



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 - July 2024

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister - July 2024 (CAB-24-SUB-0279 refers)

Title of minute: Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister - July 2024 (CAB-24-MIN-0279 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)(ii), to protect the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by any international organisation
- 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, July 2024

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my official travel to Washington DC and San Francisco from 8 July to 13 July where I participated in the NATO Summit and undertook several engagements with US political and business leaders.


Report

1 In the reset of our foreign policy, we agreed both to apply renewed attentiveness to our traditional security partners (like the United States) and to support new mini-lateral groupings that we can use to advance our interests (such as the Indo-Pacific Four). We are also focused on building our international connections to support our economic recovery. My visit to the United States allowed me to progress all three of these objectives.

(i) **The US-NZ relationship**

2 The political focus in the United States is sharply on November's Presidential election. With Democrats and Republicans locked in a battle for the White House, my visit allowed me to invest effort in building New Zealand's constituency across both sides of the aisle. I had a pull-aside meeting with the President and Secretary of State, met with the Governor of California, 22 members of Congress, senior members of the Biden Administration, plus some former players in the Trump Administration. With a clear focus on New Zealand as a trusted partner for the United States, I used the opportunity to explain our foreign policy reset.

3 s6(a), s6(b)(ii)



(ii) **NATO and the Indo-Pacific Four**

4 At the NATO Summit, I chaired a meeting of the Indo-Pacific Four (IP4), participated in the NATO-IP4 dialogue session, and met with a series of NATO leaders. Celebrating its 75th anniversary, s9(2)(g)(i)

It did so by highlighting that two-thirds of its membership has now reached the 2% of GDP target for defence spending, by welcoming Finland and Sweden formally to its fold, and by pledging long-term assistance to Ukraine coupled with a series of bilateral security guarantees.

5 Against this backdrop, I chaired the IP4, providing an opportunity for Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and New Zealand to meet collectively to discuss shared security challenges, including the intersect with the Euro-Atlantic. We then met together with President Zelenskyy followed by President Biden. It was evident from these meetings and

from the dialogue with all NATO Allies that security between the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific is increasingly seen as indivisible.

6 s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

7 s6(a), s6(b)(ii)

President Zelenskyy welcomed our latest tranche of support. I also had the opportunity of formal bilateral meetings with a number of NATO leaders, as well as informal engagement with well over half of the Allies at various social events. Participating in the NATO Summit was, therefore, a good opportunity to further embed the IP4 as a mini-lateral grouping s6(a), to formally advance our interests with NATO Allies, and to build inter-personal connections with many leaders.

(iii) Advancing our economic interests

8 Finally, in both Washington DC and San Francisco, I was able to advance our economic interests. The United States is the world's biggest economy, an innovation and technology powerhouse, with some of the most sophisticated capital pools in the world. During my meetings in Congress, there was a sentiment that the lack of a FTA between the US and New Zealand was an anomaly, and that even while the US authorising environment is a complicating variable, we should be finding creative ways to advance our economic links, including on innovation, technology and energy. I met a series of innovators with which New Zealand has partnerships, notably Apple and NASA. While in the US, I pitched New Zealand to major institutional investor, Blackrock, s9(2)(g)(i)

I also met with a series of venture capitalists to boost interest in the New Zealand market. I did interviews positioning New Zealand with two major financial newspapers. Governor Newsom and I were also able to advance the relationship with California, with which we continue to expand our cooperation on decarbonisation.

Proactive release

9 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.

Recommendations

10 I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon
Prime Minister



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.

Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister - July 2024

Portfolio **Prime Minister**

On 5 August 2024, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Prime Minister under CAB-24-SUB-0279 on his travel, from 8 to 20 July 2023, to Washington D.C. and San Francisco, United States of America, to attend the NATO Leaders' Summit and undertake a range of bilateral visits.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

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