

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 30/03/2026

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

Title	Reference
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Nicole McKee - March 2026</i>	CAB-26-MIN-0036
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt Hon Winston Peters: Latin America Mission: 1 - 9 March 2026</i>	



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.

Proposed Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters and Hon Nicole McKee – March 2026

Portfolio Foreign Affairs

On 16 February 2026, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of the Rt Hon Winston Peters from New Zealand, from 1 to 9 March 2026, to travel to Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Chile, via Rapa Nui and Tahiti, to lead a Latin America Mission and attend bilateral meetings;
- 2 **authorised** the absence of Hon Nicole McKee from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 1 to 9 March 2026, to accompany Rt Hon Winston Peters as part of a cross-party delegation;
- 3 **agreed** that they be accompanied by one member of staff from the office of the Rt Hon Winston Peters and one member of staff from the office of Hon Nicole McKee;
- 4 **agreed** that they be accompanied by three other Members of Parliament (Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Tim van de Molen and Hon Damien O'Connor);
- 5 **noted** that they will also be accompanied by three spouses of the cross-party delegation;
- 6 **noted** that the delegation will be transported on a New Zealand Defence Force aircraft;
- 7 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$126,264 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 8 **noted** that they will also be accompanied by:
 - 8.1 officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, whose travel costs would be met by their respective agencies;
 - 8.2 business representatives, who will cover their own costs;
 - 8.3 media, who will cover their own costs;
- 9 **agreed** that in the absence of Rt Hon Winston Peters:
 - 9.1 Hon Todd McClay act as Minister of Foreign Affairs;
 - 9.2 Hon Shane Jones act as Minister for Racing;
 - 9.3 Hon Simeon Brown act as Minister for Rail;

- 10 **agreed** that in the absence of Hon Nicole McKee, Hon Paul Goldsmith act as Minister for Courts;
- 11 **noted** that leave from the House will be sought.

Diana Hawker
for Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

**Proposed Overseas Travel: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt Hon Winston Peters:
Latin America Mission: 1 – 9 March 2026**

Proposal

- 1 Cabinet approval is sought for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to travel to Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Chile, via Rapa Nui and French Polynesia, with a cross-parliamentary, business and media delegation, to lead a Latin America Mission from 1 – 9 March 2026.
- 2 The Prime Minister's Office has approved the travel in-principle.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 The proposed objectives for the Minister's Latin America Mission include to:
 - Reaffirm the importance New Zealand attaches to our partnerships in Latin America and promote New Zealand's value proposition to the region.
 - Engage with increasingly influential Latin American partners with a view to sharing insights, advancing our common interests, and further broadening and shoring-up New Zealand's network of partnerships.
 - Support the goal of doubling New Zealand's export value by 2035, including by showcasing and supporting New Zealand businesses in-market.
- 4 The Minister's visit to French Polynesia will provide an opportunity for engagement with the French State and the Government of French Polynesia on bilateral and regional interests in the Pacific.

Outline of Proposed Visit

- 5 The proposed visit will include the following anticipated components:
 - **Argentina:** Bilateral meetings with the Argentine President and Minister of Foreign Affairs; fixtures with the Argentine Congress and Friendship Group; a New Zealand-Argentine networking event; and a business roundtable.

- **Uruguay:** Bilateral meetings with the Uruguayan President and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade; a meeting with Congress; a New Zealand-Uruguayan dinner; and a business roundtable and a visit to an Uruguayan Free Trade Zone.
 - **Brazil:** Bilateral meetings with the Brazilian President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vice-President/Minister of Trade, and Minister of Education; the formal signing of the New Zealand – Brazil Film Co-Production Agreement and Education Cooperation Arrangement; an event with education stakeholders and alumni; engagement with senior Brazilian Congress Members; involvement in NZTE’s “Accelerate Brazil” iPlan programme, and a business showcase and reception, where a keynote speech on New Zealand-Latin America relations will be delivered.
 - **Chile:** Noting their recent election, the overnight visit will include bilateral meetings with both the outgoing and incoming Minister of Foreign Affairs. There will also be a delegation dinner with alumni and business contacts.
 - **Rapa Nui:** Engagement over lunch with the Presidential Delegate, Mayor, and Council of Elders, and other local stakeholders.
 - **French Polynesia:** Bilateral meetings with the President of the Government of French Polynesia, and the recently appointed French High Commissioner.
- 6 If travel is approved, the Minister and his delegation will depart New Zealand on 1 March and return on 9 March 2026.

Delegation

- 7 With the last mission of this nature to Latin America nearly 20 years ago, it is proposed that the Minister be accompanied by a cross-party delegation, with the aim of demonstrating the bipartisan importance New Zealand attaches to our partnerships in the region. The delegation would include:
- 7.1 Nicole McKee, Minister for Courts
 - 7.2 Carmel Sepuloni, Deputy Leader of the Opposition
 - 7.3 Tim van de Molen, Chair of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee
 - 7.4 Damien O’Connor, Opposition Trade Spokesperson
- 8 It is proposed that Mr van de Molen stay back to represent New Zealand at the Chilean President’s Inauguration on 11 March 2026, and to undertake further bilateral meetings in both Rapa Nui and Santiago.
- 9 The Minister proposes to be accompanied by his Senior Press Secretary. Minister McKee would be accompanied by a her Senior Private Secretary.

- 10 Other officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise will travel in support of the visit. The costs will be covered by their respective agencies.
- 11 In addition, members of the business community and New Zealand media have been invited to join the visit. Accompanying business leaders and media representatives will cover their own costs.
- 12 Three spouses of the cross-party delegation will participate in the visit to take part in the hospitality offered to the delegation by host governments. The spouses would stay with the Members of Parliament.
- 13 The delegation would be transported on an NZDF aircraft. It would depart for Buenos Aires (via Tahiti and Rapa Nui) on Sunday 1 March on an NZDF Boeing 757. We would then travel to Montevideo, Brasilia, Santiago, Rapa Nui and Tahiti (in that order), returning to New Zealand on Monday 9 March on the same asset.

Travel costs

- 14 Travel costs for the parliamentary delegation (i.e. five Members of Parliament and two ministerial staffers) would be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel.

ITEM	COST (NZD)
Flights	\$0 (NZDF asset)
Visa application costs	\$0
Airport facilitation – French Polynesia (transit plus visit)	\$1,500
Accommodation	\$22,029
Based on 7 rooms (5 MPs + 2 Ministerial staff)	
<i>Buenos Aires \$320-370/night x 2 nights</i>	\$5,180
<i>Montevideo \$288-425/night x 1 nights</i>	\$2,975
<i>Brasilia \$318-355/night x 2 nights</i>	\$4,970
<i>Santiago \$500/night x 1 nights</i>	\$3,500
<i>Tahiti \$772/night x 1 nights</i>	\$5,404

Ground Transportation	\$17,496.67
<i>Buenos Aires</i>	\$4,543
<i>Montevideo</i>	\$3,675
<i>Brasilia (3x days)</i>	\$2,832
<i>Santiago</i>	\$3,046.67
<i>Rapa Nui</i>	\$1,400
<i>Tahiti</i>	\$2,000
Hospitality (33% share of cost)	\$47,493
<i>Buenos Aires</i>	\$9,585
<i>Montevideo</i>	\$5,680
<i>Brasilia</i>	\$20,928
<i>Santiago</i>	\$4,000
<i>Rapa Nui</i>	\$5,300
<i>Tahiti</i>	\$2000
Gifts	\$4,861
<i>Buenos Aires</i>	\$1000
<i>Montevideo</i>	\$1000
<i>Brasilia</i>	\$1,121
<i>Santiago</i>	\$440
<i>Rapa Nui</i>	\$800
<i>Tahiti</i>	\$500
Meals	\$6,300
(\$150 per person per day, for 7 people x 6 days (excludes travel days at start/end of trip))	
Interpretation	\$6,920

<i>Buenos Aires</i>	\$1,429
<i>Montevideo</i>	\$1,921
<i>Brasilia</i>	\$970
<i>Santiago</i>	\$800
<i>Rapa Nui</i>	\$1800
Tim Van de Molen's attendance at the Chilean Presidential Inauguration	\$13,651.95
<i>Flights</i>	\$7,841.95
<i>Accommodation</i>	\$1,900
<i>Representation</i>	\$1,400
<i>Interpretation</i>	\$1,000
<i>Ground transport</i>	\$430
<i>Per diems</i> (\$150 per person per day, for 1 person x 4 days (excludes Saturday 7 March)	\$600.00
<i>Gifts</i>	\$480
Subtotal	\$120,251.62
Contingency 5%	\$6,021.59
GRAND TOTAL	\$126,264.2

Acting Ministers

15 If travel is approved, Minister McClay would cover the foreign affairs portfolio, Minister Jones would cover the racing portfolio, and Minister Brown would cover the rail portfolio in Minister Peters' absence. Minister Goldmith would cover the courts portfolio and associate justice portfolio in Minister McKee's absence.

Proactive release

16 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.

Recommendations

This paper recommends that Cabinet:

- 1 authorise the Minister of Foreign Affairs' absence from New Zealand to travel to Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Chile, via Rapa Nui and Tahiti, for a Latin America Mission from 1 – 9 March 2026.
- 2 agree that the Minister of Foreign Affairs be accompanied by four Members of Parliament: Nicole McKee, Carmel Sepuloni, Tim van de Molen and Damien O'Connor; and two members of staff.
- 3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$126,264.2 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs - Members of the Executive – Travel.
- 4 note that the delegation would be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, whose travel costs would be met by their respective agencies;
- 5 note that the delegation would be accompanied by business representatives, who would cover their own costs;
- 6 note that the delegation would be accompanied by media, who would cover their own costs;
- 7 agree that in the absence of Minister Peters and Minister McKee:
 - 7.1 Minister McClay would act as Minister for Foreign Affairs;
 - 7.2 Minister Jones would act as Minister of Racing;
 - 7.3 Minister Brown would act as Minister for Rail;
 - 7.4 Minister Goldsmith would act as Minister for Courts.
- 8 note that the travelling Members of Parliament will seek leave from the House over this period.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs