

Proactive Release

Date: 15 February 2023

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Title	Reference
Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Phil Twyford, 9-14 November 2022, Cambodia November 2022, Cambodia Paper	CAB-22-MIN-0557

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Phil Twyford

Portfolio Disarmament and Arms Control

On 5 December 2022, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Phil Twyford under CAB-22-SUB-0557 on his travel, from 9 to 14 November 2022, to Phnom Penh, Cambodia to attend the ASEAN Economic Ministers' – Closer Economic Relations Meeting.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister
for Disarmament and Arms Control

In Confidence

Office of the Minister for Disarmament & Arms Control
Chair, Cabinet

Report to Cabinet: Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control travel to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 9-14 November 2022

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 9-14 November 2022.
- 2 The purpose of this travel was to attend, in my capacity as Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth, the special ASEAN Economic Ministers - Closer Economic Relations Meeting (AEM-CER) to conclude the AANZFTA upgrade negotiations. This involved:
 - securing the conclusion of the AANZFTA upgrade by resolving remaining issues with my ASEAN and Australian counterparts, for announcement by the Prime Minister and other Leaders at the East Asia Summit
 - protecting and progressing New Zealand's interests in this upgrade through meaningful engagement in bilateral meetings and side discussions, including with co-chairs Australia and Brunei
 - reinforcing commitment to our partnership with ASEAN and to ASEAN-centrality in the Indo-Pacific region, through constructive engagement with AEM-CER Ministers.

Report

Programme

- 3 My programme included the following meetings and events:
 - Bilateral meetings and side discussions with attending Ministers and officials
 - Attending the ASEAN Economic Ministers - Closer Economic Relations special meeting on the AANZFTA upgrade
 - Supporting the public announcement by the Prime Minister of the conclusion of the upgrade.

AANZFTA Upgrade

4 Prior to the arrival of Ministers in Phnom Penh, Chief Negotiators had been meeting to prepare the ground for the substantive conclusion of the upgrade. Some key issues remained on the table, including our top priority of finalising agreement on investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS).

5 s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a)

. By the time the Ministers' meeting began, a package of compromises was beginning to emerge, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

6 Ministerial negotiations, which were intense and prolonged, brought us close to agreement on a provisional package for the upgrade, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a)

7 s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

8 A series of urgent bilaterals took place the following day, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

There followed a final ministerial meeting that formally endorsed the compromise package and agreed on the remaining steps for the negotiation. With ministerial agreement reached, Leaders were able to announce the substantive conclusion of negotiations on the morning of 13 November, an outcome that had not seemed assured even a few days earlier.

Next steps

- 9 With substantive conclusion thus secured, Ministers agreed to a deadline of mid-December for negotiators to wrap up the final details of the negotiations. Parties are working to complete the necessary work for a signing of the upgrade in early 2023, with the ASEAN Economic Ministers' Retreat in March as one possibility.

Conclusion

10 s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

the successful announcement of substantive conclusion to the AANZFTA upgrade negotiations is a conclusion of which we can be proud, and one that will advance our national interests.

- 11 In more general terms, participation in the meetings enabled us to have significant influence over the direction of discussions and the final outcome. As at the preceding discussions in Siem Reap in September, we were seen as an engaged and constructive player and received considerable positive feedback on the contributions we made to navigating challenges and bringing the meeting to its successful conclusion.

Other

- 12 While in Phnom Penh I took the opportunity to engage in some activities related to my Disarmament and Arms Control portfolio:
 - a breakfast meeting with Mr Tun Channereth, a landmine survivor who accepted the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, and now serves as their global Ambassador; and
 - a visit to the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC), to which we provide funding for a technical adviser.

Proactive release

13 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO(18)4 on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. Proactive release is subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act (1982).

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement.

Hon Phil Twyford

Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control

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for Disarmament and Arms Control