

4 December 2024

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OIA 29759

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Thank you for your email of 16 October 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

please supply the Summary, Report and Comment sections of Formal messages from the following meetings/visits:

- 1. An overseas visit by Rt Hon Winston Peters to French Polynesia from 29-30 September 2024.*
- 2. An overseas visit by Rt Hon Winston Peters to New York to attend the High Level Week of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly from 23-29 September 2024.*
- 3. A visit by Hon Manoa Kamikamica, Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji to New Zealand on 20 September 2024.*

On 14 November 2024, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 15 working days due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA refers).

The 3 Formal Messages in scope of your request are:

1. Formal Message: Minister of Foreign Affairs Visit to French Polynesia – 28-29 September 2024
2. Formal Message: United Nations: UNGA79 High-Level Week: Minister of Foreign Affairs Visit to New York, September 2024
3. Formal Message: Pacer Plus: Fiji/Australia/New Zealand Trade Ministers' Meeting Brings Fiji Closer to Accession

Please note that no Formal Message exists that reports on the entirety of the visit by Hon Manoa Kamikamica, Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji, to New Zealand on 20 September 2024. The only Formal Message produced that covers any aspect of Hon Kamikamica's visit is document 3 (listed above).

Attached are the documents in scope of your request. Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;

- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 6(b)(ii): to protect the passing of information from an international organisation on a confidential basis;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website:

www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Out of scope

Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS VISIT TO FRENCH POLYNESIA – 28-29 September 2024
Date: Thursday, 10 October 2024 3:41:58 pm

[RESTRICTED]

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Rt Hon Winston Peters (MFA) visited French Polynesia from 28 to 29 September and met with the French High Commissioner Eric Spitz (paras 3 - 9 refer), French Polynesia President Moetai Brotherson (paras 10 - 17), former Presidents Édouard Fritch (paras 18 - 21) and Oscar Tamaru, Members of Parliament, and local business leaders.

MFA took the opportunity to discuss regional and geostrategic challenges, emphasising the value New Zealand placed on French engagement in the region and the importance of its support for its Pacific overseas territories.

The visit took place in the immediate aftermath of China's intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test into the South Pacific, with the missile landing at the edge of French Polynesia's EEZ on 25 September (NOU FM 1 October refers). ^{s6(a)}

s6(a)

The visit underscored that French Polynesia, ^{s6(a)} is a place where we can work effectively with France and reaffirmed the deep sense of goodwill towards New Zealand in the territory. It also highlighted French Polynesia's appetite to cooperate more closely with New Zealand ^{s6(b)(i)}

Out of scope

PŪRONGO – REPORT

On his return to New Zealand from the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Rt Hon Winston Peters, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA) visited French Polynesia from 28 to 29 September. MFA was accompanied in French Polynesia by his Specialist Ministerial Adviser (Johansson); Senior Foreign Affairs Adviser (Appleton); DM-PACPF (Coombs); Consul-General to French Polynesia (HoP Roxburgh); and NOU Public Affairs and Policy Adviser (Fuluhea). Press releases related to the visit are available [here](#) and [here](#).

2. MFA has been a repeat visitor to French Polynesia, both in his previous terms as Foreign Minister and in his personal capacity, including to attend the Blue Climate Conference in 2022 at the personal invitation of then-President Édouard Fritch. His close and long-standing relationships with French Polynesian counterparts were evident throughout the visit.

Meeting with French High Commissioner Eric Spitz

3. As French protocol requires, MFA's first meeting was with French High Commissioner Eric Spitz. MFA took the opportunity to emphasise the importance of France to the French Pacific Territories, ^{s6(a)}

s6(a)

4. Spitz provided an overview of recent **political and economic developments in French Polynesia**, s6(a), s6(b)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

5. MFA and Spitz discussed **New Zealand and French cooperation and the geostrategic challenges** facing the region. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

s6(a)

This was why France was engaging more in the Indo-Pacific, and had been pleased to host the 2023 South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting (SPDMM) in Noumea – the first time a French Defence Minister, (Sebastien Lecornu), had attended a SPDMM meeting in person.

6. Spitz touched on the joint exercises between New Zealand and France and said that Paris was keen to see this cooperation expand, perhaps with new exercises. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

7. s6(a)

s6(a),
s6(b)(i)

8. s6(b)(i)

9. France was also very focused on its responsibilities as the country with one of the largest EEZ in the world (due to its overseas territories), and would host the UN Ocean Conference in Nice next year (9 - 13 June 2025). s6(b)(i)

FFA. s6(b)(i) in addition to France's support of the work of the Forum Fisheries Agency

Meeting with President Moetai Brotherson

10. This was the third time MFA had met President Brotherson this year, with earlier meetings taking place in Nuku'alofa and Tokyo. This familiarity has helped to foster a mutual respect and openness between them and their meeting in French Polynesia was a chance to continue the conversation about regional issues, as well as to discuss the bilateral relationship.

11. On the **bilateral relationship** MFA noted plans to update our Joint Cooperation Plan. Brotherson said that French Polynesia's priorities were s6(b)(i)
s9(2)(f)(iv)

s9(2)(g)(i)

12. HoP highlighted existing biosecurity cooperation noting three Ministry of Primary Industry (MPI) trained biosecurity beagles were operating in French Polynesia. s6(b)(i)

13. Brotherson asked New Zealand to consider opening a consulate in French Polynesia. s6(a)
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s9(2)(g)(i)

14. s6(a)

15. s6(a)

16. s6(a)

17. s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act

Meeting with Edouard Fritch – Leader of the opposition

18. MFA had a warm, open and honest meeting with Edouard Fritch, with the two having known each other for many years, including during Fritch's previous stints as President. Fritch thanked MFA for his engagement at the Port of Tauranga during Covid, which had helped unblock difficulties for important products bound for French Polynesia including chicken feed.

19. s6(a)

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20. s6(a)

21. s6(a)

TĀKUPU – COMMENT

22. MFA has close and long-standing personal friendships in French Polynesia including with former President Oscar Temaru, whom he has known since the 1960s when they were both students in Auckland. In 1997 MFA and Temaru attended a protest together in Tahiti, protesting against French nuclear testing. This is emblematic of MFA's longstanding interest in France's role in the Pacific s6(a) and this is played through in the close interest he's currently paying to the situation in New Caledonia s9(2)(g)(i)

Meeting s9(2)(g)(i) Temaru again, in the presence of the current President Moetai Broetherson - Temaru's son in law - had a strong resonance for MFA, s6(a)

23. There is a deep sense of goodwill towards New Zealand across French Polynesian government, business and civil society. s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

24. The request to consider opening a New Zealand consulate in French Polynesia is not new. Australia opened its Consulate-General in Pape'ete in 2021, and China is the only other

representation in town, having a presence there since 2007. s6(a)

25. s6(a)

26. s6(a)

Footnotes:

s6(a)

MUTU - ENDS

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act

Out of scope

Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: UNITED NATIONS: UNGA79 HIGH-LEVEL WEEK: MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS VISIT TO NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2024
Date: Wednesday, 9 October 2024 4:39:29 am
Out of scope

[RESTRICTED]

Rāpopoto – Summary

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters led New Zealand's participation at the UN's annual High-Level Week (HLW) in New York from 23 to 28 September. Key engagements for the Minister included the delivery of New Zealand's national statement to the General Assembly, a separate address to the Security Council, a leadership role in a high-level meeting on sea-level rise, attendance at Pacific and Indo-Pacific events, and a programme of eleven bilateral meetings and various impromptu pull-asides. The Minister conducted a number of interviews with New Zealand and international media outlets, with his statements garnering attention, particularly the announcement that New Zealand would seek another term on the UN Security Council in 2039-2040.

This year's HLW took place against a backdrop of crises in the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan and beyond, about which there was a sense of general despondency. The deteriorating international peace and security landscape, and the complex geopolitical environment which makes resolution of these crises extremely challenging, was at the forefront of attendees' minds. The culmination of the UN Secretary-General's UN and wider multilateral system reform agenda featured prominently across the week, ^{s9(2)(g)} to prevent war and foster cooperation among states to solve international problems.

Out of scope

Pūrongo – Report

The High-Level Week segment of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly took place in New York from 23 to 30 September. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs led New Zealand's delegation this year, accompanied by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. A key annual fixture of the multilateral meeting calendar, HLW brings together leaders for a mixture of set-piece multilateral engagements, bilateral meetings and a vast array of side events. The heads of delegation for the UN's 190 Member States this year were comprised of 113 Heads of State or Government, six Vice-Presidents and Crown Princes, eight Deputy Prime Ministers and 53 Ministers.

National statement

2. A centrepiece of the Minister's programme was the delivery of New Zealand's [national statement](#) to the General Assembly on 26 September. This was an opportunity to articulate New Zealand's foreign policy priorities to an international audience. The address, titled 'The Spirit of San Francisco', reiterated New Zealand's abiding commitment to multilateralism, the UN and the UN Charter, while lamenting some of the challenges flowing from a context of heightened great power competition, increased use of the veto, lack of political leadership and a difficult diplomatic climate. The Minister used the statement to announce New Zealand's intention to campaign for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2039-2040 term. Small states

featured strongly in the address, with the Minister explicitly outlining an intention for New Zealand to act as a voice for small states in our future Council term.

Address to the UN Security Council

3. The Minister took the opportunity of his visit to New York to address the Security Council itself, during a High-Level Open Debate on "Leadership for Peace", convened by September Council President Slovenia, to discuss how the Council and Member States could better address some of the most intractable peace and security challenges, such as Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan. The Minister's [statement](#) affirmed New Zealand's support for the UN Charter and international law, international humanitarian law and the UN's role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Sea-level rise

4. A flagship event of this year's HLW was the High-Level Meeting on the Existential Threats Posed by Sea-level Rise. The convening of the meeting and elevation of this issue to the UNGA represented an important milestone in New Zealand's efforts to garner international support for the Pacific Island Forum's approach, including to highlight the [2021](#) and [2023](#) PIF Declarations. Minister Peters took a leadership role in the meeting in New York, co-chairing a multi-stakeholder panel discussion on the legal dimensions of sea-level rise, alongside the Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Sierra Leone. Minister Peters used his framing remarks to amplify the clear statements made by Pacific leaders on the topic.

Pacific priorities

5. High-Level Week provided an opportunity for Pacific leaders to convene once more following the recent Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting in Tonga. As we do each year, New Zealand leaned into the strong Pacific participation in this year's HLW, to demonstrate our support for Pacific priorities in the UN and multilateral system. Together with current PIF Chair Tonga, New Zealand co-hosted a reception for Pacific leaders. The Minister also attended a function hosted by Palau marking thirty years of independence and a meeting of the High Ambition Coalition (on climate change) led by the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

6. The Minister participated in a meeting between Pacific leaders and the UN Secretary-General. ^{s6(b)(ii)}

s6(a)

s6(a)

Maritime security in the Indo-Pacific

7. The Minister attended a US-organised side event on maritime safety and security in the Indo-Pacific, with a focus on the South China Sea. ^{s6(a)}

the meeting zeroed in on the importance of upholding international law and of the rules-based maritime order for safety and security. ^{s6(a)}

The Minister delivered remarks on New Zealand's support for UNCLOS, our deep concern at the current trajectory of Chinese actions in the South China Sea and our commitment to acting in support of the rules-based system and regional stability.

Bilateral engagements

8. As the largest gathering of world leaders, HLW affords an unmatched opportunity to interact formally or informally with an array of counterparts. In addition to his UN-focused engagements, the Minister also held formal bilateral meetings with counterparts from Iceland, Italy, Jordan, Egypt, the Netherlands, Costa Rica, Sweden, Kiribati, the Maldives, the Palestinian Authority, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. File notes reporting on these engagements are attached.

9. Minister Peters also had informal or stand-up encounters with a range of other leaders and ministers in and around the UN. These included with the Prime Ministers of

Timor-Leste and Norway, the foreign ministers of Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Australia, Mongolia, and US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell. Further detail can be found on the [Minister's official Twitter/X page](#). High-Level Week also offered an opportunity to meet with two of the candidates for the Commonwealth Secretary-General position, from Lesotho and the Gambia respectively. The election for that role will take place at the forthcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Samoa.

Media engagement

10. Minister Peters also engaged with US-based New Zealand media and international outlets during his visit, including interviews with Al Jazeera, Reuters, TRT World and Sky News Australia.

Key issues for leaders at HLW

11. As expected, global flashpoints loomed over this year's HLW (NYK's separate FM reporting on the General Debate refers). The situation in the Middle East, with ongoing conflict and a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, heavily informed many Member States interventions, with particular focus reserved for the perceived failings of the UN Security Council to carry out its mandate to maintain peace and security. Many leaders went on to link this criticism with the use of the veto and a wide range of leaders from across regional and economic divides also made calls for reform of the Council's membership. The Pact of the Future, adopted on the eve of HLW (NYK's FM of 23 September), represented a tangible step forward in this regard, with Member States agreeing, among other things, on the need to enlarge the Security Council to make it more representative.

12. s6(a)

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

13. Strong thematic themes emerging from the range of developing country perspectives included strong and consistent calls for the reform of the global financial architecture, developing country debt, and the need for equitable access to financing for development. The deleterious effects of climate change and sea-level rise on SIDS and other coastal states was also a consistent refrain. Many leaders noted the perceived risks or opportunities from advancements in AI (separate NYK reporting on this year's High-Level Week will refer), while some stated their concern over the lack of progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition to sea-level rise, two other High-Level Meetings were held during this year's HLW, focusing on antimicrobial resistance and the total elimination of nuclear weapons, respectively.

Tākupu - Comment

14. In light of the escalating situation in the Middle East, the Security Council's struggle to fulfil its core mandate of ensuring international peace and security was under particular scrutiny during HLW. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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

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

The Minister's expressions of commitment to the value of the UN, the Charter and the international rules-based system for small states, and New Zealand's continued resolve to represent those interests, was a core objective of his visit. The Minister's engagements with a cross-regional selection of partners supported both our multilateral objectives and bilateral relationships, while support for Pacific voices and priorities represented a critical element of New Zealand's activity during the week.

17. As always, HLW presented a formidable array of competing meetings and events (and a formidable level of patience-testing logistics). Our navigation of the agenda required prioritisation of issues of particular importance for New Zealand. The participation of a select number of senior officials ensured New Zealand was able to cover a range of priority interests and ensure our voice was heard on relevant issues. New Zealand was represented at several ministerial meetings, including those with the interests of small states and international rule of law at their core. Separate reporting will follow.

Mutu – Ends

Released under the Official Information Act

Out of scope

Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: PACER PLUS: FIJI/AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND TRADE MINISTERS' MEETING s6(a), s9(2)
Date: Friday, 27 September 2024 11:11:52 am
Out of scope

[SENSITIVE]

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

s6(a)

s6(b)(i)

A trilateral statement covering PACER Plus, fisheries and broader trade interests was released at the conclusion of the talks (see attached).

Out of scope

PŪRONGO – REPORT

s6(a)

On 21 September, Fiji Deputy Prime Minister Kamikamica, Australian Trade Minister Farrell and New Zealand Minister for Trade McClay met in Rotorua for trade talks. Ministers discussed PACER Plus s6(a)

2 Deputy Prime Minister Kamikamica said that Fiji s6(a) wanted to see how PACER Plus could work for Fiji. He was interested in how it could support economic diversification and growth s6(a) as well as closer economic integration in the region.

3 Fiji completed a first round of high-level PACER Plus consultations with business stakeholders in early August and is about to commence more detailed consultations, sector by sector. s6(b)(i)

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

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

sb(D)(1)

5 s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(i)

Senior officials meeting

6 s6(b)(i)

7 s6(b)(i)

8 s6(b)(i)

Deputy Secretary Vitalis highlighted several existing flexibilities in the Agreement including through the industrial development provisions; tariff exclusions; lengthy phase outs; non-tariff elimination phase downs; a very generous transitional safeguard mechanism, infant industry protections and 25-year safeguards on Fiji's exports.

9 s6(b)(i)

10 s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(i)

TĀKUPU – COMMENT

11 s6(a)

Ministers highlighted the existing flexibilities in the Agreement s6(a)

12 s6(a)

13 s6(a)

s6(a)

14 s6(a)

15 s6(a)

MUTU – ENDS

Released under the Official Information Act