

# FONZ LETTER



## Friends of New Zealand

November 2019

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### Welcome by FONZ Chair and New Zealand Ambassador

Dear friends,

We are delighted to re-launch the Friends of New Zealand newsletter following the 2019 European Parliament elections. Congratulations to you all on your success in the elections and best wishes for the hard work that lies ahead.

Launched in 2012 by then New Zealand Prime Minister Key in the European Parliament, the FONZ is an informal grouping of MEPs from a range of parties and EU Member States, and has been chaired by Axel Voss since 2018. The group had a membership of more than 60 MEPs in the last parliamentary term, which we're hoping to replicate in the new- and we're counting on your help!



*Axel Voss and David Taylor*

We are pleased to welcome as members Josianne Cutajar, Assita Kanko, Billy Kelleher, Morten Løkkegaard, Eva Maydell, Dace Melbārde, Róza Thun, Monika Vana and Kim van Sparrentak. We very much look forward to continuing our cooperation with "old" members as well.

The EU and New Zealand are firm friends, sharing core values and interests: our history speaks for itself. The partnership is being lifted in many different ways, including through the negotiation of an FTA to modernise the trade relationship; finding ways to work better together on climate change, where both have a strong commitment to reduce emissions; deepening cooperation in the Pacific; and finding ways to stop the internet being used to advance terrorism and violent extremism.

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The world has become more complex, with more geostrategic issues to confront. Climate change and biodiversity loss pose real threats to our way of life; the multilateral system is under threat; we have not yet done enough to ensure that everyone benefits from globalisation and new technologies; and our economies are not quite as resilient as we would like them to be. More than ever, friends like the EU and New Zealand have to stick together. We're geographically distant but closely united partners. Please continue to support efforts to deliver on these shared goals and interests.

*Axel Voss MEP, FONZ Chair*

*David Taylor, New Zealand Ambassador to the EU*

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Meeting

A New Zealand Parliament delegation led by Deputy Speaker Hon Anne Tolley, with Rt Hon David Carter, Hon Paul Goldsmith and Kieran McAnulty MP, took part in the 23rd EU-NZ Inter-Parliamentary Meetings (IPM) on 10 October.

The delegation exchanged views with MEPs on political developments in the EU and New Zealand; the state of trade negotiations; and cooperation on climate change, security and other issues. The dialogue was rich, enthusiastic and frank, highlighting the like-mindedness and common values that underpin EU-New Zealand engagement.



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The programme was followed by engagements with the Belgian Federal Parliament and Wallonia Regional Parliament. The delegation then travelled to Serbia for the 141st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly and finally to Hungary for bilateral meetings including with the Vice Chairs of the Hungarian Parliament's Foreign Relations Committee and the Deputy Speaker of the House.

## Christchurch Call makes progress at UNGA

Substantive progress on the Christchurch Call to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online has been announced at an event on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

A fully resourced, fully staffed, legal entity is to be established by tech companies, with an expanded mandate to counter violent extremist content online in addition to terrorist content.

New Zealand and France also welcomed 33 new countries and international organisations as supporters of the Christchurch Call— bringing the total number of country and company supporters to 58.

Alongside co-founder France, EU supporters include Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

The European Commission has also registered its support for the Christchurch Call for Action. EU representatives will take part in a related workshop being held in New Zealand in December.





World leaders at UN Leaders' Week, September 2019

## Landmark 2050 Zero Carbon Act adopted

On 7 November the New Zealand Parliament passed the landmark Zero Carbon Act with only one MP opposed. The Act provides a framework by which New Zealand will achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and make New Zealand the first country to set targets to reduce biogenic methane. Overall the Act ensures New Zealand will fully contribute to the Paris Agreement target of limiting climate change to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

The Act will implement clear and stable climate change policies that contribute to the global effort under the

Paris Agreement. Its goals are to: make New Zealand carbon neutral by 2050; set specific targets for reducing biogenic methane; establish a new, independent Climate Change Commission to provide expert advice and monitoring to help keep successive governments on track to meeting long-term goals; establish a system of emissions budgets as stepping stones towards the long-term target; and require the government to develop and implement policies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

## Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability (ACCTS)

New Zealand is leading a first-of-its-kind agreement that will use trade rules to tackle climate change and other environmental issues, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has announced.

Norway, Iceland, Costa Rica and Fiji will join New Zealand in negotiations on the Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability (ACCTS), jointly launched at Leaders' level at an event on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly Leaders' Week in New York.

"Trade can't sit outside of our work to tackle climate change. In fact international trade rules are uniquely placed to be part of the solution by removing trade barriers for green products and services and stopping pollution being subsidised," Prime Minister Ardern said.



Norway PM Erna Solberg, Fiji PM Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, NZ PM Jacinda Ardern, Iceland PM Katrín Jakobsdóttir, and Vice Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica Duayner Salas

## Launch of the EU-NZ consular dialogue

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New Zealand and the EU held their first-ever bilateral consular dialogue on 27 September. The dialogue was an opportunity to exchange best practices, with both partners having similar experiences of citizens travelling further away, in higher numbers and to more remote places. The dialogue is an additional facet to the widening and deepening EU-New Zealand relations.

Issues discussed included: 1) consular policy, such as family issues (forced marriages, child abductions, etc.), access to justice, detentions and prison conditions; 2) planning and exercises for consular crisis response; and 3) lessons learned from crisis response operations, including on outreach to the public.

## New International Human Rights Action Plan

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New Zealand has a strong history of protecting and promoting human rights at home and internationally. The new International Human Rights Action Plan for 2019-2023 identifies four issues where New Zealand will show global leadership: 1) the rights of persons with disabilities; 2) gender equality and women's empowerment, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, maternal mortality and morbidity, leadership and political participation; 3) sexual

orientation and gender identity; and 4) abolishing the death penalty.

"Protecting and promoting human rights lies at the core of our identity", PM Ardern said. "It's central to our efforts to build strong, inclusive societies. Our new International Human Rights Action Plan will strengthen our global voice".

## All Blacks finish third in Rugby World Cup

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© All Blacks Twitter account

After their loss to England in the semifinals, the All Blacks ended their World Cup campaign in Japan on a positive note with a 40-17 win over Wales in the third-place playoff.

Congratulations to the Springboks on their third World Cup title!

We're already looking forward to the 2023 Rugby World Cup in France- hopefully to see the All Blacks become world champions for the fourth time!