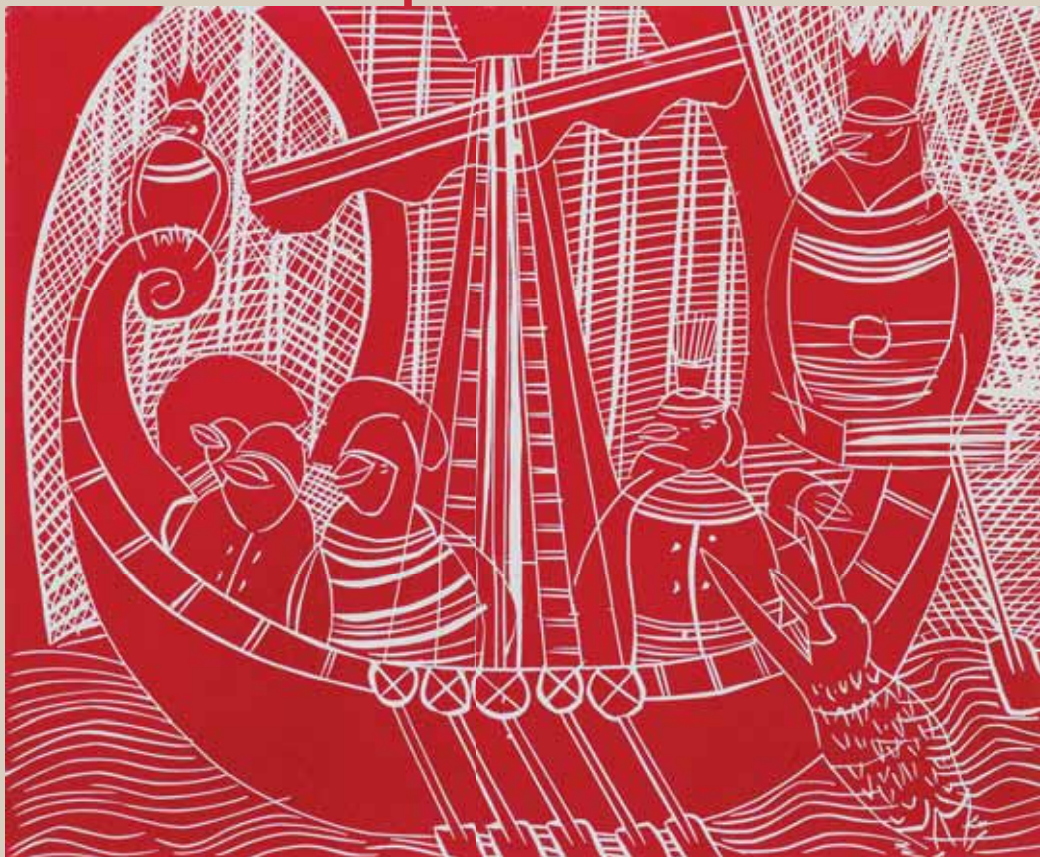


# Pacific Snapshot Seminar



19 November 2009, Auckland.



NEW ZEALAND MINISTRY OF  
**FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE**  
MANATŪ AORERE

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## The Pacific region is of central importance to New Zealand.

New Zealand is a Pacific nation and we share strong bonds of shared interests: history, culture, trade, family and future. New Zealand's strong support in response to the recent tsunami in Samoa and Tonga illustrates the importance we place on our relationships with our Pacific neighbours. This Government has affirmed its focus on the Pacific region. There is a desire to embed long-term relationships and assistance with the Pacific to help the region move toward stability and prosperity for all who live in it. This seminar seeks to reinforce the linkages between government and the private sector in pursuit of those goals. Businesses such as those represented at this event have a clear role in this, through their investment in, knowledge of and long-standing links with the Pacific.



### JOHN ALLEN

SECRETARY OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS AND TRADE

**John Allen was appointed as the Ministry's Chief Executive and Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade in July 2009. He leads the Ministry as the Government's chief adviser on foreign and trade policy, official development assistance, international law, and diplomatic and consular issues. He is responsible to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Disarmament and Arms Control.**

Before taking up his role at the Ministry, John served as the Chief Executive of New Zealand Post for six years. He joined New Zealand Post in 1994 and held a number of senior management roles prior to his appointment as Chief Executive. In his earlier career, John reached the position of Partner at law firm Rudd Watts & Stone, and was a visiting Lecturer in Law at Victoria University of Wellington. John is Chair of the Territorial Forces Employers Support Council and formerly co-Chair of the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum.



## Kiribati

Robert Kaiwai,  
High Commissioner

**Robert Kaiwai joined MFAT in 2001. He has worked in the Ministry's Environment Division and been Deputy Director of the Middle East and Africa Division. He was seconded to the Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change in 2003. He also served as the Deputy Director, New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office in Taiwan. Prior to joining MFAT Robert lived in Japan and returned to New Zealand in 1996 working for Japanese company Juken Nissho as General Affairs Manager. As High Commissioner he is also accredited to the Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of Marshall Islands.**

## New Zealand-Kiribati bilateral relationship

The Republic of Kiribati consists of 33 low-lying atoll islands spread over 3.5 million square kilometres of ocean with a land mass of only 811 square kilometres. There are three main island groups, the Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands.

Because of its dispersed and isolated geography, a narrow export base and vulnerability to external shocks economic development in Kiribati is severely constrained. Kiribati is one of the poorest countries in the Pacific.

In contrast to its limited land, capital and human resources, Kiribati is surrounded by an extremely valuable asset in the form of its tuna-rich Exclusive Economic Zone, the second largest in the world spanning 5000 km west to east and 2000km north to south.

Kiribati is focused on opportunities to maximise its share of the income generated from fishing and to encourage private investment in the marine sector. Niche tourism on Christmas Island, a world-class bone fishing and bird watching destination, is another sector Kiribati is looking to further develop.

Government finances are underpinned by a reserve fund, valued at A\$583 million in March 2009. However, the fund has declined substantially in real per capita terms. The budget deficit for 2009 is expected to be A\$26.31 million, 13% of GDP. The trade deficit is consistently large with exports averaging A\$5 million versus imports of A\$80-100 million.

New Zealand has increased its ODA allocation to Kiribati from \$3million in 2007/2008 to \$7million in 2009/2010, with a focus on public sector performance, human resource development, education, and urban renewal.

In particular, the Sustainable Towns Programme (NZ\$15 million from 2008-2013) aims to develop economically viable and liveable urban centres for about 9000 people in South Tarawa and Kiritimati Island.

The Pacific Access Category (PAC) allows up to 75 I-Kiribati to move to NZ each year. Kiribati was also one of five kick start countries at the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme's inception.

Support with negotiating and tendering air services over the last year has been very successful. A new airline will begin serving Tarawa/Nadi the first week in November hopefully ending the predatory pricing now common on the route.

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## Niue

Brian Smythe,  
High Commissioner

**Brian Smythe has been in Niue since January 2008. Prior to this he was Pacific Trade Adviser in the Pacific Division of the Ministry for three years, involved in issues such as PACER and WTO accessions by Pacific nations. He has had postings to Geneva, Brussels and Moscow and has been High Commissioner to Vanuatu twice, and also to Tonga.**

## New Zealand – Niue bilateral relationship

Niue is part of the Realm of New Zealand and Niueans have New Zealand citizenship. Since 1974 it has been “self governing in free association with New Zealand”, a status less than independent but with almost all responsibility resting with Niue. New Zealand is committed to providing Niue with “necessary economic and administrative assistance”.

Niue’s population has continued to decline since 1974 and now is about 1300, with fewer than a thousand being Niueans. This has had a dramatic impact on the island’s economy and overall viability. Niue’s links are almost exclusively with New Zealand through the weekly Air New Zealand flight from Auckland and the monthly Reef Shipping service, also from Auckland.

Most of Niue’s imports originate in New Zealand - in 2008 \$10.5 million out of its total imports of \$11 million (95%) were from New Zealand. Niue’s exports to New Zealand have been minimal since the commercial fishing venture closed in late 2007.

Informal exports include mainly personal consignments of taro, crabs, fish and vanilla.

New Zealand provides substantial assistance to Niue in the form of budgetary, technical and other support. In 2008/09 bilateral assistance amounted to some \$18 million, including a contribution of \$5 million to the Niue International Trust Fund. Additional funding that year was also provided to enable Niue to host the Pacific Island Forum leaders meeting.

The government of Premier Talagi, elected in June 2008, has identified tourism development and fisheries as the keystones of Niue’s economic revival. Responding to strong criticism of existing efforts relating to tourism development under New Zealand’s assistance programme, New Zealand’s Foreign Minister Hon Murray McCully appointed a Special Envoy for Tourism Development to assess prospects for significant tourism development on the island. The resultant Hall Report is now being assessed by both Niue and New Zealand to identify possibilities for substantial developments in this sector.

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## Noumea

Simon Draper,  
Consul-General

**Simon Draper joined MFAT after several years in the banking and finance field.**

**He has been Consul General since August 2008. Previously the Director of the Chief Executive's Office in MFAT, Simon has also had roles as the Ministry's Strategic Policy Manager, Programme Manager for the Cook Islands and was seconded as Foreign Policy Advisor to Rt. Hon Simon Upton.**

**As Consul-General in Noumea he has responsibility for the three French Pacific territories; New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna.**

## New Zealand - French Pacific Territories (FPTs) bilateral relationship

With combined exports of over \$400 million, New Caledonia and French Polynesia are New Zealand's 2nd and 3rd largest export markets in the Pacific region. Nearly 50% of New Zealand's exports to France are in fact to the FPTs.

**New Caledonia** has a solid economic base with the world's 3rd largest known reserves of nickel, an essential ingredient for stainless steel. Exports of nickel are worth US\$3.2 billion per annum and supplies have been identified for the next 100 years.

Current infrastructure projects underway include:

- US\$3.2 billion Vale Inco mine
- SUS 4 billion Koniambo mine
- SUS 432 million hospital project
- SUS110 million 2011 Pacific Games project
- SUS117 million airport upgrade.

Clustered around these projects are a range of other projects, including housing, key infrastructure, schooling.

In addition, New Caledonians are significant investors in New Zealand and purchase a range of education and tourism services from New Zealand. New Caledonia has been little touched by the global economic crisis and New Caledonia's average income remains slightly higher than New Zealand's.

Historically, New Zealand firms have struggled with the obstacles of language and standards (European Union standards). There is little doubt, however, that opportunities exist in this rich market for New Zealand firms. Under a policy of greater Pacific regional integration, supported by France, we can expect New Caledonia to look even more towards New Zealand as a provider of imports.

There are very strong French Military / New Zealand Defence Force links – underpinned by the New Zealand War Cemetery in New Caledonia where 246 New Zealanders are buried.

Finally New Caledonia is New Zealand's closest neighbour – 2hrs 30 minutes with flights 4 times a week.

**French Polynesia's** economy is based on tourism, which has been declining for a number of years and has been exacerbated by the global economic crisis. New Zealand is a key supplier of food products to the tourism market. Supplying the tourism industry remains an opportunity for New Zealand exporters as does education and tourism services.

New Zealand's Polynesian linkages with French Polynesia go back a long way and the warmth of welcome and familiarity, makes French Polynesia a natural trading partner of New Zealand's.

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**PNG**  
Niels Holm,  
High Commissioner

**Niels Holm previously served as a Trade Commissioner (Tokyo 1987-88) after working in trade and investment promotion roles in the Department of Trade and Industry, and as Private Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He has been posted to Japan twice, once to the Philippines, was Ambassador to Iran (accredited to Afghanistan and Pakistan) 2001-4, and has been High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea since January 2007.**

## **New Zealand - Papua New Guinea bilateral relationship**

Papua New Guinea illustrates well the pressing economic, social, political and development challenges facing Melanesian countries: unbalanced economic performance, high population growth; heavy reliance on extractive industries; declining human development indicators and significant law and order problems.

However, on the positive side PNG enjoys a strong human capital resource. It also has vast natural resources, with liquid natural gas (LNG) set to take its place beside copper, gold and oil as the nation's major export earners. PNG's GDP is forecast to increase by more than 100% if LNG exports commence in 2014 as scheduled.

The current administration has provided some much needed macroeconomic stability, and PNG has avoided the full impact of the global economic crisis. Although the government is still likely to run a significant operating deficit. GDP growth for the current year is

expected to be around 4%, possibly rising back as high as 6% over the next two years.

The bilateral political relationship has always been warm, if not as substantive as that PNG has with former colonial power Australia. New Zealand governments have always been aware that with three quarters of the population of the South Pacific region, and perhaps eighty percent of the natural resources, PNG is the natural regional powerhouse.

Accordingly, New Zealand seeks to work with PNG on regional affairs, especially within the Pacific Islands Forum, meaning there is a record of close and often productive consultation in both regional and global contexts.

The other key strand of the relationship is Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). New Zealand has been a development partner since PNG's independence, with the ODA programme now worth some NZ\$29 million. This is principally spent in the areas of health, education and promoting rural livelihoods.

Bilateral trade however remains modest, with New Zealand importing little from PNG and principally exporting just a few major items such as sheep meat, dairy, used clothing and metals. Although some 4000 Australian firms export to PNG, New Zealand's business profile is low, and there are only a couple of New Zealand firms with an in-country presence.

The opportunities available in PNG may merit greater attention from the exporting community. It is a tough, but potentially rewarding market, especially during the construction phase of the LNG project once it is finally confirmed.

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## Samoa

Caroline Bilkey,  
High Commissioner

Caroline Bilkey has a Bachelor of Arts and a Law degree from the University of Auckland and a Masters of Management from Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. She served as a New Zealand diplomat in Canberra, Geneva and Bangkok before being appointed to Samoa as High Commissioner. She has also worked at the New Zealand Embassy in Washington DC and for the United Nations in Rwanda, Tanzania and Thailand.

## New Zealand - Samoa bilateral relationship

The overwhelming response by both the New Zealand Government and the people of New Zealand to assist Samoa after the devastating tsunami that struck the country on 29 September is evidence of the very close and special relationship our two countries share. Our historic links, our Pacific Forum connections, our Treaty of Friendship and the close personal ties with over 130,000 New Zealanders of Samoan origin mean that New Zealand will always be among the first to respond to Samoa in time of need.

It has been truly inspiring to see over 150 New Zealand doctors, nurses, engineers, defence personnel, police, grief counsellors and civil defence experts mobilise in an NZInc relief effort to support the Samoan people. This is in addition to the \$2 million in immediate relief and \$6 million in budget support

(to be matched by the Australian Government) pledged by our Government. I have felt very proud to be a kiwi as hundreds of ordinary New Zealanders have volunteered to help Samoa as the country begins to recover from the tragedy.

New Zealand already has a significant development assistance programme in Samoa (\$14 million 09/10 F/Y) focusing on strengthening the private sector, education and training, health, public sector reform and community development. We will look at bolstering this assistance focusing on areas that need extra help post-tsunami such as the tourism sector. Tourism was a developing sector prior to the tsunami which enjoyed growth even when the rest of the economy took a downturn in the global financial crisis. Despite a setback we can expect it to grow again in future and we want to be there to support it.

Another issue that we will continue to address and which we will look to the private sector to help us with is the serious trade imbalance whereby New Zealand exports over \$100 million to Samoa but imports only \$6 million from Samoa.

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## Solomon Islands

Mark Ramsden,  
High Commissioner

**Mark Ramsden joined MFAT in 1991. He was most recently Team Leader for Pacific Regional Growth and Governance in NZAID. Mark has significant experience in the Pacific region, particularly in Melanesia, with previous postings to Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Bougainville. He has also served with New Zealand's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York. In 2005/2006 Mark completed a Masters of Public Administration at the John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.**

## New Zealand - Solomon Islands bilateral relationship

New Zealand has well-developed and multifaceted links with Solomon Islands. These extend back into the colonial period, when New Zealand missionaries were active in the region (the Anglican Church of Melanesia, in particular, maintains strong links to New Zealand). Many New Zealanders fought in the Solomon Islands during World War 2, participating in the landings at Mono, and in the battles for Guadalcanal and Vella Lavella. Many Solomon Islanders have been educated in New Zealand, including Prime Minister Derek Sikua (who holds a PhD from Waikato University).

New Zealand's support for the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) since its inception in 2003 is a major feature of the bilateral relationship. New Zealand supports RAMSI's objective of

maintaining security and stability in the Solomons, including through deployment of New Zealand Defence Force and Police personnel, and also advisers from Inland Revenue.

The Solomon Islands is New Zealand's largest single bilateral aid recipient, with \$36 million programmed for 2009-10. The programme is focussed on promoting broad-based economic growth through support for education, governance (strengthening revenue collection), fisheries and RAMSI.

Bilateral trade is small. Exports for the year ending June 2008 were \$18 million; imports \$2 million. While the Solomon Islands economy has grown rapidly in recent years, the global economic situation has had a marked impact on the country's economic well-being. Nevertheless, opportunities remain for New Zealand firms. These include construction and food and beverage supply, as the Solomon Islands tourism industry has enjoyed some growth (albeit off a small base).

Solomon Islands was included as a "kick start state" under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme. This scheme has added a new dimension to the relationship, with some 300 Solomon Islanders having worked in New Zealand under the scheme over the last year.

The Governor-General visited Solomon Islands in October, and Prime Minister John Key and Foreign Minister Murray McCully visited Honiara in January 2009.

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## Tonga

Christine Bogle,  
High Commissioner

**Christine Bogle has been in Tonga since January 2008. She has had previous postings as New Zealand's Ambassador to Spain, Morocco and the Vatican (2000-2004) and as Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy in Rome (1992-96). She has also served as Second Secretary in Lima, Peru. Back in Wellington, Christine has had considerable experience in the multilateral field (environment issues and disarmament) and has also worked on economic affairs, Latin America, Australia, South Pacific issues, and the aid programme.**

## New Zealand –Tonga Bilateral Relationship

Tonga is coming to a key point in its process of democratic reform. A Commission on constitutional and electoral reform reported back to Parliament this month, and Parliament will be making decisions on any necessary legislative changes required. Elections under a new, more democratic system are scheduled to take place in 2010. The changes under consideration are profound, and the following few years of transition and adjustment to a new system will be challenging. New Zealand is committed to assisting Tonga through this bedding in process and beyond, and to support public awareness of these changes and the new democratic system. This is one of the reasons the government decided to increase our bilateral aid allocation for Tonga from \$12 million to \$16 million in both 2009 and 2010 and to \$18 million in 2011.

Tonga's economy is heavily dependent on remittances (estimated at around 40 percent of gross domestic product) and on development assistance. Significant potential lies in the tourism industry, an area that New Zealand will be assisting over the coming years.

Another priority for New Zealand and Tonga is to help facilitate the growth of Tonga's export sector for agricultural produce. A number of New Zealanders have set up businesses in the tourism sector there. Several New Zealand business missions have visited Tonga this year, and a new Business Opportunity Support Scheme (BOSS) has been launched, to encourage Tongan private sector development.

Tongan and New Zealand firms will be able to apply for support to cover the cost of feasibility studies for new investments or joint ventures in Tonga to promote exports from Tonga. Our aid programme also concentrates on the education sector, Police development, assisting the political reform process, supporting infrastructure, and emergency assistance. In addition, a priority for Tonga is for part of our increased aid allocation to be devoted to the energy sector, especially renewables.

A highly beneficial development for both New Zealand and Tonga over the past two years has been the temporary employment programme (RSE) whereby over 1200 Tongan workers have now travelled to New Zealand on temporary assignments, assisting both the New Zealand employers (in the horticulture and viticulture sectors) and the Tongan families back home.

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## Vanuatu

Jeff Langley,  
High Commissioner

Jeff Langley joined MFAT in 1993. He has been New Zealand's High Commissioner in Vanuatu since August 2007. Prior to his current role he was head of the Southeast Asia Unit in the Asia Division of MFAT. He has also had postings in Brazil and at the UN in New York.

## New Zealand-Vanuatu Bilateral Relationship

After many years marked by political turmoil and economic ups and downs, Vanuatu has recently emerged as the quiet achiever of the Pacific. Since 2003 it has averaged around 6% GDP growth every year, and even in the shadow of the global economic crisis, estimated growth should hit 3.8% this year and 4.6% in 2010.

This remarkable economic performance has been driven by expansion in tourism, construction, real estate and, to a lesser extent, agriculture. Air arrivals have grown steadily throughout this period (14% in 2007, 16% in 2008), and are now being overtaken by dramatic increases in cruise ship visitors.

This economic success has been backed by a stable government that has worked hard to manage its finances, control inflation (currently 5.5%) and introduce business friendly policies such as competition in air services and telecommunications, and reformed business laws. Vanuatu's financial centre, like other international tax havens, is adapting to modern requirements for openness and transparency.

There are still plenty of challenges ahead. Vanuatu remains a "Least Developed Country" with the majority of the 250,000 population living a subsistence lifestyle in remote rural communities. Health and education standards are well below international targets and the youthful population is growing rapidly.

Substantial investment is needed in infrastructure to open up new economic opportunities - some of which is already underway. And investment in land should be approached with care to ensure custom ownership claims are properly dealt with (all land in Vanuatu remains in custom ownership and is sold on long term leases).

Our goods trade with Vanuatu is small (around NZ\$23m) and New Zealand business interests have tended to focus on the services sector, including tourism, real estate and construction. There are increasing opportunities for New Zealand in all these areas. Three direct flights per week have seen Kiwi tourist numbers climb steadily, but perhaps the biggest contribution to the economic relationship has been Vanuatu's rapid uptake of work opportunities under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. With 2,500 workers in New Zealand in the 08/09 year, Vanuatu is by far the biggest Pacific contributor to the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme and Vanuatu labour has become a valuable input to our horticulture and viticulture industries.

In July 2010 Vanuatu will celebrate its 30th Anniversary of Independence, and will host the Pacific Islands Forum to mark the occasion.

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# REGIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION: PACER PLUS

In an effort to help create favourable conditions for private sector led growth and to stimulate economic development throughout the Pacific, attempts are being made to pursue a process of gradual trade and economic integration. The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) provides a framework for pursuit of this goal, clearly stating this objective as:

“the gradual trade and economic integration of the economies of the Forum members in a way that is fully supportive of sustainable development of the Forum Island Countries and to contribute to their gradual and progressive integration into the international economy.”

As part of this process, Leaders, at the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting in Cairns in August 2009, agreed to the commencement of negotiations on PACER Plus. PACER Plus is a proposed free trade and economic development agreement between New Zealand, Australia, and Forum Island Countries. PACER Plus will extend and operationalise the commitment to regional economic integration and trade liberalisation contained in the original PACER Agreement.

New Zealand’s objective in pursuing PACER Plus will be to ensure that the agreement promotes sustainable economic growth in the Pacific, by assisting Pacific Island Countries to capitalise on their potential for trade. Our vision is for an agreement that will equip Pacific Island Countries to better withstand external shocks, to raise standards of living, to increase jobs and export capacity in the region, and to address the significant trade imbalance that currently exists between the Pacific and New Zealand.

As a trade and economic agreement, PACER Plus will create a new framework under which the private sector will operate. Engagement with the private sector and other national interest groups throughout the negotiations will therefore be critical to ensuring the success of PACER Plus. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is interested in hearing from interested parties at any stage during the PACER Plus negotiations.

Please visit

[www.mfat.govt.nz](http://www.mfat.govt.nz) for further information on making a submission on PACER Plus negotiations or contact the Pacific Division’s Regional Trade Unit through [pacerplus@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:pacerplus@mfat.govt.nz)



## Chris Seed

### Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Chris Seed's programme responsibilities include the Pacific, Australia and MFAT's public diplomacy and outreach. He has served in the Pacific (Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands) and in Australia, as well as in Iran

and the United Kingdom. He was a deputy secretary at the Ministry of Defence from 2004-08.



## John Adank

### Director Pacific Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

John Adank has been Director of MFAT's Pacific Division since April 2007. Immediately prior to this he served as New Zealand High Commissioner to Samoa and concurrently as Consul-General to

American Samoa from 2004-2007. Earlier in his career John served in MFAT's Legal Division and at New Zealand's Missions to the UN and multilateral agencies in New York and Geneva.



## Auckland Office

### Michael Chilton, Director of the Auckland Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

**Michael Chilton has been the Director of the Auckland Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade since September 2006. His overseas postings have included Thailand, Singapore, the United States and Britain. More recently, he has been High Commissioner to Malaysia and Brunei, and Ambassador to Viet Nam.**

His Wellington assignments have included Director of Public Affairs, and Director of the Middle East and Africa Division.

As Executive Director of the APEC Task Force in 1998-99, he arranged the meetings of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation in New Zealand, and has since advised several subsequent APEC hosts, including the Governments of China, Chile, Viet Nam and Peru. He was awarded the Queens Service Order, (QSO) in 2000.

He is a member of the Executive Committee of the New Zealand Pacific Business Council. He also represents MFAT on the Export New Zealand Auckland Advisory Committee, and on the Trade and Foreign Policy Committee of the Employers and Manufacturers Association.

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**Pacific Islands Trade and Investment Commission was established to assist the Pacific Forum countries with marketing their products in New Zealand, encouraging investment in the Pacific and promoting Pacific Island tourism.**

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**South-pacific.travel, (formerly South Pacific Tourism Organisation) is the regional agency mandated to facilitate the sustainable development of the tourism sector in the South Pacific.**

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**Tonga – New Zealand Business Council is an association of businesses within Tonga and New Zealand who trade between the two countries and are interested in New Zealand as an export market.**

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