

United States – Aotearoa New Zealand Joint Statement:

A 21st-Century Partnership for the Pacific, the Indo-Pacific, and the World

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. is honored to welcome Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern of Aotearoa New Zealand to the White House. The leaders reaffirmed the strategic partnership between the United States and New Zealand, as expressed in the 2010 Wellington Declaration and the 2012 Washington Declaration.

Our peoples have served side-by-side to uphold international peace and security for over a century; 80 years ago, during the Second World War, U.S. Marines arrived in New Zealand before embarking for the Pacific theatre. Together we honor that history of shared resolve in the face of aggression, in the pursuit of peace, and in our common respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. We note that, since then, our ties have broadened and deepened, founded on shared values of democracy, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. Today, President Biden and Prime Minister Ardern committed to advance our longstanding partnership to meet 21st-century challenges: bolstering security and building resilience, including to climate change, in the Pacific; promoting prosperity in the Indo-Pacific; and combatting the climate crisis and ensuring the responsible use of technology around the world.

We meet at a time of great challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak a human and economic toll, even as the climate crisis becomes ever more urgent. Technology brings both opportunity and threat, including the scourge of online radicalization to violence. The rules-based international order that has long been the foundation of peace and prosperity is under pressure. In the Indo-Pacific, we face a challenging landscape, where the values, norms, and rules that have fostered stability, growth, and prosperity in recent decades are under threat. In Europe, meanwhile, Russia continues to wage its unjustified and unprovoked war in Ukraine. Taken together, these challenges call for common purpose and action, across the Atlantic and the Pacific.

I. Regional Architecture and Security

Our partnership is global, but it is centered in the Indo-Pacific. The United States and New Zealand are committed to realizing a region of sovereign, resilient, and prosperous states, based on the international rules-based order, where states, including and especially small states, can pursue their interests free from coercion. This vision is reflected in the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States, which New Zealand welcomes; and in New Zealand's Indo-Pacific policy as outlined by Prime Minister Ardern in 2021.

The United States and New Zealand share a strong commitment to the regional architecture. We jointly recognize the importance of a strong and unified Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to an open, inclusive, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific. We reaffirm our strong support for ASEAN centrality and

the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. We value the Pacific Islands Forum, of which New Zealand is a member and the United States is a Forum Dialogue Partner, as the preeminent political regional body and a critical driver of Pacific regional cooperation, security, and stability. We appreciate that the Quad—the grouping of Australia, Japan, India, and the United States—plays an important role in delivering practical support to the region, including providing COVID-19 vaccines and improving maritime domain awareness. We note the shared commitment among New Zealand and AUKUS partners to the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region, and to upholding the international rules-based order.

We reaffirm our steadfast commitment to the Pacific Islands region, with a strong and united Pacific Islands Forum at the center. Prime Minister Ardern welcomed the United States' decision to heighten its engagement with this vital region, reflected in its recent appointment of a Special Presidential Envoy for Compact Negotiations and its commitments to expand its physical diplomatic presence across the Pacific. President Biden resolved to raise U.S. ambition in partnering with the Pacific Islands still higher and to match that ambition with resourcing.

Throughout our engagement, the United States and New Zealand will continue to support the Pacific region's own priorities, which will be reflected in the Forum's upcoming 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. At the top of this agenda is addressing the climate crisis, which, as the Pacific Islands Forum's *Boe Declaration* states, is the single greatest threat to the Pacific and the health and well-being of its residents. New Zealand and the United States also affirmed their commitment to an approach to Pacific fisheries that is led by Pacific countries, protecting the marine environment, livelihoods, traditions, food security, and economic benefits.

Our countries will expand our work in the Pacific on infrastructure, including transportation and information-communications technology; cyber security; maritime security, including combatting illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; education and skills training; COVID-19 pandemic assistance and global health security; and economic recovery. At the same time, we will promote democratic governance, free and fair elections, media freedom, and transparency; we will increase respect for human rights and the rule of law, and expand access to justice in Pacific countries, including through a new joint program to bolster the role of women in the justice sector. To best deliver these and other commitments in the Pacific, President Biden and Prime Minister Ardern committed to deepen coordination between the United States and New Zealand, and with other likeminded allies and partners, as we work together in support of Pacific priorities.

We are concerned with growing strategic competition in the Pacific region, which threatens to undermine existing institutions and arrangements that underpin the region's security. The United States acknowledged that Pacific Islands Forum Members have a strong commitment to support one another to meet the broader ambitions for the region's security, as set out in the *Biketawa Declaration* and *Boe*

Declaration. We recognize that Pacific Islands Forum Members have worked hard together to meet one another's security needs, and today have the capacity and commitment to continue doing so. In this regard, we note with concern the security agreement between the People's Republic of China and the Solomon Islands. In particular, the United States and New Zealand share a concern that the establishment of a persistent military presence in the Pacific by a state that does not share our values or security interests would fundamentally alter the strategic balance of the region and pose national-security concerns to both our countries.

A freer and more open Indo-Pacific depends on preserving the international rules-based order in the maritime domain. To that end, we reaffirm our support for freedom of navigation and overflight, in the South China Sea and beyond, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We oppose unlawful maritime claims and activities in the South China Sea that run counter to the rules-based international order, particularly UNCLOS. We reiterate our grave concerns regarding the human-rights violations in Xinjiang, and the erosion of rights and freedoms in Hong Kong, which undermines the high degree of autonomy enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. We underscore the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and encourage the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.

We affirm our commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to abide by its obligations under United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and return to negotiations. The leaders jointly condemn the DPRK's destabilizing ballistic missile tests this year, including multiple launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles, as clear violations of UNSC resolutions; they reaffirmed their commitment to work with the international community to address DPRK sanctions violations, including its illicit ship-to-ship transfers. We condemn the coup in Myanmar and the military's brutal attacks on civilians. We continue to call for the immediate cessation of violence, the release of all who are unjustly detained, unfettered countrywide humanitarian access, and a swift return to democracy.

Beyond the Indo-Pacific, the leaders strongly condemned Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, which is in flagrant violation of international law. President Biden and Prime Minister Ardern discussed the financial and military support that both countries have provided to Ukraine, reviewed the ongoing application of sanctions our two countries have designed to deny the Kremlin the means to continue to prosecute its war in Ukraine, and considered what further measures could be taken to bolster the diplomatic effort. Alongside the European Union and international partners, our countries have condemned the campaign of disruptive and destructive cyber activity by Russia against Ukraine. And as food-exporting nations, we recognize the importance of ensuring that global supply chains for food and agricultural products remain free and open, and we are concerned by the severe impact of Russia's attacks on civilian infrastructure and its blockading of Ukraine's sea ports on global food security.

We highlight the importance of full implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and look forward to working together to achieve a meaningful outcome at the forthcoming Review Conference.

Today, we acknowledge that security and defense will become an ever-more-important focus of our strategic partnership. We look to increase the interoperability of our forces, including through personnel exchanges, co-deployments, and defense trade. Achieving this vision will require robust and sustained commitment to defense in the Pacific. As New Zealand takes delivery of new capabilities, we will look for opportunities for combined operations and to expand our cooperation in other ways. As the security environment in the Indo-Pacific evolves, so must our defense cooperation.

II. Indo-Pacific Prosperity

The United States and New Zealand will deepen our economic ties, with each other and the region. Bilaterally, we intend to work together to promote growth in both our economies for the benefit of all our citizens, and to explore how we can expand bilateral trade and investment in order to strengthen the security of our supply chains and economic resilience. To that end, the United States and New Zealand will resume annual Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) discussions.

Regionally, the United States and New Zealand look forward to working together to progress the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), alongside 12 other founding partners: Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. President Biden and Prime Minister Ardern warmly welcomed Fiji's recent decision to join IPEF as a founding member—the first Pacific Island nation to do so.

We reiterate the value of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)—which New Zealand hosted in 2021 and the United States will host in 2023—as a forum for supporting trade and economic growth in the region in fulfillment of APEC Leaders' vision for an open, dynamic, resilient, and peaceful Asia-Pacific Community. We reaffirm our joint commitment to rationalize and phase out inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption, recalling the Glasgow Climate Pact and APEC Leaders' commitment to this goal. In doing so, we recognize that inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies distort markets, disadvantage renewable and clean energy, and undermine efforts to deal with the threat of climate change.

We intend to ensure that a free and open rules-based global trade system built on high standards and long-standing principles serves the interest of the citizens of both of our countries; to that end, we affirm our commitment to reform and

strengthen the World Trade Organization (WTO), and to work together to secure outcomes that provide for meaningful disciplines at the upcoming 12th WTO Ministerial Conference.

III. 21st-Century Challenges

Our deepening ties are vital to our ability to meet transnational challenges. Climate change poses an existential threat, in our countries and around the world, with the potential for devastating impacts in the Pacific region. We are urgently pursuing efforts toward net-zero emissions in our economies and limiting global average temperature rise to no more than 1.5 degrees, and commit to enhanced collaborative engagement on climate-change issues. We will work together to accelerate the uptake of the technologies, innovation, and investment needed for our transition to productive, sustainable, and inclusive low-emissions economies. We commit to producing plans to reduce methane emissions to support national and global efforts under the Global Methane Pledge. We will enhance our efforts to support an empowered low-emissions transition and to address climate impacts in the Pacific, including by supporting activities that build the resilience and adaptive capacity of small island developing states. We will also enhance our efforts to ensure the environmental integrity of carbon markets, and to ensure the mutual supportiveness of trade and climate policy.

As maritime democracies, we will cooperate on ocean governance. We will work together on protection and sustainable use of the ocean; decarbonizing the shipping sector, including by supporting the establishment of green-shipping corridors; and promoting maritime security, including by combatting challenges such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. We also intend to work together on complementary approaches to achieve the objective of protecting maritime zones from challenge in the face of sea-level rise, through continued dialogue between law-of-the-sea experts. Noting our longstanding and shared interest in protecting Antarctica as a place for peace and science, and our decades of research collaboration, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles and the letter of the Antarctic Treaty system.

President Biden and Prime Minister Ardern committed to helping end the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic while also working to prevent, detect, prepare for, and respond to future global health emergencies and pandemic threats. With key partners, the United States and New Zealand have delivered more than 200 million life-saving doses of vaccine to the Indo-Pacific region, and we continue our efforts to address new phases of the pandemic. We will accelerate progress on immunization and increase access to testing, therapeutics, oxygen, and other lifesaving measures to prevent hospitalizations and deaths. Both leaders commended the commitments made at the recent Global COVID-19 Summit. In addition to supporting the ongoing work of the World Health Organization and the ACT-Accelerator, Prime Minister Ardern committed to support in-principle the establishment of a global health security fund for pandemic preparedness and

response. Both leaders also reaffirmed their strong support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, including as an ACT-Accelerator partner, and its Seventh Replenishment later this year. We affirm the importance of strengthening the resilience and responsiveness of the global health architecture, and are committed to negotiations underway on a new instrument to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, with a strengthened World Health Organization able to fulfill its central and coordinating role in international health work. They are also committed to working together to improve elements of the existing system, such as the International Health Regulations.

We must also address the virus of hate, online and offline. The leaders emphasized the need to take action to keep our people safe from gun violence. The Prime Minister expressed her personal condolences to President Biden and to the American people for the tragedies in Uvalde, Texas and Buffalo, New York.

In the face of online radicalization to violence, we share a commitment to work together to ensure that technology is used in ways that promote and advance human rights. As supporters of the Christchurch Call, we pledge to continue our work alongside civil society and the technology sector to counter terrorist and violent extremist content online, including racially or ethnically motivated violent extremism, while promoting human rights online and a free, open, global, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet. We look forward to our countries participating in the Christchurch Call Leaders' Summit in September this year, during which we intend to announce new measures to better understand and address online radicalization by promoting algorithmic transparency and data access, designing and implementing evidence-based interventions, optimizing and closing loopholes in crisis response, and advancing innovation by drawing on multi-stakeholder partners.

Even as we address the dangers of misuse of technology, we are committed to working together to protect and amplify its benefits. As supporters of the Declaration for the Future of the Internet, and members of the Freedom Online Coalition, the Open Government Partnership, and the Global Partnership on AI, we commit to pursuing multi-stakeholder approaches to support an open, free, global, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet and the responsible and ethical use of emerging technology. We will continue to work together to build strategies and share best practices to counter disinformation and misinformation, the spread of which threatens our democratic values and institutions. We also recognize the need for a diverse cohort of young people to help us navigate a digitally enabled future in line with our shared values. We plan to look for training and placement opportunities in both New Zealand and the United States to support young practitioners in science and technology broadly, and to deepen our digital technology partnership.

Online and offline, we will advance the rights of all people in our societies, including women, minorities, and Indigenous peoples. We share a fervent

commitment to gender equity and equality. We recognize that online harassment and abuse, particularly when targeted at women activists, journalists, and political figures, undermines the strength of democracies; Prime Minister Ardern committed New Zealand to join the Global Partnership for Action on Online Gender-Based Harassment and Abuse. We reaffirm our commitment to promoting human rights and democracy and countering corruption and authoritarianism globally, including through the Summit for Democracy Year of Action.

The two leaders committed to strengthening the U.S.-New Zealand strategic partnership across all areas of space cooperation. They welcomed the finalization of our bilateral Space Framework Agreement, which will facilitate future collaboration between the United States and New Zealand on the uses of outer space for peaceful purposes. They also looked forward to the initiation of joint feasibility studies under the Framework Agreement in support of space exploration.

For 80 years, our diplomatic relationship has benefited our countries, the region, and the world. But today's world demands new resolve and closer cooperation between us. The United States and Aotearoa New Zealand will strengthen our strategic partnership to meet the challenges of the 21st century, seize the opportunities of an interconnected economy, and work together to preserve the international rules-based system on which our security, prosperity, and sustainability depends. As they reaffirmed our countries' unique partnership, President Biden and Prime Minister Ardern recalled the words inscribed on the Marine Corps Memorial plaque in Wellington, New Zealand: "To the people of New Zealand: If you ever need a friend, you have one."