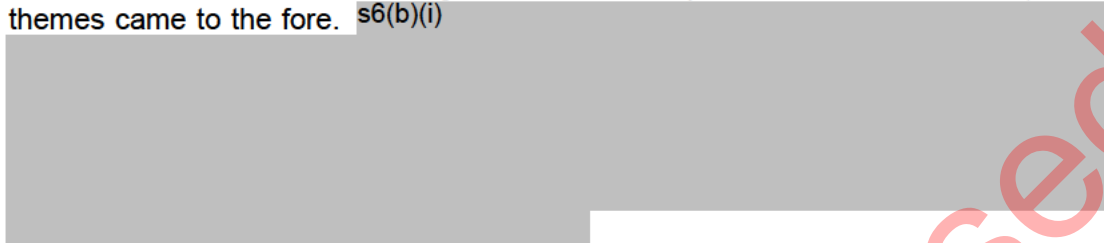
6.2 s6(b)(i) [Redacted]

7 Two themes stuck out in Japan. First, I was reminded again of the importance of committing for the long-term to enduring relationships. Japan is a key market for many New Zealand businesses, with it important that they sustain a presence in the market so they can evolve their offering better to take advantage of new opportunities in a country of 120 million people. The same applies to our government-to-government relationship, with it important that we continue to recommit to and modernise a relationship with a G7 country that sits at the absolute heart of the emerging Indo-Pacific architecture.

8 s6(b)(i) [Redacted]

## **Papua New Guinea**

- 9 With our aircraft having a planned refuelling stop in Port Moresby, Prime Minister Marape and his Foreign, Trade and Agriculture Ministers were all kind enough to come and meet Minister McClay and I at the airport. In our discussions, three themes came to the fore. s6(b)(i)



- 10 Obviously, the Air Force's B757 breaking down in Port Moresby became a problem to be solved. I appreciated Minister McClay, Air New Zealand, the Air Force and officials coming together to find a speedy solution that enabled the delegation to get to Japan. s9(2)(g)(i)



### **Proactive release**

- 11 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO (18) 4 on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. The paper will be subject to redaction as appropriate on the grounds set out under the Official Information Act 1982.

### **Recommendation**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon

Prime Minister



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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*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.*

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### Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Todd McClay - June 2024

**Portfolio**                      **Prime Minister**

On 1 July 2024, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Prime Minister under CAB-24-SUB-0243 on his travel, and that of Hon Todd McClay, from 16 to 20 June 2024, to Japan for a bilateral visit and to grow New Zealand's economic opportunities.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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