



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

Portfolio **Trade and Export Growth**

On 30 May 2022, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Damien O'Connor from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 7 to 18 June 2022 to travel to France and Switzerland;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one staff member;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of \$79,482 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **noted** that two officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) will also be attending the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Ministerial Conference meeting in Paris, and four officials from MFAT and one official from the Ministry for Primary Industries will be attending the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference meeting in Geneva, and that officials' travel costs will be met by their agencies;
- 5 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 5.1 Hon Dr David Clark act as Minister for Land Information;
 - 5.2 Hon Phil Twyford act as Minister for Trade and Export Growth, from 7 to 14 June 2022;
 - 5.3 Hon David Parker act as Minister for Trade and Export Growth, from 15 to 18 June 2022;
 - 5.4 Hon Meka Whaitiri act as Minister of Agriculture, Minister for Biosecurity, and Minister for Rural Communities;
- 6 **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

[RESTRICTED]

Office of the Minister for Trade and Export Growth

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Damien O'Connor

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to France and Switzerland from 7 – 18 June 2022.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 The primary purpose of the visit is to attend the OECD Ministerial Conference Meeting (MCM) in Paris, France and the twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 4 The MCM is the high point of the OECD's annual Ministerial calendar, The MCM is attended by trade and economic Ministers and senior officials from its 38 Member States and as such provides an important platform for policy discussion with my Ministerial counterparts, while at the same time emphasising the importance of multilateral solutions to global challenges. The focus for MCM this year is on developing better policies for future generations and sustainable transition. Participation at the MCM will demonstrate the importance New Zealand places on these issues, and enable me to highlight the relevant areas where New Zealand has been considered a thought leader, such as our inclusive Trade for All agenda and our ambitious climate change goals. The MCM will also be an opportunity to advocate for increased visibility of the Pacific region throughout the OECD's work.
- 5 As much of the OECD's membership is made up of European economies, the MCM provides important opportunities to pursue our trading interests, especially in the lead up to the WTO MC12, s6(b)(ii), s9(2)(j)
- 6 The likeminded basis of the OECD's membership makes it a unique multilateral organisation in that it is able to build consensus more easily than other groupings. This makes the MCM one of the few opportunities for trade and economic Ministers to make clear and unambiguous consensus statements condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- 7 I will then travel to Geneva, Switzerland to attend the WTO MC12. The Conference is scheduled to take place from 12-15 June. As the highest decision making body of the WTO, the Ministerial Conference provides a crucial avenue for political direction in this Member-led organisation. The

Ministerial Conference last met in 2017 and usually meets every two years, however, MC12 has been repeatedly delayed due to COVID-19.

- 8 The WTO is under considerable stress with rising protectionism, geo-strategic issues, and divergent views across the membership, compounded by COVID-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. As an export-oriented economy, the rules-based multilateral trading system is of fundamental importance to New Zealand. Attendance at MC12 is therefore an opportunity to demonstrate the importance that New Zealand places on the WTO, and to work with likeminded Members to try and build momentum at a time when the organisation is struggling. I will, for example, be advocating for the conclusion of meaningful disciplines on fisheries subsidies, a credible trade policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a commitment to ongoing negotiations on agriculture and responding to the current food crisis.
- 9 I will also use my time in Geneva to work with interested groups of WTO Members to progress trade rules in areas aligned with New Zealand's commercial and trade-for-all interests. This will include a Ministerial meeting on the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement at which we hope to welcome Colombia as the newest participant, and promoting New Zealand's various trade and sustainability initiatives e.g. Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform.
- 10 I will also meet with European counterparts to further our FTA objectives in the margins of the MC12 meetings, and in particular look to engage again with my EU counterpart, Executive Vice President and Trade Commissioner, Valdis Dombrovskis.
- 11 I acknowledge the changing global situation with respect to COVID-19, and will continue to monitor developments in each host country. I will adapt my travel plans if necessary, including through contingency budgeting.

Ministerial Party

- 12 I will be accompanied by one staff member as part of the Ministerial Delegation. Two officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) will be attending the OECD MCM with me, and four officials from MFAT and one from the Ministry of Primary Industries will join me for the MC12. The travel costs of officials will be covered by their departmental budgets.

Travel Costs

- 13 The estimated costs of my travel are:

	Minister	Staff
Flights	27,000	27,000
Ground transport	900	900

Accommodation	4871	3174
Per Diems	1556	1556
Representation	1900	
PCR Tests	700	
Facilitation	1500	
Gifts	500	
Subtotal	38927	33330
Contingency 10%	3892	3333
TOTAL	42819	36663
<u>TOTAL \$79,482</u>		

Acting Ministers

14 In my absence, Acting Ministers in my portfolios will be:

Land Information: Hon Dr David Clark

Agriculture; Biosecurity; Rural Communities: Hon Meka Whaitiri

Trade and Export Growth: Hon Phil Twyford from 7-14 June

Hon David Parker from 15-18 June

Proactive release

15 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 redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

16 I recommend that Cabinet:

16.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 7 – 18 June 2022 to travel to France and Switzerland;

- 16.2 agree that I be accompanied by one staff member;
- 16.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$79,482 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];
- 16.4 note that two officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) will also be attending the OECD MCM meeting, and four officials from MFAT and one official from the Ministry for Primary Industries will also attend the WTO MC12 meeting, and officials' travel costs will be met by the departments;
- 16.5 agree that Hon Dr David Clark (Land Information); Hon Phil Twyford (Trade and Export Growth from 7-14 June); Hon David Parker (Trade and Export Growth from 15-18 June); and Hon Meka Whaitiri (Agriculture, Biosecurity and Rural Communities) will be Acting Ministers in my absence; and
- 16.6 note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Damien O'Connor

Minister for Trade and Export Growth