

Proactive Release

Date: 3 September 2019

The following Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minute have been proactively released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade:

Title of paper:

Report on Overseas Travel: Undersecretary Tabuteau MP: Fiji 6-9 May 2019

Title of minute:

Report on Overseas Travel: Fletcher Tabuteau MP

(CAB-19-MIN-0297 refers)

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

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the New Zealand Government.



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: Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 17 June 2019, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Fletcher Tabuteau MP) under CAB-19-SUB-0297 on his travel, from 6 to 9 May 2019, to Suva, Fiji, for the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers Meeting.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:

Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Proactively Released by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair
Cabinet

**REPORT ON OVERSEAS TRAVEL: UNDER SECRETARY TABUTEAU MP: FIJI:
6 – 9 MAY**

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Fiji between 6 and 9 May 2019.

Report

2 I led the New Zealand delegation to the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Suva, Fiji from 7-9 May. This was the second consecutive year that I have represented New Zealand at the FEMM.

3 This year's FEMM was a valuable opportunity to engage with counterparts from throughout the Pacific Islands region. Finance and Economic Ministers are generally very influential in Pacific Governments, and continuing to build connections with them is an important component of the leadership diplomacy that underpins New Zealand's Pacific Reset.

4 Unfortunately, progress on the key FEMM agenda item – the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) – was slower than hoped. The PRF is a proposed regional initiative, s6(a)

to create a financing facility to invest in resilience-building across the region. s6(a)

4 Despite no final decisions being taken on the PRF, delegates provided significant feedback on the pros and cons of the proposed Facility during this year's FEMM. Delegates spoke about how the landscape for development financing had changed since the PRF was initially conceived. For example, the Pacific had now gained increasing access to climate finance, the new Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific had been established, and New Zealand had launched the Pacific Reset. The Pacific now had multiple sources of finance for infrastructure, s6(a)

5 Given that overall decisions on the PRF would not be taken at the meeting, I focused New Zealand's interventions on the importance of Members giving clear

direction on what acceptable core parameters of the Facility would look like, so as to see progress ahead of the Special FEMM to be convened to discuss the PRF in July.

6 The other item that generated animated discussion at the FEMM was the EU's 'blacklisting' of certain Pacific Island countries due to their approach to tax issues. With six Pacific Islands Forum Members on the blacklist, and five Members s6(a) on the greylist, this topic resonated strongly across the Forum Membership, s6(a)

7 Other highlights from the FEMM included:

- Ministers welcomed the work being carried out by the Pacific Islands Investment Forum (PIIF), a collection of Pacific investment funds, to explore opportunities to co-invest in infrastructure across the region;
- Ministers agreed to continue efforts to seek more concessional types of financial instruments for Pacific countries from the Multilateral Development Banks, in particular the World Bank and Asian Development Bank; and
- Ministers encouraged further investment in statistics by both national governments and development partners.

8 Our dialogue with private sector representatives was more productive than at previous FEMMs. A key focus was to encourage governments to proactively include the private sector in discussions on resilience financing and resilient infrastructure investment.

9 Similarly, a productive dialogue with civil society organisation (CSO) representatives saw Ministers welcome progress on a Physical Activity and Physical Education Action Plan and endorse a survey on the cost of violence against women and girls to the Pacific economy.

10 The FEMM concluded with the second Development Partner Dialogue. Partners represented included the ADB, Canada, China, the EU, France, Germany, the IMF, Japan, Korea, Spain, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, the United Nations, the United States, and World Bank.

Proactive Release

12 I plan to release this paper in part within 30 business days. All redactions will be made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

13 I recommend that Cabinet **note** this report.

Approved for lodgement

Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Proactively Released by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary
to the Minister of Foreign Affairs



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Proposed Overseas Travel: Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Portfolio **Foreign Affairs**

On 6 May 2019, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Fletcher Tabuteau MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, from New Zealand, from 6 to 9 May 2019, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, to travel to Suva, Fiji, for the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers Meeting;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff from the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- 3 **approved** the expenditure of up to \$9,038 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel).

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Hard-copy distribution:

Prime Minister
Deputy Prime Minister
Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Chair
Cabinet

PROPOSED OVERSEAS TRAVEL: FLETCHER TABUTEAU: FIJI: 6 – 9 May

I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Suva, Fiji, for the Pacific Islands Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM), which is an annual meeting of Pacific finance ministers and senior officials. I would also attend a lunch hosted by Dame Meg Taylor, the Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum.

Travel Objectives

2 The main objective for attending the FEMM is to provide New Zealand input into discussions on regional economic management and development issues. This is an opportunity to demonstrate New Zealand's credentials as a constructive partner to Pacific Island countries in the areas of trade, economic and development effectiveness. This also serves a broader purpose of underscoring our commitment to the Pacific Islands Forum.

3 The FEMM will also provide an important opportunity to network with Ministers and senior representatives ahead of the Pacific Islands Forum in Tuvalu in August. The development of relationships in the Pacific is also in line with the Pacific Reset strategy and New Zealand's goal of working in partnership with Pacific countries.

Travel

4 I propose to depart New Zealand on Monday 6 May and return on Thursday 9 May.

Under-Secretary's Party

5 I propose to be accompanied by the Senior Foreign Affairs Adviser from the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Under-Secretary's Responsibilities

6 If my travel is approved, I propose that Minister Peters cover my Foreign Affairs responsibilities and that Minister Shane Jones cover my Regional Economic Development responsibilities, from 6 – 9 May. I have been granted leave from the House for the period of my travel.

Costs of Travel

7 The projected costs of the proposed travel are:

Airfares:	\$4,612
Accommodation and other expenses:	\$2,526
Hospitality and gifts:	\$500
Contingency:	\$2,000
Total	\$9,038

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Recommendation

9 I recommend that Cabinet:

- a) **approve** my proposed travel to Fiji from 6-9 May;
- b) **approve** expenditure of up to \$9,038 for this travel;
- c) **agree** that Rt Hon Winston Peters will cover my Foreign Affairs responsibilities and Hon Shane Jones will cover my Regional Economic Development responsibilities while I am away.

Approved for lodgement

Fletcher Tabuteau MP

Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs