

## Proactive Release

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

<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b><i>Cabinet Minute of Decision –Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta</i></b>	CAB-23-MIN-0093
<b><i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta</i></b>	

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the OIA 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 OIA redaction codes:

- s6(a) – to protect the international relations of the Government of New Zealand
- s9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered to Ministers of the Crown by officials.



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

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### Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta

**Portfolio**                      **Foreign Affairs**

On 20 March 2023, Cabinet:

- 1        **authorised** the absence of Hon Nanaia Mahuta from New Zealand, from 22 to 26 March 2023, to travel to Beijing, China for a bilateral visit;
- 2        **agreed** that she be accompanied by one member of staff;
- 3        **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$45,590 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4        **noted** that the accommodation costs of the ministerial party will be met by the Chinese government;
- 5        **noted** that she will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose costs will be met by their department;
- 6        **agreed** that in her absence Hon David Parker act as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control;
- 7        **noted** that the House is not sitting during her absence.

Rachel Hayward  
Secretary of the Cabinet

~~IN CONFIDENCE~~

Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

### Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Nanaia Mahuta

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to China over Wednesday 22 March – Sunday 26 March inclusive. Prime Minister Chris Hipkins has approved the travel in-principle, and the dates have been confirmed by China.

### Executive Summary

- 2 This visit would be my first bilateral visit to China as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

- 3 s6(a)

China remains our largest trading partner, s6(a)

- 4 I consider it is important to have a high level, in person, political engagement in China as a priority. This will be the first high level New Zealand visit to China since 2019.

- 5 s9(2)(f)(iv)

- 6 Both sides have worked hard to confirm a visit for several months, with a visit in 2022 not proving possible for various reasons, including because of China's recently rescinded COVID-19 restrictions.

- 7 A visit to China would deliver on the following objectives:

- Establish a constructive working relationship with new Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang, building on my previous bilateral engagements with his predecessor Wang Yi.

- s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

- Acknowledge the significance of the bilateral relationship and signal New Zealand's ongoing commitment to a relationship consistent with our interests and values.

- Provide an opportunity to engage with China on issues that matter to New Zealand, such as the Pacific, and Antarctica. s6(a)

- s6(a)

(with regard to China's position on Russia's

invasion of Ukraine) as well as register at a high level New Zealand's concerns including regarding Taiwan, Xinjiang, and Hong Kong.

- Be a tangible demonstration of New Zealand's reconnection and economic recovery strategies, and reassure the business community of New Zealand's constructive engagement with our largest trading partner.
- Engage with our staff, and families, at the Embassy after a challenging three years under China's difficult COVID-19 restrictions.

### Outline of Proposed Visit

- 8 The visit would revolve principally around a face-to-face meeting and dinner with Foreign Minister Qin Gang on Friday 24 March.
- 9 This visit may also include meetings with other senior Chinese officials. For example, MFAT officials will seek a courtesy call on the former Chinese Foreign Minister and newly appointed member of the Chinese Communist Party's Politburo Standing Committee and Director of China's Foreign Affairs Commission, Wang Yi. Officials are also exploring events with New Zealand businesses and expatriate communities based in China, women leaders in China, as well as time with the New Zealand Embassy staff and families and resident Pacific Missions.

### Travel

- 10 If my travel is approved, I will arrive in Beijing on Wednesday 22 March, departing Auckland via Singapore. I will depart China on Saturday 25 March, returning to Auckland via Hong Kong on Sunday 26 March. The substantive elements of my visit will take place on Thursday 23 and Friday 24 March.

### Ministerial Party

- 11 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

- 12 The estimated cost for this travel is:

Flights	Minister and accompanying staff member	\$33,500
Accommodation	Minister and accompanying staff member (costs covered by Chinese Government)	\$0
Gifts		\$1300
Hospitality – catered function at the NZ Embassy	At New Zealand Official Residence, up to 70 people (cost shared between Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and MFAT)	\$2,500
Hospitality – catered function with business community	At New Zealand Official Residence or Hotel (10 people) (cost shared between Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and MFAT)	\$1,000

Hospitality – catered function with women leaders	At New Zealand Official Residence (10 people) (cost shared between Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and MFAT)	\$250
Facilitation	Facilitation by Singapore Airlines through Singapore	\$250
Per diems		\$840
Subtotal		\$39,640
Contingency 15%		\$5,950
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$45,590</b>

### Acting Ministers

- 13 If my travel is approved, I propose that Hon David Parker act as Minister for my Foreign Affairs and Disarmament and Arms Control portfolios.
- 14 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 22-26 March to travel to China.
- 2 Agree that I will be accompanied by a member of my staff paid for by ministerial services.
- 3 Note that I will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- 4 Approve the expenditure of \$45,590 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 will be Acting Minister in my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minister of Foreign Affairs / Minita Take Aorere