NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

23 June 2026

Minister of Foreign Affairs	For approval by	24 June 2026
Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology	For approval by	24 June 2026

New Zealand invited to attend Pax Silica Summit as an observer

BRIEFING	Decision Submission
PURPOSE	To agree that New Zealand attends a Pax Silica Summit in Washington DC as an observer and endorses the "Joint Statement on AI Opportunity Partnership".

Recommended referrals

Prime Minister	For information by	24 June 2026
Minister for National Security and Intelligence	For information by	24 June 2026
Minister for Economic Growth	For information by	24 June 2026
Minister for Energy	For information by	24 June 2026
Associate Minister for National Security and Intelligence	For information by	24 June 2026
Minister for Trade and Investment	For information by	24 June 2026
Minister for Resources	For information by	24 June 2026
Minister Responsible for the GCSB and NZSIS	For information by	24 June 2026

Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Gina Williams	General Manager	Science, MBIE	s9(2)(a)
Peter Shackleton	Unit Manager	International Security and Disarmament Division	

Minister's Office to complete

☐ Approved	☐ Noted	☐ Referred
☐ Needs amendment	☐ Declined	☐ Withdrawn
☐ Overtaken by events	☐ See Minister's notes	

Comments

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Key points

- On 16 June, the New Zealand Embassy in Washington DC received an informal invitation from the United States (US) Department of State (State), inviting New Zealand to attend, as an "Observer Nation", a Pax Silica Summit to be hosted in Washington DC on Thursday 25 June. If agreed, New Zealand attendance would be by the Ambassador and other Embassy staff.

- Pax Silica was launched in December 2025 and is described as State's "flagship effort on AI and supply chain security". It is focused on greater collaboration across those supply chains, including in critical minerals refining and processing, energy, advanced manufacturing and technology, network infrastructure, and software applications. The US has made it clear that New Zealand's participation (and that of all other Observers) is dependent on endorsing the Joint Statement on AI Opportunity Partnership (see annex one).

- The statement is broadly consistent with New Zealand policy. It "champions a pro-growth regulatory environment" and promotes the role of "entrepreneurs [..] as the architects of the future". s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(h)

  New Zealand's 2025 AI Strategy promotes "innovative and trustworthy" AI systems, in alignment with the OECD AI Principles. New Zealand takes a non-regulatory approach to AI development, relying on existing regulation and legislation to address the sector. New Zealand is actively promoting the adoption of AI as a productivity enhancer and seeking investment in our AI sector.

- New Zealand has not been invited to join Pax Silica proper but participation in this Summit could precede a formal invitation in the future. Pax Silica members are: Australia, Finland, Greece, India, Israel, Japan, Norway, Qatar, Korea, Singapore, Sweden, Philippines, UAE and UK. Other countries invited to observe are Vietnam, Indonesia, Portugal, Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Costa Rica and Chile.

- s6(a)

- The US is at the forefront of AI development and US firms are major investors in AI infrastructure globally. New Zealand is likely to rely on US AI models given the existing centrality of the US tech stack throughout our economy. Attending the Summit would enable us to have discussions in the margins with the US Government and industry representatives on access to frontier AI, including early access models s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

- The US Government has recently taken steps to limit access to frontier AI models, such as Anthropic's Mythos. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

- The invitation to observe can be met from existing baselines and will provide New Zealand a clearer view of the direction of travel for this grouping. Pax Silica is one of many tech-related multi-country groupings recently proposed by the US and any further engagement in it would need strategic consideration and would likely require reprioritisation of other work.

- There are mixed views on the role of AI in society and the impacts of its development, including how to address indigenous knowledge and cultural intellectual property, the provision of supporting infrastructure and inputs such as critical minerals, and the displacement of labour.

Grahame Morton for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Gina Williams for Secretary of Economic Growth

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Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

1	**Agree** that New Zealand should attend the Pax Silica meeting as an observer and endorse the Joint Statement on AI Opportunity Partnership (annexed) which is a requirement for attendance.	**Yes / No**
2	**Note** that attendance at this meeting can be met within baselines but further involvement in this initiative, if invited, could require reprioritisation of resources.	**Yes / No**
3	**Refer** a copy of this submission to the Prime Minister, Minister for National Security and Intelligence, Minister for Economic Growth, Minister for Energy, Associate Minister for National Security and Intelligence, Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Resources and Minister Responsible for the GCSB and NZSIS.	**Yes / No**

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date: / /

Hon Penny Simmonds
Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology

Date: / /

Annex one: Joint Statement on AI Opportunity Partnership

We, the undersigned, gathered in common purpose, affirm a shared vision for our innovation ecosystems, and a common commitment to the principles of trusted partnership and technological progress to advance our mutual prosperity and economic security.

Recognizing the critical importance of the physical backbone for artificial intelligence—from critical minerals and energy to compute and semiconductor manufacturing—we share the view that the future of AI should be built on a foundation of trusted collaboration, economic security, innovation, and fair competition.

Embracing AI Opportunity

We express our desire to pursue an approach to AI that promotes entrepreneurship and innovation for our mutual prosperity, anchored in the following shared priorities:

- ***Promoting Pro-innovation Regulation:*** We support the adoption of policies and frameworks that advance technological innovation and promote investment. We aim to champion a pro-growth regulatory environment that fosters AI innovation and empowers builders, s9(2)(g)(i) and the platforms that enable them—in all our economies—to test, deploy, and scale secure and trusted AI ecosystems.

- ***Strengthening Broad Cooperation on AI:*** We plan to deepen cooperation to support the supply chains of tomorrow. This includes joint R&D initiatives to expand reliable energy infrastructure, produce critical minerals, harness skilled workforces, and accelerate the development of trusted semiconductor ecosystems. We will also explore opportunities to jointly export our AI stack to partner countries.

- ***Mobilizing Private Industry***: We seek to foster an environment where the AI revolution is driven by robust ecosystems of developer tools and platforms that lower barriers to entry, underpinned by the creative power of the private sector. We endeavor to facilitate cross-border venture capital flows and R&D partnerships to help ensure our entrepreneurs remain the architects of the future. We intend to work together to enable industry partnerships and investments in next-generation data centers, to expand access to AI compute, and s9(2)(g) advance innovation in trusted AI models—including both open and closed-source models—as well as the development of AI applications.

This partnership signals a new era in which we s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) in the pursuit of shared prosperity and progress. Together, we aspire to build an AI future that serves our peoples, strengthens our economies and societies, and reflects our shared values of entrepreneurship, innovation, and the rule of law.