

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 11/08/2025

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

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision: Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters - 23 to 31 May 2025</i>	CAB-25-MIN-0211
<i>Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters - 23-31 May 2025</i>	

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- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis, and;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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.

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters - 23 to 31 May 2025

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 30 June 2025, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-25-SUB-0211 on his travel, from 23 to 31 May 2025, to Australia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and India, to undertake bilateral engagements.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Restricted

Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters – 23-31 May 2025

This paper recommends that Cabinet note this report on travel to Australia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and India from 23-31 May 2025 in order to undertake bilateral engagements.

Report

- 1 The purpose of travel to Australia was to conduct six-monthly Australia-New Zealand Foreign Ministry Consultations and engage early with the re-elected Australian Government at a senior level, in order to promote New Zealand's priority interests in our bilateral relationship and enhance our coordination in support of shared international goals such as Pacific development and security.
- 2 The purpose of travel to Sri Lanka and Nepal was to highlight the New Zealand Government's commitment to energising its relationships in South Asia, reinforce the long-standing nature of our relationships, and emphasise New Zealand's interest in maintaining and strengthening dialogue and cooperation.
- 3 The visit to Nepal was the first by a New Zealand Foreign Minister. It emphasised New Zealand's interest in deepening cooperation with Nepal on our shared interests in the multilateral system, in particular on UN reform and upholding the rules based international system.
- 4 The purpose of travel to India was to underline New Zealand's commitment to developing a broad-based relationship, s6(a)

Bilateral visit to Australia, 23-24 May

- 5 While in Australia, Minister Peters held Foreign Ministers' Consultations with newly re-elected Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong.

- 6 s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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

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- 8 Discussions with Minister Wong provided a valuable opportunity to profile New Zealand as an indispensable partner s9(2)(g)(i) discuss how best to respond to an increasingly challenging strategic environment together.
- 9 While in Melbourne the Minister also held television interviews with Sky News Media and ABC Media, raising the profile of New Zealand's foreign policy settings and our close partnership with Australia.

Bilateral visit to Sri Lanka, 24-28 May

- 10 In Sri Lanka, Minister Peters met with key figures in the new government: President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya, and Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath, as well as Leader of the Opposition Sajith Premadasa.
- 11 The visit, the first of a New Zealand Foreign Minister since 2013 and the establishment of a High Commission in Colombo in 2021, achieved the primary objective of profiling New Zealand as a reliable, constructive, and invested partner, and affirming our commitment to maintaining the long-standing bilateral relationship with the new government.
- 12 Discussions elicited useful proposals for strengthening bilateral cooperation, including holding Foreign Ministry Consultations in 2026, s6(b)(i) and strengthening bilateral dialogue on trade.
- 13 The visit allowed us to convey New Zealand's credentials as an invested and valuable partner in Sri Lanka's development ambitions, including through our development cooperation and support for the growth of sustainable tourism in Sri Lanka.
- 14 s6(a)
. It was an opportunity to signal our desire to strengthen educational links, and profile our advantages as an international education destination.
- 15 s6(b)(i)
. It allowed us to underline our strong interest in maintaining our valuable security cooperation to address trans-national organised crime s6(a) .

- 16 Minister Peters gave a television interview on the current affairs programme *Face to Face* lifting New Zealand's public profile as a long-standing partner of Sri Lanka and highlighting our valued and rapidly growing links in sport, tourism, and trade.

Bilateral visit to Nepal, 28 - 29 May

- 17 In Nepal, Minister Peters met with President Ramchandra Paudel, Prime Minister K P Sharma, and Foreign Minister Rana Deuba, as well as Leader of the Opposition and former Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal.
- 18 The visit successfully reaffirmed the warm and friendly relationship between New Zealand and Nepal and New Zealand's intent to maintain this.
- 19 New Zealand confirmed at the highest levels our shared interest in reform and strengthening of the multilateral system.
- 20 s6(b)(i)

- 21 The Minister's visit also focused political attention on progressing the bilateral Air Services Agreement, s6(b)(i)
- 22 In addition to political meetings, engagements with development projects in the remote Himalayas on the anniversary of the Hillary/Tenzing summit of Everest underlined our unique shared history and positive legacy, and generated substantial and positive media coverage.

Bilateral visit to India, 29 - 30 May

- 23 The Minister's visit to New Delhi centred around engagements with his counterpart, External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, s6(a)
These included a one-on-one meeting, a formal delegation-level bilateral meeting, and a working dinner, s6(b)(i)
- 24 s6(b)(i)

- 25 Ministers discussed the breadth of the relationship, including: the importance of the defence and security relationship; Free Trade Agreement negotiations; and opportunities for collaboration across education, sports, traditional medicine, and digital payment systems.
- 26 Ministers also discussed a number of regional matters, s6(a), s6(b)(i)
- 27 Minister Peters delivered a keynote Foreign Policy speech surveying New Zealand's underlying foreign policy philosophy, our relationship with India, and our approach to the Indo-Pacific generally. The speech was hosted by the Ananta Aspect Centre (a leading New Delhi-based think tank) to an audience of Indian thought-leaders, officials, commentators, and media.
- 28 Minister Peters also met with JP Nadda, President of the Bharatiya Janata Party and Minister of Health and Family Welfare, and Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition.

Proactive release

- 29 This Cabinet paper would 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.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs