

# Proactive Release

Date: 21 November 2022

The following Cabinet paper has been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta	

There is no Cabinet Minute associated with this Cabinet Paper. This paper was approved by Ministers with Powers to Act outside the Cabinet schedule.

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Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

**Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta**

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Cook Islands over 13-16 October 2022, inclusive.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle.

**Executive Summary**

- 3 If approved, I will be the first Foreign Minister to be formally welcomed in the Cook Islands since its election. I intend for my kanohi ki te kanohi engagement to be focused on ways to elevate our partnership and cooperation.
- 4 My specific objectives for the visit are to:
  - Consolidate gains in the relationship that we have made over the past two years of COVID-19, and reinforce our commitment to Cook Islands' response and recovery, including through announcing further support to the Polynesian Health Corridors programme and signing a Statement of Partnership;
  - Demonstrate our commitment to supporting the Cook Islands' economic recovery, sustainable development and resilience, specifically through partnering on priority projects via our joint Infrastructure Trust Fund, including announcing an initial climate finance contribution of \$7.5m to a renewable energy upgrade in the northern Pa Enea;
  - Discuss opportunities for expanding mutually beneficial Māori-Māori engagement with the Cook Islands; and,
  - Develop a mutual understanding of our respective priorities and positions on multilateral and regional issues, including in relation to the Pacific Islands Forum, which the Cook Islands will host in 2023.

**Outline of Proposed Visit**

- 5 The programme will include a cross-section of bilateral meetings, community events and visits to development activities supported by New Zealand.
- 6 My first official fixture will be a formal welcome and meeting with Te Ui Ariki, the traditional leaders of the Cook Islands. I will also visit Te Mana o te Vaka, a

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waka/vaka-building project supported by Aotearoa New Zealand that aims to support the retention of traditional knowledge and practices.

- 7 The centrepiece of the visit will be the signing ceremony for the Statement of Partnership with Prime Minister Brown. As the first visit since the new Government has formed this is an opportunity to highlight the importance of our bilateral partnership and the principles, priorities and values that underpin it.
- 8 I will visit a number of development activities, including Te Mato Vai, the Rarotonga Airport and the Muri Lagoon, which will highlight our partnership with the Cook Islands to support its economic recovery and achieve its sustainable development priorities. A visit to Rarotonga Hospital will be an opportunity to celebrate the Cook Islands Government's success in handling its first wave of COVID-19 and the close health-to-health partnership that has deepened during the pandemic. I will also visit the outer island of Manihiki to view climate-related development projects.
- 9 I will travel to Cook Islands by NZDF C-130, departing New Zealand on Thursday 13 October and arriving in Cook Islands on Wednesday 12 October, Cook Islands Time. Flight availability is currently limited, and there are no available commercial return flight options until 20 October 2022. Given this, I propose to return by NZDF C130, arriving in Auckland on Sunday 16 October NZT. NZDF have advised that the return flight would be a training mission for the crew to maintain flying currency and also provide freight benefits.

**Ministerial Party**

- 10 I propose to be accompanied by one staff member paid for by ministerial services. Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will also accompany me, with costs met by their department.

**Estimated Costs**

- 11 The estimated cost for this travel is:

<b>Flights (contingency only)</b>	\$7,000
<b>Accommodation and food</b>	\$3,000
<b>COVID-19 testing</b>	N/A
<b>Gifts</b>	\$1,200
<b>Function</b>	\$1,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	12,200
<b>Contingency 20%</b>	\$2,440
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,840</b>

**Acting Ministers**

- 12 If my travel is approved, I propose that Hon David Parker act as Minister for Foreign Affairs and that Hon Kieran McAnulty cover my Local Government portfolio.

- 13 My responsibilities as Associate Minister of Māori Development will revert to the primary Minister, Hon Willie Jackson.

**Recommendations**

I recommend that Cabinet:

- 1 Authorise my absence from New Zealand from 13 to 16 October 2022, inclusive, to Cook Islands.
- 2 Agree that I will be accompanied by a member of my staff paid for by ministerial resources.
- 3 Note that I will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- 4 Approve the expenditure of \$14,840 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs, Members of the Executive – Travel.
- 5 Agree that Hon David Parker and Hon Kieran McAnulty will be Acting Ministers in my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere

Proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs