

**International Facing Ministers' Meeting: Disarmament and Peace
Discussion
Brief for Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control**

Opening remarks

- Russia's aggression in Ukraine has seen significant international solidarity behind Ukraine. But at the same time it has demonstrated the fragility of multilateral institutions and of the rules and norms that we rely on to underpin the international rules-based order.
- This general dynamic is playing out on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. Russia has threatened use of nuclear weapons and there are fears it is positioning itself for the possible use of chemical and/or biological weapons – actions that degrade the international norms against use of these weapons. It has used explosive weapons in populated areas, cluster munitions and landmines. Conflict around nuclear power facilities has threatened nuclear safety and security.
- We have also already seen a reduction in the effective operation of key disarmament institutions, including worsening deadlock in multilateral fora and the derailing of substantive disarmament and non-proliferation meetings.
- If these trends continue, there is a risk of further deterioration and fragmentation of the multilateral system; a split into the "West" and others.
- But there is also another possibility. This situation could instead be a rallying cry in support of multilateralism. On disarmament and non-proliferation, it could be a much-needed wake-up call – about the need to shore up existing institutions and norms, and to reverse the trends in areas where progress has stalled, including on nuclear disarmament.

New Zealand's interests

- New Zealand's interests here are multi-faceted. I thought it might be helpful to group these interests in three ways.
- First, in the immediate term, we must respond robustly to Russia's aggression, including supporting Ukraine and holding President Putin accountable for his actions. This is, understandably, the overwhelming focus for many of our partners at the moment, as well for our own response efforts.
- In this environment, on disarmament and non-proliferation, our main interest is in "holding our shape" – by which I mean, retaining our focus on our priority issues, and working to ensure there is continued progress, including firmly opposing any hints of "backsliding" or moves toward lower ambition on these issues from others. This will

include continuing to promote achievement of our Disarmament Strategy with a particular prioritisation of the more immediate and relevant challenges, for example on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and explosive weapons in populated areas, alongside other ongoing priorities such as autonomous weapons and outer space.

- And then, the third part of New Zealand's interests is what I spoke about earlier: Taking up the potential problem of a fracturing of the multilateral system. We can be proactive – working to preserve and strengthen multilateral institutions and the international rules based order on which New Zealand is dependent. We want to ensure the conflict is a turning point in a positive direction rather than a negative one.

How to take this forward?

- This medium- to long- term approach is what I wanted to discuss in more detail with you all today.

s9(2)(g)(i)

- This course of action is clearly focused on engaging a broad range of partners – from our disarmament partners, to our values-based likemindeds, and institutions such as the UN. We will need to work to a timeframe that is responsive but also realistic.

Key events and issues this year

- I wanted to finish by quickly noting some key events and issues on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda this year. These will form the basis of our “holding our shape” interactions, as I discussed earlier. But they will also be opportunities to take forward our longer-term ambitions and strategies.

- On nuclear disarmament, we have the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons First Meeting of States Parties in Vienna in June, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York in August. Both are important meetings and will have high-level representation including Ministers.
- On nuclear non-proliferation, we remain on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency until September this year so will engage actively in efforts to address unresolved issues with Iran's nuclear programme as well as the implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on nuclear safety and security.
- The coming year will also see Review Conferences of both the Biological Weapons Convention (in Nov/Dec 2022) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (in May 2023). We already had a focus on reinforcing these institutions, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated how vulnerable they are and the ongoing importance of work to shore them up.
- We expect to see the adoption of the Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas this year, of which New Zealand is a strong supporter.
- In the Pacific, we have the issue of the legacy of nuclear testing in the Pacific. New Zealand has recently joined a PIF Taskforce focused on this issue, and later this year the regular PIF Leaders' and Foreign Ministers' meetings will be held.
- The emerging issues of autonomous weapons systems and outer space will also remain priorities for New Zealand.

Questions for discussion

- I would **welcome your views on this overall approach**, ^{s9(2)(g)(i)}

- ^{s9(2)(g)(i)}

- I would also like to highlight **nuclear legacy issues in the Pacific**. There is a lot going on in the region at the moment – both domestically for many countries, and on big regional issues including on membership of the Pacific Islands Forum. But given the importance of the nuclear legacy issue and New Zealand's strong voice on this, we would be keen to have this considered by PIF Foreign Ministers and Leaders later in the

year. This could be for example a reference in a communique. I would be interested in your thoughts on this.

*International Security and Disarmament Division, MFAT
May 2022*

Released under the Official Information Act

Briefing for call with Ian Biggs, Australian Ambassador for Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation, Tuesday 10 May, 4:30pm

Haurongo – Biography



Ambassador Biggs has been in his current role since January 2022, the second person to serve in this role since it was established in 2019. AUKUS is a particular focus of his role. He is a career diplomat, having previously served as Ambassador to Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, and also in Vienna, Damascus and New Delhi. He was Head of Secretariat, International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, and has held several senior leadership roles in arms control and disarmament-related issues in Canberra. He also served as Special Assistant to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

Biggs had an introductory call with High Commissioner Annette King in Canberra in February 2022. He has travelled extensively in the past two months, visiting the Republic of Korea, Japan, India, South East Asia, Washington and New York.

Whāinga – Objectives

- Outline our interest in continuing our close engagement with Australia, not only on issues where we are very likeminded including non-proliferation and conventional weapons issues, but also on issues such as nuclear disarmament where we engage on our differences frankly and constructively.
- Exchange views on the impact of Russia's aggression in Ukraine on disarmament and non-proliferation.
- Emphasise the importance of a credible outcome at the NPT Review Conference and seek Australia's views on the prospects of this.
- Encourage Australia to attend TPNW MSP1 as an observer.
- Highlight New Zealand's expectations for the adoption of a meaningful Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas ^{s6(a)}
- Note New Zealand's interest in the non-proliferation implications of AUKUS, and the importance of the IAEA's role in this regard.

Pito korero – Talking points

- Register New Zealand's **long-held commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation**. We have a long and proud history of taking a principled approach to these issues, and the elimination of nuclear weapons remains a core component of our foreign policy. Our current priorities are set out in our **Disarmament Strategy**, released last year.
- Recognise Australia's own long-standing advocacy in this space, for example on the **Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty**, which **Australian Rob Floyd** now presides over.

- Reiterate our interest in **ongoing trans-Tasman dialogue** across the disarmament and non-proliferation portfolio.
- Note that **Russia's invasion of Ukraine** has implications right across the disarmament and arms control agenda – from undermining the norms against nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, to the use of cluster munitions and explosive weapons in populated areas, and the threats to nuclear safety and security.
- It is clear, as a result, that we need to **work to shore up disarmament and non-proliferation institutions, Treaties, rules and norms.**
 - Some of these were already vulnerable – such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention – and Russia's actions just highlight the importance of our work to shore them up.
 - In other areas, we need to reverse trends where progress has stalled – such as nuclear disarmament. Russia's nuclear threats have made crystal clear that nuclear weapons are never the answer.
- I would be interested in your views on the **proliferation implications of Russia's actions**. I know you have visited Japan and South Korea recently, and am interested in any reflections you might have from that
- Note the importance of the **NPT Review Conference**. Russia's nuclear threats and its escalatory activities should be opposed and called out by the NPT membership. But they are not the only problem facing the NPT right now and should not be presented as such.
 - For New Zealand and other non-nuclear weapon states, the risk facing the NPT is the same risk that has been present many years now. It's the risk that lack of progress by the NWS on their nuclear disarmament obligations will lead to an unravelling of the NPT.
 - At the Rev Con, we need to see a clear statement and some concrete measures from the NWS that they are committed to their disarmament obligations under Article VI. The situation in Ukraine highlights the unsustainability of the current situation and the need for progress. Of course there are always reasons why nuclear disarmament is difficult but we are seeing right now that its constant deferral has serious consequences.
 - We are genuinely concerned about the health of the NPT regime if there isn't a credible outcome from the Rev Con. There is a real risk that countries that are strong supporters of nuclear disarmament will lose faith in the NWS commitment to the NPT, and so will start to lose faith in the entire NPT itself. This would be a very bad scenario. It would threaten all the gains we have made on non-proliferation under the NPT, alongside, of course, the implications for nuclear disarmament.

- We are aware that what is happening in Russia/Ukraine, and the fallout from that, will make it very hard to see significant steps forward at the Rev Con. But we really hope everyone can see the risks to the NPT and the implications of that – and that we will be able to come together to get a credible outcome. What do you think are the prospects for this?
- **Encourage Australia to attend TPNW MSP1 as an observer**, alongside Germany, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Switzerland among others. This would send the message of being open to dialogue and wanting to avoid polarisation on nuclear disarmament – a particularly important message in the current climate.
 - s6(a)
 - We would be more than happy to talk further about all this and I know you have calls with our disarmament officials lined up. But actually, the main point is that the Treaty is now a reality. It has entered into force; it is part of the landscape. The focus now needs to be on reducing polarisation and inflammatory arguments, and focusing on dialogue and where we can all find common ground.
- **Iran and North Korea** pose additional challenges to the international non-proliferation regime. The **JCPOA negotiations** appear to have reached an impasse. At the same time, there has been a significant uptick in **North Korea's ballistic missile testing with fears that a nuclear test is imminent**. What is Australia's assessment of the prospects for a revived JCPOA deal and a return to diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula?
- Note New Zealand's ongoing interest in the issue of **the legacy of nuclear testing in the Pacific**, building on the commitments made by Forum Leaders over many years. New Zealand has recently joined the CROP Taskforce that deals with these issues. Our priority is to advance the independent review of existing scientific assessments of nuclear contamination in the Pacific. ^{s6(a)}

We would welcome Australia's support for this ongoing work.

- Outline the importance New Zealand places on international regulation of **Autonomous Weapons Systems**, as reflected by our position agreed by Cabinet late last year.
 - In line with this policy, New Zealand will continue to advocate for new, legally-binding international rules and limits to address our concerns with autonomous weapons systems. Our focus is on enlarging the number of

states that are willing to consider agreeing effective legally-binding rules and regulations.

- I know my officials have really appreciated close engagement with their Australian counterparts^{s6(a)}

I want to register here our ongoing interest in working with Australia on this issue,^{s6(a)}

- I am keen to understand what Australia views as a best possible outcome from the existing GGE process and whether it meets your views of what is necessary to address the ethical and legal concerns we share about AWS.
- Highlight New Zealand's strong support for the conclusion of a meaningful **Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas**, noting that the devastation in Ukraine has only highlighted the urgency of this work. We were pleased with the direction of travel at the latest round of negotiations in Geneva^{s6(a)}

- s6(a)

What are Australia's objectives for this process? Will you endorse the Declaration?

AUKUS – non-proliferation aspects

- The Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs have both commented publicly on the AUKUS security partnership, and I know this is something that has been discussed in their bilateral meetings. I am personally interested in possible implications of the deal for the issues that fall within my portfolio, specifically in relation to nuclear non-proliferation.
- As we would expect, the IAEA has confirmed that the submarine deal **raises some very tricky technical questions**. There is also the central question of the precedent effect of AUKUS.
- As acknowledged by AUKUS partners, it will be important to work closely with the IAEA given the imperative of transparency, and in order to **maintain confidence in the IAEA's safeguards regime**. We therefore welcome AUKUS partners' continued commitment to keeping the IAEA Board of Governors actively informed of latest developments and would encourage you to continue doing this.
- s6(a)

- We are conscious the IAEA has a real interest and role to play in this issue. We are clear, though, that the timeframe and content of this should be driven by the IAEA itself in line with its mandate. We therefore do not support politically-motivated efforts to include AUKUS on the Board agenda but will consider it appropriate for the Board to engage on the advice of the Director-General.

- What impact does Australia think AUKUS might have on other important upcoming meetings, including the **NPT Review Conference**?

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

- s6(a)

s6(a)

Background

AUKUS

AUKUS has been a major focus for Ambassador Biggs and his (significantly expanded) team, with engagement with South East Asian and Pacific countries a particular priority.

2 s6(b)(i)

s6(b)(i)

3 s6(b)(i)

TPNW

4 s6(b)(i)

**International Security and Disarmament Division
April 2022**

Released under the Official Information Act

Briefing for call with Izumi Nakamitsu, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Wednesday 1 June 2022, 8:00am

Haurongo – Biography



Izumi Nakamitsu is the United Nations' top disarmament official, a position she has held since May 2017. Ms Nakamitsu has had a long career working for the UN on a variety of peace and security issues that includes refugees and peacekeeping. She also previously served as Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator, and Crisis Response Unit leader of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during Helen Clark's tenure as UNDP Administrator. Born in 1963, Nakamitsu holds a Master of Science degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and a Bachelor of Law degree from Waseda University in Tokyo. She is married and has two daughters. You had a call with Nakamitsu in February 2021. She visited New Zealand in 2020.

Nakamitsu's accompanying officials

- Christopher King, Senior Political Affairs Officer and Deputy Chief, Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch, UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
- Jose Restrepo, Office of the High Representative

MFAT attendees

- H.E. Lucy Duncan, New Zealand Ambassador for Disarmament and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva
- H.E. Carolyn Schwalger, New Zealand Permanent Representative to the UN in New York
- Katy Donnelly, Unit Manager (Disarmament), MFAT
- Tessa Versteeg, Senior Policy Officer, MFAT

Whāinga – Objectives

- Share perspectives on the state of the international disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, including the implications of Russia's war on Ukraine.
- Seek an update on the disarmament aspects of the **UN Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda** report and calls for a 'New Agenda for Peace' and emphasise New Zealand's support for this.
- Register New Zealand's position on the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference**, and note your interest in an in-person meeting with Nakamitsu in the margins.
- Note the importance New Zealand is placing on the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** First Meeting of States Parties, **Explosive Weapons on Populated Areas**, and **autonomous weapons systems**.

Pito korero – Talking points

- I would be interested to hear your thoughts on the **state of the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda**, including in light of Russia's war on Ukraine.
- From New Zealand's perspective, **Russia's actions** have implications right across the disarmament and arms control agenda – from undermining the norms against nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, to the use of cluster munitions and explosive weapons in populated areas, and the threats to nuclear safety and security.
- It is clear, as a result, that we need to **work to “hold our shape”, to shore up disarmament and non-proliferation institutions, Treaties, rules and norms.**
 - Some of these were already vulnerable – such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention – and Russia's actions just highlight the importance of our work to shore them up.
 - In other areas, we need to reverse trends where progress has stalled – such as nuclear disarmament. Russia's nuclear threats have made crystal clear that nuclear weapons are never the answer, but at the same time have reinforced for some the value of nuclear deterrence (and extended nuclear deterrence).
- UNODA's role and work is crucial as we look to navigate a constructive path forward.
- I have been following member state discussions on the UN Secretary-General's **Our Common Agenda** report, and its calls to further develop a 'New Agenda for Peace'. I understand that preparations on that New Agenda will now continue in the lead up to the Summit for the Future. How do you see this progressing, and what do you think it might entail for disarmament?
- Note the importance of securing a meaningful outcome from the **NPT Review Conference**. Russia's nuclear threats and its escalatory activities are providing the backdrop to the Conference but they are not the only problem facing the NPT right now and should not be presented as such.
- At the Rev Con, we need to see a clear statement and some concrete measures from the NWS that they are committed to their disarmament obligations under Article VI. The situation in Ukraine highlights the unsustainability of the current situation and the need for progress. Of course there are always reasons why nuclear disarmament is difficult but we are seeing right now that its continued deferral has serious consequences.
- We are aware that what is happening in Russia/Ukraine, and the fallout from that, will make it very hard to see significant steps forward at the Rev Con. But we really hope everyone can see the risks to the NPT and the implications of that – and that we will be able to come together to get a credible outcome. What do you think are the prospects for this?

- I am planning to attend the Rev Con during its first week. It would be great if we were able to meet in person on the ground in New York.
- We are looking forward to the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons First Meeting of States Parties**, which I will be attending for New Zealand.
 - From our perspective the policy work for the meeting is shaping up well, and we are pleased to have a number of countries committed to attend as observers. We think this will help to reduce polarisation and inflammatory rhetoric, and to show openness to dialogue – a particularly important message in the current international climate.
 - Overall, we think the meeting will send a good signal of States Parties' determination to completely eliminate nuclear weapons, and cement the Treaty's place in taking that forward.
 - We appreciate UNODA's work to support preparations for MSP1, including on the Sponsorship Programme, which will help get broad geographic representation at the meeting. New Zealand has contributed to the programme, with a particular focus on Pacific countries and has been in close touch with Pacific partners to encourage attendance. We understand that ongoing COVID travel and border restrictions will impact Pacific attendance but that some partners will be present in Vienna.
 - New Zealand is keen to take a strategic, long-term view of the Treaty. We're conscious that the UN will have an ongoing role in supporting implementation – so we look forward to staying in touch on this.
s6(a)
- New Zealand is pleased that dates and a Chair for the **Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)** have now been confirmed. While not a bioweapon, the COVID-19 pandemic has served as a stark reminder of the international community's collective vulnerability to biological threats. We hope that the Conference will provide a vehicle for much needed strengthening of the BWC regime.
s6(a)
- Highlight New Zealand's strong support for the conclusion of a meaningful **Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas**, noting that the devastation in Ukraine has only highlighted the urgency of this work. We were pleased with the direction of travel at the latest round of negotiations in Geneva and are looking closely at the final text that has now been circulated by Austria. We will play our part to promote universalisation and implementation of the Declaration.

- Outline the importance New Zealand places on international regulation of **Autonomous Weapons Systems**, as reflected by our position agreed by Cabinet late last year.
 - In line with this policy, New Zealand will continue to advocate for new, legally-binding international rules and limits to address our concerns with autonomous weapons systems. Our focus is on enlarging the number of states that are willing to consider agreeing effective legally-binding rules and regulations. As part of this, we continue to engage actively in the CCW's work on LAWS as well as with civil society and experts
 - s6(a)

Background

The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, visited New Zealand in March 2020 and you met virtually with her in February 2021 (report attached). This call is a great opportunity to check back in with Nakamitsu on the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on her expectations across the disarmament portfolio.

2 The **Our Common Agenda** report, presented by the Secretary-General in September 2021, proposes a 'New Agenda for Peace' that takes a more comprehensive, holistic view of global security to: reduce strategic risks (nuclear weapons, cyberwarfare, autonomous weapons); strengthen international foresight; reshape responses to all forms of violence; invest in prevention and peacebuilding; support regional prevention; and put women and girls at the centre of security policy. The Secretary-General has asked the UN system (including UNODA) to develop a New Agenda for Peace in close consultation with Member States, and in collaboration with all relevant partners, as part of the preparations for the proposed Summit of the Future in September 2023.

3 s6(a)

4 The inclusion of disarmament in Our Common Agenda reflects a long-standing view that greater coordination **is necessary across the UN's work**, for example between humanitarian disarmament campaigns such as on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) and de-mining, and the broader objectives of conflict prevention and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

5 With regards to **autonomous weapons systems**, Nakamitsu has previously stated that the international community needed to be increasingly vigilant when it came to emerging technologies, particularly AWS. In your call last year, she noted the UN

Secretary-General had said publicly that “machines taking the decision to kill humans is unacceptable”, and expressed the UN’s interest in keeping the issue in the CCW GGE process.

**International Security and Disarmament Division / Geneva / New York
May 2022**

Annex 1: Formal report on your call with UNHR Nakamitsu (February 2021)

RĀPOPOTO / SUMMARY

New Zealand’s Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, Hon Phil Twyford, met virtually with United Nations Under-Secretary General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, on 23 February. Discussions focused on the current global environment and the ongoing importance of nuclear disarmament, including in the build-up to the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and the deferred Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Nakamitsu encouraged New Zealand to continue our active support for both treaties s6(b)(ii) Emerging challenges, including Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems and the intersection of disarmament and outer space, were also discussed. Minister Twyford confirmed New Zealand’s ongoing commitment to progressing the disarmament agenda, including through our support for new initiatives being promoted by the United Nations Secretary-General.

HOHENGĀ / ACTION

For information.

PŪRONGO / REPORT

1 On Tuesday 23 February the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, Hon Phil Twyford, met virtually with the United Nations Under-Secretary and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu. Hon Twyford was joined on the call by NYK (Hawke), GVA (Duncan), ISED (Donnelly) and his office. s6(b)(ii)

Disarmament and arms control: a global view

2 Minister Twyford sought Nakamitsu’s views on the opportunities and challenges facing global efforts on disarmament. s6(b)(ii)

s6(b)(ii)

3 s6(b)(ii)

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)

4 s6(b)(ii)

5 s6(b)(ii)

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Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

6 Minister Twyford sought Nakamitsu's views on the prospects for a **successful outcome of the deferred NPT Review Conference.** s6(b)(ii)

7 s6(b)(ii)

8 s6(b)(ii)

s6(a)

9 s6(a)

s6(b)(ii)

s6(b)(ii)

10 s6(b)(ii)

Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (“Killer Robots”)

11 Minister Twyford asked Nakamitsu whether the UN was keen to promote progress on the issues relating to Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). s6(b)(ii)

12 s6(b)(ii)

Outer space

13 Minister Twyford noted that New Zealand has a small but (for us) significant space industry – we were keen to reap the benefits of that but also wanted to be part of global efforts to frame up responsible rules and norms. s6(b)(ii)

Intersection of disarmament and the UN common agenda

14 Minister Twyford noted that it had been excellent to see the UN Secretary-General speaking so eloquently and passionately about disarmament and the UN "common agenda" and sought Nakamitsu's views on how the UN's efforts to progress this were going (comment : the Common Agenda flows from the Political Declaration on the 75th Anniversary of the UN, and is the Secretary-General's follow-up to the Declaration). s6(b)(ii)

15 s6(b)(ii)

Minister Twyford noted that the UN could "count on us" and reiterated New Zealand's commitment to supporting the UN's work in this space in any way we could.

s6(b)(ii)

16 s6(b)(ii)

Comment

17 This introductory call provided an excellent opportunity for Minister Twyford to hear directly from the UN's most senior disarmament official on many of the key issues within his Disarmament and Arms Control portfolio. s6(b)(ii)

There are many areas in which New Zealand can and will be able to work in support of the UN's refreshed disarmament agenda and we look forward to working with NYK and GVA to take up as many of these opportunities as we can.

18 We note that this was the first of a series of international calls being made by Minister Twyford as he steps up New Zealand's engagement on a number of disarmament issues.
s6(a)

We encourage posts to alert ISED to opportunities for high-level engagements on disarmament issues (including government counterparts and the heads of international organisations etc), and for involvement in high-level events.

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Annex 2: Our Common Agenda – disarmament language

security responses and a meaningful set of steps to manage emerging risks. To achieve this, we need a [new agenda for peace](#), potentially focusing on six core areas:

- a) **Reducing strategic risks.** I have already proposed to work with Member States to update our vision for disarmament so as to guarantee human, national and collective security, including through broader support for non-proliferation, a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, effective control of conventional weapons and regulation of new weapons of technology. The new agenda for peace could be an opportunity to take this forward, in particular through establishing stronger commitments for the non-use of nuclear weapons and a time frame for their elimination, ensuring continued cooperation to prevent and counter-terrorism, strengthening digital transformation and promoting innovation by United Nations peace and security entities, banning cyberattacks on civilian infrastructure, putting in place measures to de-escalate cyber-related risks and tensions, and establishing internationally agreed limits on lethal autonomous weapons systems. The entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in January 2021 was an extraordinary achievement and a step towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons;
- b) **Strengthening international foresight and capacities to identify and adapt to new peace and security risks.** The proposals laid out in chapter III above to ensure the future of succeeding generations and chapter IV.B below on addressing major risks could allow us to identify and adapt to new risks to peace and security;
- c) **Reshaping our responses to all forms of violence.** Large-scale conflict kills fewer people than other forms of violence, including violence from criminal groups and interpersonal violence in the home. At the same time, increases in

C. Next steps

102. It is ultimately for Member States, in close consultation with other relevant stakeholders, to identify and agree on those global commons or public goods that may require renewed commitments or governance improvements. To support their deliberations, I will ask a **High-level Advisory Board** led by former Heads of State and/or Government to build on the ideas I have shared here. Notably, I will ask the Advisory Board to identify global public goods and potentially other areas of common interest where governance improvements are most needed and propose options for how this could be achieved. This would need to take into account existing institutional

and legal arrangements, gaps and emerging priorities or levels of urgency, and the need for equity and fairness in global decision-making. The Advisory Board could also take into account the proposals made throughout this report, including the repurposing of the Trusteeship Council and the creation of an Emergency Platform.

103. Once the Advisory Board has reported its findings, it will be important to hold a high-level, multi-stakeholder **"Summit of the Future"** to advance ideas for governance arrangements in the areas of international concern mentioned in this report, and potentially others, where governance arrangements are nascent or require updating. It would be preceded by preparatory events and consultations. The Summit would most appropriately be held in conjunction with the high-level week of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly and could include high-level tracks on:

- a) Advancing governance for global public goods and other areas, as appropriate, in the light of the findings of the Advisory Board;
- b) Anticipating sustainable development and climate action beyond 2030;
- c) Peace and security, for the new agenda for peace;
- d) Digital technology, for the Global Digital Compact;
- e) Outer space, to seek agreement on the sustainable and peaceful use of outer space, move towards a global regime to coordinate space traffic and agree on principles for the future governance of outer space activities;
- f) Major risks and agreement on an Emergency Platform;
- g) Succeeding generations, for possible agreement on a Declaration on Future Generations.

AUKUS – NAVAL NUCLEAR PROPULSION AND THE NPT

Talking points

- New Zealand is closely following initiatives relating to nuclear naval propulsion being advanced separately by AUKUS and Brazil.
- With regard to AUKUS specifically, Prime Minister Ardern has welcomed increased engagement by the UK and the US in our region. She reiterated that our collective objective needs to be delivery of peace and stability and the preservation of the international rules based system.
- New Zealand's position in relation to the prohibition of nuclear powered vessels in our waters remains unchanged.
- Nuclear propulsion initiatives from states without nuclear weapons are unprecedented and so there are naturally many legitimate questions and concerns that need to be considered and addressed. For New Zealand, as for the IAEA, the non-proliferation aspects and the legal obligations of all concerned are of primary importance.
- New Zealand has full confidence in the IAEA's independent, impartial and professional work on safeguards matters. We look to the IAEA for guidance and advice as they engage with the AUKUS partners and Brazil on their respective initiatives.
- New Zealand appreciates the commitments made by AUKUS and Brazil to engage openly and transparently with the IAEA and the Director General's remarks of satisfaction with engagement to date in this regard.
- In the case of AUKUS in particular, we note the AUKUS partners' public reiterations of commitment to non-proliferation and their respective legal obligations.
- We look forward to the Director General's initial report to the Board for its quarterly meeting in September, and to further details on the proposed submarine initiatives from AUKUS and Brazil in due course.
- New Zealand does not support the establishment of additional parallel structures to consider the AUKUS initiative given this would undermine the work and integrity of the IAEA.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

Background

- Under the AUKUS arrangement, the UK and the US will provide a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability to Australia. This will involve nuclear propulsion technology sharing with Australia and the provision of complete, welded power units, enabling the construction of a fleet of at least eight nuclear-powered submarines. Separately, Brazil is pursuing its own nuclear-propelled submarine programme, which will be conducted completely domestically with low-enriched uranium (LEU) as the fuel source. Nuclear propulsion enables submarines to remain submerged for much longer periods of time than conventional models and travel at much higher speeds.

- Despite allegations to the contrary, the provision of nuclear propulsion technology and fuel to Australia is neither prohibited by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or the Treaty of Rarotonga, nor contrary to Australia's obligations under its safeguards agreements with the IAEA.
- Rather, it is utilising a deliberate exemption (referred to by some as a "loophole") in the nuclear safeguards system, which provides that IAEA safeguards do not need to be applied to nuclear material being used in a "non-proscribed military activity". The exemption, enshrined in paragraph 14 (Non-Application of Safeguards to Nuclear Material to be Used in Non-Peaceful Activities) of the foundational Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, is based on the premise that the NPT does not prohibit non-explosive military applications of nuclear technology, and was agreed to by all NPT members when the Treaty was adopted. With respect to the AUKUS deal, the "non-proscribed military activity" is naval nuclear propulsion and the nuclear material is expected to be up to two tons of weapons-grade uranium enriched to more than 90 percent uranium-235.
- The AUKUS partners have reaffirmed that Australia does not and will not seek nuclear weapons, nor will the project position Australia to do so given it does not enable Australia to conduct uranium enrichment or fuel fabrication. All three AUKUS partners have been clear they remain fully committed to, and compliant with, all of their legal obligations, including their safeguards arrangements with the IAEA. They have stated they are cognisant of the precedent the additional safeguards arrangement with the IAEA would set and are working to achieve the highest safeguards standards in this regard. s6(a)
- s6(a)
- s6(a)
- For some states, experts and civil society representatives, the "precedent risk" of AUKUS is perceived as being so high that the option of utilising the "loophole" should be taken off the table. Others appear focused

on ensuring that whatever rules or processes are put in place for AUKUS will be sufficiently robust to avoid weakening the IAEA safeguards system and undermining the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

- New Zealand recognises that the nuclear propulsion aspect of AUKUS poses significant challenges for the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and for the IAEA safeguards system in particular. We consider that the IAEA, with its mandate, independence, and technical expertise, is the appropriate source of advice as to whether the proposal can be implemented in such a way that achieves the stated objective of the AUKUS partners, namely “strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and closing the door to any potential misuse of these elements of the NPT framework for the purposes of developing a clandestine nuclear weapons program”.
- New Zealand sees value in receiving substantive reporting from the IAEA Director General, expected at the next meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors in September 2022, ^{s6(a)}
- ^{s6(a)}
- We continue to encourage the AUKUS partners to engage closely and transparently with the IAEA. There remain open questions regarding the role the IAEA Board of Governors can expect to have with respect to any agreement reached with the IAEA Secretariat. Some have suggested any agreement would need to be formally approved by the Board, whereas others hold the view that this is not required. ^{s6(a)}
- Beyond the nuclear proliferation challenges posed by AUKUS, a number of states such as Indonesia have also sought to highlight the prospect of accidents or other safety risks which may occur during the transportation, maintenance and use of the nuclear fuel, with humanitarian and environmental consequences. These risks are not unique to the AUKUS proposal and are the subject of a number of safety standards and regulation as well as nuclear liability frameworks (which New Zealand follows closely given our interests as a coastal state that sometimes sees nuclear shipments pass close by).
- There has been no discussion or agreement by IAEA members of the definition of “non-proscribed military activity”, or of the arrangements that need to be put in place for the IAEA to agree to a state’s invocation of paragraph 14. The AUKUS partners are no longer the only country exploring nuclear-naval propulsion with the IAEA. Brazil also initiated a formal discussion with the Secretariat in May regarding its long-standing nuclear submarine programme. ^{s6(a)}

Briefing for meeting with Peter Beck, Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer, Rocket Lab, 27 September, 12.45pm

Haurongo – Biography



Peter Beck is the Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Rocket Lab, a New Zealand rocket technology company. He founded the company in 2006 with the goal of making space accessible to all by opening up access for small satellites that perform vital services, such as weather monitoring, communications and Earth observation. Beck and his team developed the world's first fully carbon-composite launch vehicle, powering it with 3D-printed, electric turbopump-fed engines. He also oversaw the development of the world's only private orbital launch site on Mahia peninsula.

Whāinga – Objectives

- Seek an **update on Rocket Lab's future direction**.
- Register the rationale for the space policy review consultation and the need to maintain broad public support. Listen to Mr Beck's views on this.
- Provide an update on the **current international context** (which Rocket Lab is impacted by) from a foreign policy and security perspective, underscoring the increasing focus internationally on sustainability and responsibility.

Pito korero – Talking points

Rocket Lab's Future Direction

- Congratulations on the successful launch of the CAPSTONE mission for NASA's Artemis programme. This was a significant achievement.
- I know that you were supportive of New Zealand joining the Artemis Accords. Where do you see the key opportunities for further engagement in this programme? Do you have plans to seek deeper involvement in NASA's return to the moon and eventual exploration of Mars?
- Seek an update on Rocket Lab's development of the larger reusable Neutron launch vehicle.

Space Policy Review consultation – maintaining broad public support

- s9(2)(f)(iv)
- This is one reason the government has established the public consultation on New Zealand's space policy. The consultation document sets out the government's values and interests in space, as well as our policy objectives.
- We hope to achieve broad public engagement. This will include public meetings as well as two meetings targeted at disarmament civil society organisations.
- Feedback from the public consultation will inform the development of a national space policy. We cannot prejudge the outcome of the consultation, but it is clear that our national space policy will need to reflect our national values, national security interests, international obligations, and economic development opportunities.
- Seek an update on community engagement and Mr Beck's views on how this can be more effectively addressed.

Current International Context

- We have strong interests in maintaining the space environment as a peaceful, safe, and sustainable domain. But space is becoming increasingly complex and congested and there is no guarantee that it will continue to be this type of environment without significant international engagement.
- Russia's destructive test of an anti-satellite missile in November 2021 was irresponsible and dangerous. Aotearoa New Zealand was quick to condemn Russia's actions.

- In July, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that New Zealand would join the United States' commitment to not conduct destructive, direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. We will be working closely with the United States to achieve broad support for the resolution on the same topic at this years' United Nations General Assembly.
- Aotearoa New Zealand is a strong supporter of efforts to ensure the safe and sustainable use of space. This includes being active in conversations on the Long Term Sustainability (LTS) guidelines at the Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (COPUOS). We are also strongly engaged in conversations as part of the United Nations open-ended working group on reducing space threats through rules, norms and principles of responsible behaviours in Geneva.
- These issues matter to all New Zealanders given our reliance on space based systems to run our economy. I also appreciate that they matter to you and your colleagues in the space sector.
- Current geopolitical issues mean that multilateral processes are even more difficult and contested than usual. However, they are essential to building international consensus, which is the only path towards solving these truly global problems.

Papamuri – Background

1. Mr Beck has requested this call as part of a broader set of meetings he's having with Ministers and senior officials in Wellington. Rocket Lab's representatives noted the purpose of the meeting was to "discuss Rocket Lab's growth plans for the future, and how Rocket Lab is contributing to New Zealand's peaceful relationships with international partners".
2. s9(2)(f)(iv)

Rocket Lab Expansion Plans

3. Rocket Lab employs more than 550 people in New Zealand, primarily at their production facility in East Tamaki, Auckland. Rocket Lab launches in New Zealand from Mahia Peninsula.
4. Rocket Lab has recently completed a merger with a US-based Special Purpose Acquisition Company called Vector Acquisition Limited and listed on the NASDAQ. Rocket Lab has raised USD777 million from the float in order to support significant expansion.
5. The centre-piece of this expansion is the plan for a new Neutron rocket, an advanced 8-tonne payload class launch vehicle tailored for mega-constellation deployment, interplanetary missions, and human spaceflight. Rocket Lab has stated that Neutron will be launched from the US, having indicated there is not sufficient infrastructure in New Zealand to support a launch vehicle of this size, although the possibility of this eventually being possible has not been ruled out.
6. In 2020 Rocket Lab announced it will launch the first privately funded science mission to a planet in the solar system, with a plan to launch a Photon spacecraft to Venus in 2023 to search for signs of life in the Venutian atmosphere. Rocket Lab has not announced the science partnerships to design the research that will be conducted on the mission but media reports indicate Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) planetary science researchers have been engaged in conversations with Rocket Lab over the mission. s9(2)(g)(i)

Space Cooperation with the US: Artemis Accords, Space Framework Agreement

7. New Zealand was the 11th country to sign NASA's Artemis Accords in May 2021 - a set of principles for international cooperation in space exploration. s9(2)(f)(iv)

s9(2)(f)(iv)

The first meeting of the now 21 Artemis Accords members took place in the margins of the International Astronautical Congress in Paris the week of 19 September.

8. New Zealand and the U.S. have negotiated a treaty-level Framework Agreement on space cooperation, which would enable more collaborative missions, research, and industry partnership with NASA. It was signed by the Minister for Economic and Regional Development and the US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman in August. It is currently undergoing Parliamentary Treaty Examination. It will enter into force on exchange of diplomatic notes following completion of PTE.

International Context

9. Work continues on responsible behaviours in outer space, with the second of four sessions of an open-ended working group on reducing space threats through rules, norms, and principles of responsible behaviour having taken place in Geneva last month.
10. In April this year, US Vice President Harris announced that the United States would not conduct destructive, direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. In July, New Zealand became the third country to join this commitment, following Canada. Germany and Japan made the same commitment in September. The United States is running a resolution at the United Nations General Assembly this year seeking broader support for this initiative, which New Zealand will be supporting.
11. All countries agree on the need to prevent an arms race in outer space, but differ in how best to approach this. Russia and China continue to promote their initiative to negotiate a legally binding treaty, while the UK is leading an effort to develop norms and principles of responsible behaviour in outer space. New Zealand supports the UK's effort as the most pragmatic way forward, but we do not rule out the possibility of a legally binding instrument in the future. ^{s6(a)}

International Security and Disarmament Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
September 2022

Hon. Phil Twyford Meeting with Solomon Islands Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Hon. Jeremiah Manele

Time and date: Wednesday 5 October, 5:30pm

Media: Officials recommend you Tweet after your meeting with Minister Manele. A draft of this has been provided.

Before the bilateral, media will be present for a photo opportunity and opening remarks in front of the official flags. Proposed opening remarks are also provided below.

Biography



Jeremiah Manele [*"ma-nel-ee"*] was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in 2019. Before his election to Parliament, Manele was Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs and External Trade.

You last spoke with Minister Manele via Zoom in June 2021. This is your first time meeting Minister Manele in-person.

Proposed Tweet

[Image: of the Ministers together]

[NZ flag] and *[Solomon Islands' flag]* share a deep partnership. Excited to discuss PACER Plus, RSE and labour mobility, and nuclear and disarmament issues with *[Solomon Islands' flag]* Hon. Jeremiah Manele today and kōrero on strengthening economic resilience in our region

Opening remarks [for pre-bilateral media photo opportunity]

Kia ora, tēnā koutou katoa, Halo and Welkam,

I want to thank Minister Jeremiah Manele for travelling to Aotearoa New Zealand, and extend our warmest welcome to him and his delegation. It is an honour to meet for the first time in-person today.

Aotearoa New Zealand receives Minister Manele and the Solomon Islands delegation as friends and Pacific whānau, connected by a deep and enduring partnership that Aotearoa New Zealand remains firmly committed to.

As Pacific countries, we share many areas of mutual interest — and also face many mutual, complex challenges. Today, I look forward to discussing our partnership in the areas of labour mobility and the RSE scheme, PACER Plus, and nuclear and disarmament issues.

Ngā mihi, and tagio tumas [*"ta-gio too-mas"*].

Key objectives

- Deepen your relationship with Minister Manele and reaffirm the depth and breadth of Aotearoa New Zealand's partnership with Solomon Islands.
- Emphasise Aotearoa New Zealand's support for building Solomon Islands' economic resilience, including through areas such as labour mobility, the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, and PACER Plus.
- s6(a)

Key points

Labour mobility and the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme

- **Acknowledge** that labour mobility and the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme are key bilateral interests for Solomon Islands, but that limited opportunities have been available across the pandemic. **Explain** that, with the scheme returning to a business as usual model and flight pathways becoming more regular, demand for workers is expected to increase.
- **Note** on 27 September 2022, the Minister of Immigration announced an RSE cap increase to 19,000 workers for 2022-23 (an increase of 3,000).
- **Underscore** that Aotearoa New Zealand is committed to improving the RSE scheme, to ensure RSE workers are able to maximise their participation. **Note** the RSE policy review underway will consider employer compliance, accommodation requirements, and worker benefits, among other aspects of the scheme. **Highlight** our commitment to actively consulting Pacific partners on strengthening the scheme and addressing concerns of our partners.
- **Note** Aotearoa New Zealand is also currently expanding labour mobility opportunities into the meat and seafood processing, construction and care sectors. We expect these programmes to be in place in 2024.
- **Note** that new programmes will reflect Aotearoa New Zealand's commitments under the PACER Plus Labour Mobility Arrangement, and our next-generation labour mobility approach. **Explain** we will pursue alignment of opportunities to partners' own development aspirations; skills and training; circular opportunities; worker well-being; maximising the benefits and mitigating negative impacts on communities; and collective regional responsibility.

s6(a)

s6(a)

PACER Plus

- **Enquire** about Solomon Islands' views both on current PACER Plus delivery and, looking ahead, on how PACER Plus can support its economic priorities.
- s6(a)
- s6(a)

Nuclear and disarmament issues

- s6(a)

the importance of strong regional and global solidarity against nuclear weapons given the deteriorating international security environment and the increased threat and risk of nuclear weapons use.
- s6(a)
- **Highlight** Aotearoa New Zealand's support for regional efforts to address outstanding nuclear legacy issues in the Pacific, noting the increased global attention given to such issues.
- s6(a)

Background

Labour mobility and the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme

1. Pre-pandemic, around 750 workers from Solomon Islands participated in the RSE scheme. As of October 2022, there are currently 170 workers from Solomon Islands in Aotearoa New Zealand (mainly located in Marlborough, Bay of Plenty and Hawke's Bay), with a number of employers planning future recruitments. Solomon Islands workers are highly valued for their strong work ethic.
2. On 27 September 2022, the Minister of Immigration announced an RSE cap increase to 19,000 workers for 2022-23 (an increase of 3,000). Ahead of the wider policy review, which is scheduled for completion in mid-2023, other short-term improvements to the scheme are being explored to potentially help address some of the concerns recently raised around accommodation and pastoral care.

3. Solomon Islands has indicated strong interest in expanded labour mobility opportunities and would welcome enhanced access to Aotearoa New Zealand's labour market. s6(a)

Immigration settings for Solomon Islanders

4. s6(a)

5. s6(a)

Visitor visas are required for all Pacific Island nationals. s6(a)

6. Nationals of Solomon Islands and other Pacific countries receive a reduction in the standard visitor visa fee. Also Pacific nationals are not required to pay the international visitor levy.

PACER Plus and our trade relationship with Solomon Islands

7. Our trade relationship with Solomon Islands is modest. The main commodities we import include wood and wood products and coconut oil (NZD 17 million). Our top exports to Solomon Islands are mainly sugars, sugar confectionary, meat, dairy products, iron, and steel (NZD 40 million). Solomon Islands is heavily dependent on foreign investment and development assistance.

8. The Pacific Agreement for Closer Economic Relations Plus (PACER Plus) entered into force in December 2020. Tuvalu and Vanuatu's ratification followed in 2022.

9. The PACER Plus Implementation Unit, based in Apia, is implementing the five year Development and Economic Cooperation Work Programme (our contribution is NZD 7m and Australia AUD 19m). The Work Programme is governed by annual plans; priorities and needs of Pacific Parties are key in setting this, and the individual activities included in the plan.

10. s6(a) activities to date involving Solomon Islands include rules of origin training and developing sea container hygiene awareness materials. A significantly expanded programme is being delivered in 2022/23, with the bulk of activities directly benefitting all Pacific Parties.

11. A sample of 2022/23 activities benefitting Solomon Islands include: revenue mobilisation strategies; capacity building among the private sector on phytosanitary

requirements; critical equipment, including incinerators and harvest bins; training and equipment to enable introduction of electronic certification and; helping agricultural products meet food safety requirements in export markets. s6(a)

12. s6(a)

13. s6(a)

Nuclear and disarmament issues

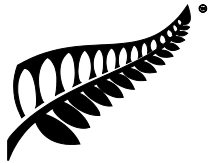
14. s6(a)

15. s6(a)

16. s6(a)

Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division
September 2022

RESTRICTED



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE

**VISIT BY SOLOMON ISLANDS
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
EXTERNAL TRADE, HON. JEREMIAH
MANELE**

2-5 October 2022

Overview and Objectives

Released under the Official Information Act

RESTRICTED

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Released under the Official Information Act

Context and Objectives

1. Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Hon Jeremiah Manele's visit to Aotearoa New Zealand over 2-5 October will be his first in his current role. He is accompanied by his wife, Jocelyn Manele, and Solomon Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade official, Martin Teu.
2. Solomon Islands and Aotearoa New Zealand share a long history and close bonds as Pacific whānau. Aotearoa New Zealand's development partnership with Solomon Islands is one of our most significant by breadth and value, reflecting our deep commitment to supporting Solomon Islands to address development challenges.
3. Aotearoa New Zealand's visible presence and engagement with key interlocutors as the world reopens and learns to live with COVID-19 is an essential tool to deepen our relationship with Solomon Islands ^{s6(a)} The objectives for this visit are to:
 - Reinforce Aotearoa New Zealand's role as a committed, consistent and values-based partner with Solomon Islands;
 - Reiterate and reinforce Aotearoa New Zealand's interests in a stable, peaceful, prosperous and sustainable Pacific; and
 - Build resilience into relationships across a range of portfolios and matters of interest beyond headline topics.
4. ^{s6(a)}

Overview

Solomon Islands' political context

1. Solomon Islands is currently navigating profound challenges as a result of the November 2021 civil unrest in Honiara, its domestic experience with COVID-19, and the wide-reaching impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn. These concurrent crises have exacerbated long-term political, economic, social, and cultural challenges and inequalities. Immediate needs are pronounced, while the long-term impacts of the unrest and pandemic will have implications for many years.
2. s6(a)
3. s6(a)
4. In September 2019, SIG switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China
s6(a)
5. s6(a)
6. In November 2021, protests s6(a) escalated into civil unrest and rioting.
s6(a)

s6(a)

7. Elections scheduled for next year were recently delayed by the passing of the Constitutional Amendment Bill. The Bill delays the date for the dissolution of Parliament to 31 December 2023 (previously April 2023).^{s6(a)}

The Bill

is temporary and will cease to be effective on 1 January 2024.^{s6(a)}

Economic resilience

8. Solomon Islands faces economic resilience challenges that are compounded by its exposure to climate change and natural hazards.^{s6(a)}
9. While the COVID-19 pandemic increased short-term fiscal pressures, in the longer-term Solomon Islands faces rising spending needs for services for its fast-growing population, while a decline in logging will lower government revenues. While most Pacific economics are expected to return to positive growth in 2022, Solomon Islands is projected to record a 3.0 percent *decline* in GDP this year, before returning to modest growth in 2023.
10. ^{s6(a)}
11. The cost of living has also increased markedly in recent months. As inflation, fuel, material and travel costs continue to rise,^{s6(a)}
12. Labour mobility has high ^{s6(a)} visibility, and there is keen interest to increase remittances as a form of short-term economic relief. There are currently 170 Solomon Islands Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pre-pandemic, around 750 workers from Solomon Islands participated in the RSE scheme. Solomon Islands participated in the second RSE border exception during the COVID-19 border closure, sending 148 workers in early November 2021. Solomon Islands is now eligible to participate in the RSE Scheme for 2022.

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Defence and Security

13. Australia has maintained the lead for security assistance (closely followed by Aotearoa New Zealand) since prior to the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI, 2003-2017). When RAMSI concluded in 2017, Solomon Islands and Australia signed a Bilateral Security Treaty (BST).
14. Aotearoa New Zealand has a long-standing security partnership with Solomon Islands. The current programme in our policing advisory partnership, operating since 2017, has successfully delivered capability building across Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) to implement the Solomon Islands Crime Prevention Strategy and contributed to promoting good governance and the realisation of human rights.
15. During the November 2021 unrest, Solomon Islands requested a Pacific security response, led by Australia under the BST. Aotearoa New Zealand personnel joined Australia, Papua New Guinea and Fiji to coordinate under the Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF). Following the arrival of SIAF, calm was rapidly restored. Four New Zealand Defence Force Personnel remain in Solomon Islands now.

Geopolitical context: s6(a)

16. Solomon Islands maintains a "friends to all, enemy to none" foreign policy posture.
s6(a)

17. s6(a)

18. s6(a)

19. We continue to hold serious concerns about the security cooperation agreement signed between Solomon Islands and China ^{s6(a)}

We have raised these concerns directly with China and Solomon Islands frequently since March this year, alongside talking to our Pacific partners.

20. ^{s6(a)}

Bilateral Development Partnership

21. Solomon Islands is our partner in one of our largest bilateral International Development Cooperation (IDC) programmes. The total core allocation for the current triennium is NZD 88.52 million.
22. Our development programme focuses on building state capability for Solomon Islands to deliver to all its people, strengthening social and economic resilience, and enabling sustainable management of natural resources. This includes supporting economic diversification away from extractive industries like logging and mining, towards sustainable sectors like tourism and fisheries, enhancing provincial connectivity through infrastructure, and investment in youth engagement and employment.
23. In 2019, Aotearoa New Zealand and Solomon Islands signed a new bilateral Statement of Partnership, with notable progress including:
- Implementation of a trilateral education partnership with SIG and Australia;
 - Third phase in our partnership with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources;
 - Commitment to establish a project management office for the Bina Harbour tuna cannery project in Malaita;
 - Establishment of a State Owned Enterprise to manage airports across Solomon Islands, with an appointed Board and CEO (New Zealander Mike Clay);
 - Development of a forest conservation project supporting communities to generate revenue through carbon financing (now in its second phase);
 - An upgrade of the Honiara Multipurpose Hall, creating a safe space for youth to access recreation and support services; also a training facility for the Pacific Games;
 - Commencement of Provincial Airfield Upgrades in Seghe and Taro, through a partnership with SIG and Australia;
 - Launch of the Crime Prevention Strategy through the RSIPF Force and continued work to better engage with communities on drivers of crime through the Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme;
 - Continued participation in the RSE Scheme and scholarship opportunities;

- Budget support for key economic and public financial management reforms (through the multi-partner Core Economic Working Group); and
- COVID-19 support, including: budget support for pandemic preparedness and response; support with Personal Protection Equipment, vaccinations, and health and humanitarian supplies; and budget support for COVID-19 fiscal relief.

s6(a)

24. s6(a)

25. s6(b)(i)

26. s6(a)

Solomon Islanders in Aotearoa New Zealand

27. Ministry for Pacific Peoples (MPP) works with Solomon Islands community groups throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly on the maintenance of language and community cultural initiatives. Solomon Islands community groups throughout Aotearoa New Zealand include: Solomon Islands Auckland Wantok Association (SIAWA); Lower North Island Wantok Association; and Solomon Island Wantok Association Christchurch (SIWAC). In recent years, MPP has provided support to these groups related to COVID-19 (including for masks and food) as well as community grants for language weeks and other cultural activities.
28. Glorious Marie Oxenham (known as Glo or Aunty Glo), ^{s9(2)(a)}
, was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to the Melanesian community in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 2022 New Year's Honours.

Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division
September 2022

POLI-80-2661

Visit Programme

SUNDAY 2 OCTOBER	
1700	The Honourable Jeremiah Manele and delegation arrive in Auckland. Upon arrival, Minister Manele will be met by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Honourable Aupito William Sio, Minister for Pacific Peoples
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER	
0740	Depart Auckland for Blenheim
0930	Meet and Greet with RSE workers at Hortus Viticulture
1030	Tour of facilities at Hortus Viticulture
1130	Informal lunch with Hortus management regarding future recruitment opportunities
1230	Tour of Makana Confections
1345	Depart Blenheim for Wellington
1645	NZIIA Presentation
1800	Dinner hosted by His Excellency Eliam Tangirongo, Solomon Islands High Commissioner to New Zealand
TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER	
0950	Arrive at Parliament. The delegation will be met by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaikōrero supporting the Manuwhiri Kaikaranga supporting the Manuwhiri
1000	Pōwhiri
1020	Paramanawa (morning tea)
1045	Meeting with the Honourable Nanaia Mahuta, Minister of Foreign Affairs
1130	Meeting concludes and gifts are exchanged. Minister Manele remains in meeting room, while Minister Mahuta retires to her office.
1140	Minister Mahuta rejoins Minister Manele and proceeds to the media conference location
1145	Media Conference
1200	Official Lunch hosted by Minister Mahuta at Bellamys restaurant
1345	Lunch concludes, Minister Mahuta farewells Minister Manele
s6(a)	
1515	Private tour of Te Papa
1630	Meeting with the Honourable Meka Whaitiri, Minister of Customs
1900	Dinner with previous New Zealand High Commissioners to Solomon Islands
WEDNESDAY 5 OCTOBER	
0815	Depart Wellington for Auckland
1000	Meeting with Solomon Islands scholarship students and alumni
1200	Official Lunch hosted by the Honourable Aupito William Sio, Minister for Pacific Peoples
1400	Tourism opportunity: All Blacks Experience
1615	Roundtable with NZ Pacific Business
1730	Meeting with the Honourable Phil Twyford, Minister of Disarmament and Arms control and Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth, including media photo opportunity
1830	Solomon Islands Community Event
THURSDAY 6 OCTOBER	
0615	The Honourable Jeremiah Manele and delegation depart Auckland. Farewelled by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Griffith, Unit Manager, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade H.E. Eliam Tangirongo, Solomon Islands High Commissioner to New Zealand

Biographies

Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Honourable Jeremiah Manele



Jeremiah Manele [“ma-nel-ee”] was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade in 2019. Before his election to Parliament, he was Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs and External Trade. Manele is a Member of Parliament for Isabel Province.

s6(a)

Recent engagement with Manele has focused on lifting the discussion on stability and security to a regional conversation through the Pacific Islands Forum. Aotearoa New Zealand has also reiterated our commitment to partnering with Solomon Islands on its economic, social, climate change and security priorities and ambitions, as the Pacific region faces increasingly complex challenges.

Minister Mahuta’s most recent official engagement with Minister Manele was in Suva at the Pacific Islands Forum in mid-July this year. Manele is fluent in English.

Solomon Islands High Commissioner to New Zealand, H.E. Eliam Tangirongo



Eliam Tangirongo, an experienced public servant, was appointed High Commissioner to Aotearoa New Zealand in July 2021, replacing H. E. Lady Joy Kere s6(a)

. Mr Tangirongo most recently served as Solomon Islands High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, prior to which he was Chairperson of the Public Service Commission.

Mr Tangirongo studied history, politics and sociology at the University of the South Pacific. He has held many public service roles including as Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Under Secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Chairman of the Police and Prison Service Commission and Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission. He arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in late October 2021, s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

He is from Guadalcanal Province. He is fluent in English.