

28. National Day Celebrations

28.1 National Day Receptions

Missions must notify the Protocol Division by Third Person Note, well in advance, of the date, time and venue proposed for a National Day reception. On advice of a National Day, the Ministry will organise for a senior official from MFAT to deliver a toast on behalf of the New Zealand Government. It is no longer the practice for Ministers of the Crown to speak at National Days. A New Zealand Government representative may not be available when National Day celebrations are held during the weekend and on public holidays.

Missions are free to arrange the programme of formalities for their National Day reception in whatever form they wish, or to have no formalities if that is their choice. If there are to be no formalities this should be notified in the original Third Person Note to the Protocol Division.

A commonly used order of the event is as follows:

- Toast, or short speech by the host Head of Mission ending with a toast, to 'His Majesty The King Charles III, King of New Zealand' (and the 'Government and people of New Zealand' – optional).
- National Anthem of New Zealand (recorded or performed live depending on the mission's preference).
- Reply toast by the New Zealand Government representative to the Head of State of the host country.
- National Anthem of the host country (live or recorded, as above).

Some missions may elect to play both of the National Anthems (New Zealand's followed by the host country anthem) prior to the exchange of speeches and toasts. This is entirely a matter of the host country preference.

For an instrumental version of the New Zealand National Anthem, one verse is sufficient but if a sung version is used, the first verse is normally performed twice, first in Māori and then in English.

28.2 Waitangi Day

Heads of Mission may be invited to attend the official celebration of New Zealand's National Day, Waitangi Day, hosted by the Governor-General. Protocol Division will liaise with missions well in advance on all arrangements for this event.

28.3 Congratulatory Messages

The New Zealand Government does not expect to receive congratulatory messages on the occasion of Waitangi Day nor does it follow the practice of sending such messages on the occasion of other countries' National Days. However, any congratulatory messages countries do choose to address to the Governor-General or the New Zealand Government should, in the first instance, be sent to Protocol Division via email: Protocol@mfat.govt.nz