

MINISTER OF DEFENCE TRAVEL TO MUNICH, GERMANY

Briefing Document

11-14 February 2026.



msc

**Munich Security
Conference**

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Programme Overview and Objectives

Day	Activity
Wednesday 11 February	Depart Auckland for Munich, Germany
Thursday 12 February	12:30 Arrive in Munich
Friday 13 February	AM-PM Opportunities for bilaterals s9(2)(g)(i) 13:00-14:00 Official opening of the Munich Security Conference, and associated panels of interest
Saturday 14 February	07:00 MSC Women's Breakfast AM-PM Bilateral engagements 13:00-14:00 Defence Ministers Standing Luncheon 16:20 Panel discussion: <i>Double Trouble? Europe, Indo-Pacific, and Connected Security Challenges</i> 21:25 Depart Munich for Auckland

The Munich Security Conference is a world-leading forum for debating international security policy. It is well attended by state leaders, ministers of foreign affairs and ministers of defence. It is also a chance to meet and hear from the leaders of international and non-governmental organisations, high-ranking representatives of industry, media, academia and civil society.

s6(a) In that context, its focus this year will be on global security challenges, including: European security and defence, the future of the transatlantic relationship, the revitalisation of multilateralism, competing visions of the global order, regional conflicts, and the security implications of technological advances

Objectives of your attendance at the Munich Security Conference

- **Gain insight** into how influential global leaders are perceiving the strategic environment and their priorities for responding to ongoing challenges.
- **Engage** with key partners and reinforce that New Zealand is taking its security responsibilities seriously and the steps the government is taking to address these.
- **Raise** New Zealand's profile, and understanding of Indo Pacific security considerations and approaches, where possible.

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TAB ONE: KEY ATTENDEES

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TAB TWO: HOT TOPICS

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Venezuela

- New Zealand is concerned by and actively monitoring developments in Venezuela.
- New Zealand expects all parties to comply with international law and supports diplomatic efforts to reach solutions to complex cross border issues.
- New Zealand stands with the Venezuelan people in their pursuit of a fair, democratic and prosperous future.
- New Zealand supports efforts to achieve a negotiated return to democracy in Venezuela, as the only solution that ensures that the will of the Venezuelan people is respected.

Greenland

- New Zealand is closely monitoring developments in Greenland. We agree that Greenland belongs to its people and that it is for Greenland and Denmark to determine the territory's future.
- New Zealand expects the US to fully comply with its international obligations, including under the UN Charter. Respect for the UN Charter principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the prohibition on the use of force is essential to avoid a return to a world where the exercise of hard power reigns supreme. This has underlined our support for Ukraine.
- As a strong supporter of a free, open, and rules-based trading system, New Zealand disagreed with the US proposal to impose tariffs.
- [REDACTED] s6(a)

Ukraine

- New Zealand remains fully committed to supporting Ukraine's self-defence and territorial integrity. We support a just and lasting peace settlement for Ukraine that does not legitimise territorial changes achieved by force.
- On 4 December, New Zealand announced a NZ\$15 million contribution to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. New Zealand is proud to be, alongside Australia, one of the first non-NATO contributors to the PURL.
- I am interested in your perspectives on the trajectory of the war, the US-led peace process, and what is required to compel Russia to end the war.

[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

- New Zealand has participated in military planning discussion to better understand what functions or role coalition forces might play following any ceasefire or peace settlement. We welcome the recent Paris Declaration and the progress that is being made in negotiating an end to the war in Ukraine.
- [REDACTED] s6(a)

s9(2)(g)(i)

- New Zealand is deeply concerned at the 'shadow fleet' being used to evade sanctions on Russia and its supporters. Evasion tactics are complex and global in reach.
- In 2024, together with Australia and more than 40 other countries, New Zealand endorsed the Call to Action on the Shadow Fleet, led by the UK, noting our concern about the rise in 'shadow fleet activity' and its risks to the environment, maritime safety, international trade and security, and maritime law.
- New Zealand has sanctioned over 100 shadow fleet vessels to date and will continue to do so.

Indo Pacific

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
- The NZDF has increased its tempo of engagement in the Indo-Pacific, in both the maritime and air domains. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)
- We recently completed our 2025 Indo-Pacific deployment, which included our auxiliary replenishment vessel, HMNZS AOTEAROA, and a P-8A maritime surveillance aircraft, and was timed around our support for the Pacific Security Maritime Exchange (PSMX) [REDACTED] s6(a)

s6(a)

s9(2)(g)(i)

South Pacific

- As small states, the Pacific region's security is strengthened by a strong international rules-based order, protecting not only territorial integrity but also providing protections for Pacific resources and helping the region to address complex challenges such as climate change.

- [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted] We are also working to enhance Pacific regional connections through mechanisms such as the South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting, to support the region's capacity to respond to security needs in a way that reflect Pacific priorities and needs.
- We welcome ongoing support by the EU and other European states in issues such as climate change, in supporting regional and international institutions in the Pacific.

Middle East

- New Zealand is committed to supporting Middle East regional peace and security – New Zealand conducts operations alongside partners to protect and promote our security and economic interests and is a longstanding contributor to peace support missions in the region.

The Situation in Gaza

- New Zealand welcomes the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict of 29 September 2025 and subsequent adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803.
- New Zealand calls on all parties to implement the terms of the agreement fully and in accordance with international law, abide by the ceasefire and continue to engage in good faith on outstanding issues.
- New Zealand currently has a liaison officer deployed to the US-led Civil-Military Coordination Centre in Israel. The purpose of its deployment is to gather information to support consideration of advice on potential future contributions.

- [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)

[redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)

[if raised: New Zealand's position on Palestinian statehood]

- Our Foreign Minister announced at the UN General Assembly in September that New Zealand will not be recognising a State of Palestine at this time. [redacted] s6(a)

[redacted]

[If raised: Protests in Iran]

- New Zealand is appalled by the escalation of violence and repression in Iran. The Foreign Minister has condemned the actions of Iran's security forces, including the killing of protesters.
- Iranians have the right to peaceful protest, freedom of expression and access to information. It is our long-held view that these are fundamental human rights.
- New Zealand is deeply concerned by the ongoing tensions in the region, and the potential for resumption of military action. We are closely monitoring the situation and want to see all parties exercise restraint and abide by international law.

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TAB THREE: EVENT BRIEFS

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Event: Panel Discussion – ‘Double Trouble? Europe, Indo-Pacific, and Connected Security Challenges’

Saturday, 14 February

16:20 – 17:15

Main Hall II, Bayerischer Hof

Other speakers

- Australia Deputy Prime Minister/Defence Minister, Richard Marles
- Japan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Toshimitsu Motegi
- US Under Secretary of War for Policy, Elbridge Colby
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

Moderator

- Ravi Agrawal, Editor-in-Chief of Foreign Policy

Programme

You are participating in a panel discussion with other leaders from the Indo-Pacific and Europe on the interconnectedness of security spheres.

The event is scheduled for 55 minutes.

16:10 Arrive at venue, technical briefing with panel organisers and microphone fitting

16:20 Panel commences with introductory remarks and a facilitated conversation by the moderator

16:45 Interactive Q&A with the audience

17:15 Panel concludes.

Meeting logistics

Officials will accompany you to/from the event.

Format of the discussion

This panel discussion is intended to be discursive and focus on the below framing questions.

See separate briefing for scripted talking points to assist in answering the below questions.

Framing questions

[REDACTED] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

- How can European countries best support Indo-Pacific actors, especially regarding threats to sovereignty and maritime security? Conversely, what further assistance could Indo-Pacific countries offer European partners when it comes to support for Ukraine and defence capabilities?
- How is cooperation in the framework of NATO and the IP4 countries developing? How are other plurilateral engagements on issues like resilience and economic security progressing?

Biographies

Moderator: Ravi Agrawal: Editor-in-Chief: Foreign Policy



Ravi Agrawal is the editor in chief of Foreign Policy. He is also the host of FP Live, the magazine's video channel and podcast, on which he regularly interviews world leaders and policymakers. Before joining FP in 2018, Agrawal worked at CNN for more than a decade. Agrawal is the author of *India Connected: How the Smartphone Is Transforming the World's Largest Democracy*. He is a graduate of Harvard University.

Panellist: Deputy Minister/Defence Minister, Richard Marles s9(2)(g)(i)



The Hon. Richard Charles is a senior member of the Labor party and was appointed Minister of Defence in June 2022.

His previous roles include Deputy Leader of the Opposition, as well as Shadow Minister for Defence; Immigration and Border Protection; and Trade. Born in 1967, he was raised and educated in Geelong before undertaking studies in Law and Science at the University of Melbourne, where he earned a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and a Bachelor of Science.

Panellist: Japan Foreign Minister, Toshimitsu Motegi s9(2)(g)(i)



Toshimitsu Motegi was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs for the second time in October 2025. He was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1999. Previous ministerial roles include Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry (2012-2014), Minister for Economic Revitalisation (2017-2019) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (2019-2021).

Motegi led Japan's trade negotiation with the US during the first Trump administration.

Panellist: US Under Secretary of War for Policy, Elbridge Colby s9(2)(g)(i)



Elbridge A. Colby serves as the Under Secretary of War for Policy. In this role, he is the principal advisor to the Secretary of War on matters of defence and foreign policy. His duties include leading the development and overseeing implementation of the National Defense Strategy. He is responsible as well for a number of associated strategies and reviews focused on the planning, posture, and management of the Joint Force.

s9(2)(g)(i)

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Event: Official Opening of the Munich Security Conference

Friday, 14 February

13:00-14:00

Main Hall I, Bayerischer Hof Hotel

Programme

The opening ceremony is scheduled for 60 minutes.

13:00 Arrive at venue in Main Hall I

13:30 Opening ceremony begins

13:40 Conference will be opened officially

14:00 Opening ceremony concludes

Meeting logistics

Officials will accompany you to/from the hall entrance, where you will be escorted to designated seating for Ministers of Defence.

Attendees

Heads of Delegation already in Munich are expected to attend, including President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who is the host of this event.

Host: Germany President Frank-Walter Steinmeier



Frank-Walter Steinmeier has served as President of Germany since 2017, as a member of the Social Democrats Party.

He was previously federal minister for foreign affairs from 2005 to 2009 and again from 2013 to 2017, as well as vice chancellor of Germany from 2007 to 2009.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Background

Further details will be available when the MSC programme is published.

Event: Munich Security Conference Women's Breakfast

Saturday, 14 February

07:00-08:15

Residenz – Max-Joseph-Saal

Programme

07:00: Arrive at venue (allocated seating TBC)

Overview of Event

The Women's Breakfast is an integral part of the Munich Security Conference. The purpose of this breakfast is to provide women engaged in foreign and security policy with a unique networking opportunity. This year sees the 14th anniversary of this traditional event, and you attended the Women's Breakfast at MSC in 2025.

In order to encourage inclusive and open dialogue, the event will observe Chatham House rules, i.e. participants are free to use the information received, but are asked not to directly accredit information or conversation to individual speakers.

Meeting logistics

Officials will accompany you to/from the venue entrance.

Chatham House rules.

Attendees

s9(2)(g)(i)

Female Heads of Delegation are expected to attend.

Background

The Women's Breakfast is jointly hosted by the Munich Security Conference and the Bavarian State Chancellery. Its purpose is to provide women engaged in foreign and security policy with a unique networking opportunity at the Munich Security Conference. This year sees the 14th anniversary of this event.

You attended the Women's Breakfast at MSC in 2025.

Event: Standing Luncheon hosted by the German Minister of Defence, Boris Pistorius

Saturday, 14 February

13:00-14:00

Montgelassaal, Bayerischer Hof Hotel

Programme

The luncheon is scheduled for 60 minutes.

13:00 Arrive at venue, this is a standing buffet reception for Ministers only

14:00 Luncheon concludes

Meeting logistics

Officials will accompany you to/from the venue entrance.

Attendees

All Defence Ministers attending MSC 2026 have been invited to attend the Standing Luncheon, including Germany's Defence Minister Pistorius who is the host of this event.

	<p>German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Boris Pistorius</p> <p>s9(2)(g)(i)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am pleased to be in Munich today to hear from such a diverse and influential mix of leaders and thinkers.• Thank you for the invitation to join you for lunch. Germany is an important defence partner for New Zealand and we value our long-standing relationship.• s6(a) the NATO Security Assistance Training - Ukraine (NSATU) initiative in Wiesbaden.
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TAB FOUR: BILATERAL BRIEFS

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Biography



David McGuinty, Liberal Party of Canada, has served as Canada's Minister of National Defence since May 2025. Previously, he was the first chair of the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians from 2017-2025. His previous profession was as an environmental lawyer, and has a Masters of Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- Canada is a close and natural defence partner for New Zealand. I value our common histories, values and interests, and our Five Eyes defence, security and intelligence partnership which underpins our broader bilateral relationship.
- New Zealand's Defence Capability Plan includes a major uplift in defence investment, prioritising interoperability with close partners. s9(2)(g)(i)
- New Zealand remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's self-defence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. To that end, we maintain a deployment of up to 100 personnel in Europe, working with partners across training support, staff augmentation, and command and liaison roles under a flexible mandate that allows us to respond to Ukraine's evolving needs.
- s6(a)
- s9(2)(g)(i)
- s6(a)

Military Information

Defence budget	USD \$29.3 billion (2024)
Military personnel	Active – 62,300; Reservists – 29,100
Deployments in common with New Zealand	United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation, Combined Maritime Forces (Middle East Maritime Security), North Korea Sanctions Monitoring
Common military platforms	C-130H Hercules, P-8A Poseidon (first deliveries expected in 2026), King Air, LAV III, various small arms.

Background

Canada and New Zealand's Defence Cooperation

s6(a)

2. Bilateral cooperation [redacted] s6(a) includes strong maritime ties. Lockheed Martin Canada delivered New Zealand's Frigate Systems Upgrade, installing a combat management system (CMS). [redacted] s6(a)

s6(a)

4. Canada participates in a range of Indo-Pacific exercises alongside New Zealand and other partners, including Operation Talisman Saber in 2025. In the Pacific region, Canada has also contributed to Operation Render Safe, (Australian-led explosive ordnance disposal in the Pacific Islands) since 2013.

Canada's Defence Strategy

5. Canada's updated defence policy, "Our North Strong and Free", prioritises the Arctic, Euro-Atlantic, and then the Indo-Pacific region respectively.

6. In June 2025, the Canadian Government announced a \$9.2 billion CAD (11b NZD) uplift in defence spending this fiscal year which will see Canada immediately reach 2% GDP, and a \$71.9 billion uplift over the next 5 years. This is all additional to their current \$30.5 billion annual budget. [redacted] s6(a)

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

Indo-Pacific Strategy

8. Canada's cross-Government Indo-Pacific Strategy, launched 2022, focuses on peace and security, trade resilience, people-to-people links, sustainability, and effective engagement. Supported by \$2.2 billion CAD over 10 years.

s6(b)(i)

Support to Ukraine

10. Since 2022, Canada has committed \$6.5 billion CAD in military assistance to Ukraine. This funding will allow Canada to deliver military assistance to Ukraine through to 2029.

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

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force
Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
January 2026*

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Biography



Boris Pistorius, a Social Democratic Party member, has served as Germany's Federal Defence Minister since January 2023. Previously, he was Lower Saxony's Interior and Sport Minister (2013–2023), focusing on police reform, internal security, and countering extremism. From 2006–2013, he was Lord Mayor of Osnabrück. A law graduate from Osnabrück and Münster, Pistorius completed compulsory military service in 1980–81.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key Messages

- I welcome Germany's commitment as an important and long-standing defence partner for New Zealand to support peace and security in an increasingly challenging strategic context.

Ukraine

- New Zealand remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's self-defence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. To that end, we maintain a deployment of up to 100 personnel in Europe, working with partners across training support, staff augmentation, and command and liaison roles under a flexible mandate that allows us to respond to Ukraine's evolving needs.

- s6(a) the NATO Security Assistance Training - Ukraine (NSATU) initiative in Wiesbaden. New Zealand values its role as an operational partner to NATO as part of NSATU. I also wish to highlight our \$15 million contribution to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. New Zealand is proud to be, alongside Australia, the first non-NATO contributors to PURL.

- s9(2)(g)(i)

Indo Pacific

- New Zealand welcomes Germany's commitment to supporting peace and security in the Indo Pacific region. We were pleased to welcome a German Luftwaffe (Air Force) A400M deployment to New Zealand to undertake joint training with the RNZAF last year.

- s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a)

Military Information

Defence budget	€86 billion (2025) with a planned 25% increase to €108 billion (2026, 2.5% of GDP)
Military personnel	Active – 184,000; Reservists – 60,000
Deployments in common with New Zealand	Combined Maritime Forces, Pacific Security Monitoring Exchange
Common military platforms	NH-90, P-8 Poseidon

Background

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) mainly through capability synergies (P-8A Poseidon, NH90 helicopters and naval diving). New Zealand's Defence Attaché to Germany is based in London.

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

Germany in the Indo-Pacific

3. In 2020, Germany released its Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific with the long-term objective of strengthening Germany's presence in the region. Since then, Germany has deployed major assets annually and participated in exercises such as RIMPAC, TALISMAN SABRE, and PITCH BLACK. Germany is also a member of the Pacific Security Monitoring Exchange nations that monitor the enforcement of UN sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (the same grouping New Zealand works with under s6(a)).

4. In each of the years following publication of the 2020 Policy Guidelines, Germany has undertaken significant deployments to the Indo-Pacific region. Each has been anchored against a major exercise: maritime deployments against RIMPAC, hosted by the US in Hawaii; land forces deployments against Australia's TALISMAN SABRE; and air deployments against PITCH BLACK, also hosted by Australia. These have presented opportunities for engagement with NZDF. s6(a)

5. In November 2025, two German Luftwaffe (Air Force) A400Ms deployed to New Zealand to undertake joint training with the RNZAF under Exercise Tūhono Rangi. The activity tested a range of key capabilities within the RNZAF that support combat operations, such as security forces, rescue firefighters, aviation fuel specialists and air movements operators.

Support to Ukraine

6. Germany is Europe's largest financial contributor to Ukraine and second globally behind the US, providing over €40B in military support and a further €40B in humanitarian and refugee aid to date. In 2025, Germany increased its bilateral support to Ukraine by 35%, with €11.5B proposed for 2026 (including artillery, drones, armoured vehicles, and two Patriot systems).

7. Germany hosts NSATU, which New Zealand participates in as part of our support to Ukraine's self-defence under Operation TIEKE. In 2024, Germany hosted NZDF sapper training for Ukrainian troops.

Germany's defence scale-up

8. Germany has agreed to commit up to 3.5% of GDP to defence expenditure. As the largest economy in Europe this will see an additional €500b expenditure to the defence sector over the coming years. [REDACTED] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Reintroduction of military service

9. From 1 January 2026, Germany will reintroduce military service via registration, medical exams, and recruitment targets—initially voluntary, [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i). The aim is to double the armed forces by 2035 amid rising European security concerns, in particular possible Russian aggression.

10. All Germans turning 18 will receive a questionnaire and medical exam. Responses are compulsory for men and voluntary for women, as the constitution permits conscription of men only.

Germany's response to Middle East tensions

11. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] Chancellor Merz has since visited the region in December 2025 to encourage a peaceful solution to the conflict.

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force
Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
January 2026*

Biography



Antti Häkkänen is Finland's 59th Minister of Defence. He has served as Minister of Defence in Petteri Orpo's Government since 20 June 2023. Häkkänen, born in Mäntyharju in 1985, graduated with a Master of Laws degree from the University of Helsinki in 2014. He has been a Member of Parliament representing the National Coalition Party, elected in the electoral district of Southeast Finland, continuously since 2015. He has been a member of Mäntyharju Local Council since 2009.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- I place strong value on New Zealand's relationship with NATO and its allies, and our position as one of NATO's partners in the Indo Pacific.
- New Zealand remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's self-defence and territorial integrity. We value our role as an operational partner in NATO's Security Assistance Training – Ukraine (NSATU) and have contributed \$15 million to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL). Alongside Australia, New Zealand is proud to be the first non-NATO contributor to PURL. We support NATO's coordinating role and look forward to continued collaboration.

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

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

Military Information

Defence budget	US\$6.98 billion
Military personnel	Active – 13,000; Reservists – 900,000

Background

s6(a) we share a number of common defence interests – primarily: support to Ukraine; cooperation through NATO; and developing our respective defence industries.

2. s6(b)(i)

Defence industrial cooperation and engagement

3. In line with the New Zealand Defence Industry Strategy released in September 2025, New Zealand Defence is interested in exploring cooperation with partners on defence industry initiatives, in particular multilateral industrial collaboration to boost production and innovation; as well as opportunities for regionalising sustainment.

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

6. s6(a) | s9(2)(b)(ii)

Ukraine

7. Finland has allocated EUR3.7bn in support to Ukraine since 2022 and on 3 Apr 24 signed a bilateral agreement with Ukraine covering support for Ukraine's defence capability and long-term support for society, resilience and reforms supporting Ukraine's EU and NATO ambitions. Defence security cooperation and long-term support. 30 packages of materiel support have included artillery, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, anti-tank weaponry, combat engineering vehicles, ammunition and small arms. Finland is part of the UK-led INTERFLEX training initiative.

s6(a)

9. Norway leads the multinational Nordic Baltic Training Command (NBTC), which consists of eight Nordic and Baltic countries delivering training support to the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. s6(a)

s6(a)

s6(a)

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force
Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
February 2026*

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Biography



On 26 June 2024, the North Atlantic Council appointed Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte as NATO Secretary General, succeeding Jens Stoltenberg. He assumed office on 1 October 2024 and has since urged higher defence spending, proposing a 3.7% GDP benchmark over NATO's traditional 2%, ultimately leading to the adoption of a new 5% standard (consisting of 3.5% core spending and 1.5% on other, less strictly proscribed defence spending) at the 2025 NATO Summit

Rutte, a former Unilever executive, entered politics in 2002 and served as Dutch Prime Minister from 2010 through three consecutive governments. After announcing his retirement in July 2023, he remained caretaker Prime Minister until July 2024. He last visited New Zealand in October 2019.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- It is a pleasure to reconnect and attend the Munich Security Conference, which provides an important opportunity to discuss European security and shared challenges in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions.
- NATO remains a longstanding, like-minded security partner for New Zealand. We place strong value on our relationship with NATO and our position as one of NATO's partners in the Indo Pacific, including our role in the Indo-Pacific four (IP4).
- New Zealand remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's self-defence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. To that end, we maintain a deployment of up to 100 personnel in Europe, working with partners across training support, staff augmentation, and command and liaison roles under a flexible mandate that allows us to respond to Ukraine's evolving needs.
- New Zealand values its role as an operational partner in NATO's Security Assistance Training – Ukraine (NSATU). I also wish to highlight our \$15 million contribution to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. Alongside Australia, New Zealand is proud to be the first non-NATO contributor to PURL. We support NATO's coordinating role and look forward to continued collaboration.

s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

Military Information

Defence budget	EUR 2.42 billion for 2026
Deployments in common with New Zealand	Operation TĪEKE – NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine

Background

The NZDF gains significant operational benefit from access to NATO doctrine, tactics, training and procedures, all of which improve capability and support interoperability with key partners. Access to these activities has been underpinned by a 25-year commitment to NATO operations that ended with the drawdown of the RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION in Afghanistan in 2021.

2. Prime Minister Christopher Luxon attended NATO's 2025 Summit in The Hague. His participation [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] and enabled high-level discussions on defence, technology, and security cooperation with NATO and European partners.

New Zealand and NATO's cooperation frameworks

3. New Zealand and NATO's Individually Tailored Partnership Agreement (ITPP) contains three high level and mutually agreed Strategic Objectives to guide the partnership over 2024-2027 (the ITPP period): NATO-New Zealand cooperation contributes to upholding the rules-based international system on issues of common security interest; New Zealand and NATO continue to cooperate to address common security challenges; and the NZDF is effective and interoperable with NATO forces.

4. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]

NATO's partners in the Indo-Pacific

5. The IP4 grouping¹ reflects NATO's recognition that Indo-Pacific developments affect Euro-Atlantic security and the IP4 groupings interests in Euro-Centric developments.

6. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]

Support to Ukraine

7. NZDF's contribution to the NSATU initiative re-established New Zealand as a NATO operational partner after previous contributions over the 1996–2021 period.

8. Ahead of the Hague Summit (June 2025), New Zealand committed NZD \$4M to NSATU's military healthcare project and NZD \$16M overall for Ukraine's military and humanitarian needs.

¹ New Zealand, Australia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea

9. On 4 December, New Zealand announced a NZ\$15 million contribution to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. The PURL allows supporters of Ukraine to purchase critical US-manufactured weapons and military equipment on their behalf. A majority of NATO members have now either contributed to the PURL or announced an intention to contribute. New Zealand and Australia are the first non-NATO contributors to the initiative.

Indo-Pacific Flagship Projects and Defence Industrial Cooperation

10. In 2024, NATO launched four flagship projects with IP4 partners: cyber, Ukraine military healthcare, AI, and counter-disinformation. The projects were presented to Leaders during the NATO-IP4-EU session of the NATO Summit in July 2024, [REDACTED] s9(2)(f)(iv)

11. New Zealand pledged \$2 million to the project to support military healthcare in Ukraine, [REDACTED] s6(a)

12. At the 2025 Summit, NATO and IP4 agreed to deepen cooperation between their respective defence industries, including through a range of projects proposed by NATO. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] the Space Agency is currently considering participating in STARLIFT, a NATO high visibility project on developing space launch capabilities for participants.

International Branch, Ministry of Defence

Strategic Commitments and Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force

Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

January 2026

Biography



Ruben Brekelmans was appointed the Minister of Defence in July 2024 and is a member of the conservative-liberal Peoples' Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD). s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- The Netherlands and New Zealand share a warm defence relationship, founded on our shared support for the international rules-based system and multilateral institutions.
- I place strong value on New Zealand's relationship with NATO and our position as one of NATO's partners in the Indo Pacific.
- New Zealand remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's self-defence and territorial integrity. We value our role as an operational partner in NATO's Security Assistance Training – Ukraine (NSATU) and have contributed \$15 million to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL). Alongside Australia, New Zealand is proud to be the first non-NATO contributor to PURL. We support NATO's coordinating role and look forward to continued collaboration.

s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(g)(i)

Military Information

Defence budget	USD \$24 billion (2024)
Military personnel	Active – 44,245; Reserve – 8,510 (Sep 2025)
Deployments in common with New Zealand	Combined Maritime Forces (Middle East Maritime Security), United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation
Common military platforms	NH-90 helicopters, Bushmasters Protected Mobility Vehicle

Background

New Zealand and the Netherlands' Bilateral Relationship

s6(a) cooperation is based on shared values and capability synergies.

2. In June 2025, coinciding with the NATO Summit, PM Luxon met Dutch PM Dick Schoof to mark 60 years of diplomatic representation, discussing NATO, Ukraine, and Indo-Pacific stability.

The Netherlands' Defence Policy

3. The Netherlands is very clear that European security is intrinsically linked to their own. The Defence White Paper 2024, 'Strong, Smart and Together' outlines the centrality of NATO and the European Union to the Netherlands' defence posture s6(a)

4. s6(a) Their defence policy prioritises the following: improving readiness, deployability, and adaptability; strengthening combat power; enhancing European cooperation; and improving personnel conditions.

5. In June 2025, the Dutch Government endorsed NATO's proposal for 3.5% of GDP to be spent annually on defence, with an additional spend of 1.5% for social resilience and infrastructure. For 2026, the Netherlands plan 2.2% GDP on defence, including Ukraine support—a first step toward the new target.

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

7. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

A frigate completed the Netherlands' first Taiwan Strait transit in May 2024, before joining RIMPAC. The Netherlands participated in Exercise TALISMAN SABRE in 2025 s6(b)(i)

The Netherlands' support for Ukraine

8. The Netherlands is a leading donor of military support to Ukraine. In 2024, they provided €2 billion through direct deliveries, equipment purchases, and contributions to the UK-administered International Fund for Ukraine and NATO's Comprehensive Assistance Package.

9. On 1 December 2025, the Netherlands pledged €250 million for the purchase of US weaponry and ammunition through NATO's PURL initiative. With this package of support, the Netherlands is purchasing drones, F-16 fighter aircraft missiles, and air defence equipment and ammunition. The Netherlands was the first country to fund the PURL initiative in August 2025.

s6(a)

s6(a)

International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force
Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
January 2026

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Biography



Chan Chun Sing was appointed as the Minister for Defence in May 2025. He is also the Coordinating Minister for the Public Service. Minister Chan previously served as Minister for Education and from 2018 - 21, as Minister for Trade and Industry. In this role, he ratified the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement and deepened international cooperation on the digital economy. Serving with the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) from 1987 to 2011, Mr Chan rose through the ranks to Chief of Army. He left the SAF to run in the 2011 General Election and was elected a Member of Parliament.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- Since our last meeting, we have welcomed your Chief of Army and Senior Minister of State Zaqy to New Zealand to observe Exercise Thunder Warrior [Zaqy called on Min Penk].
- I am very pleased that Singapore is intending to adapt and continue long-running military exercises, including Exercise THUNDER WARRIOR. New Zealand remains committed to supporting Singapore Armed Forces training and modernisation.
- Our Chief of Airforce was grateful to attend the recent Singapore Airshow and Space Summit, along with a capability team from our Ministry of Defence.
- [Redacted] s6(a)
- [Redacted] s6(a)
- Our officials also met at the recent Sherpa meeting in January, which provided a useful checkpoint on the CSP and follow-up to the recent 2+2 Dialogue in Singapore.
- At the 2+2, there was discussion on workforce issues and resilient supply chains. We will continue this discussion [Redacted] s6(a)

Background

s6(b)(i), s9(2)(f)(iv)

2. Under the CSP, key defence initiatives include continuing SAF training in New Zealand and exploring new opportunities; professional and personnel exchanges; enhanced engagement through FPDA and ADMM-Plus; [redacted] s6(a)

[redacted] s6(a)

4. [redacted] s6(b)(i)

Singapore will establish a National Space Agency in April 2026.

5. [redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

[redacted] Workforce challenges have also been a common theme in recent discussions, particularly how to develop small and emerging workforces, such as Cyber and Space, to ensure viable career pathways for personnel.

[redacted] s6(b)(i)

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force
February 2026*

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Biography



The Rt Hon John Healey was appointed Secretary of State for Defence on 5 July 2024.

He was Shadow Housing Secretary from 2015 to 2020 and Shadow Health Secretary from 2010-2011. During Labour's previous term in Government, Healey was the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1999-2001 and a Minister from 2001-2010, serving successively as Adult Skills Minister, Treasury Minister, Local Government Minister and Housing Minister.

Before entering Parliament, Healey was Campaigns Director at the Trades Union Congress and a disability rights campaigner.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- New Zealand places great value on our close defence relationship with the UK. I was pleased to sign the Joint Statement on Defence Cooperation in London in 2025 s6(a)
- New Zealand remains fully committed to supporting Ukraine's self-defence and territorial integrity. We continue to maintain a deployment of up to 100 NZDF personnel to work with partners in Europe across training support, staff augmentation, and command and liaison roles.
- s9(2)(g)(i)

Support to Ukraine

- New Zealand remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine's self-defence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. To that end, we maintain a deployment of up to 100 personnel in Europe, working with partners across training support, staff augmentation, and command and liaison roles under a flexible mandate that allows us to respond to Ukraine's evolving needs
- On 4 December, New Zealand announced a NZ\$15 million contribution to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. New Zealand is proud to be alongside Australia, one of the first non-NATO contributors to the PURL.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Coalition of the Willing and post-conflict support to Ukraine

- We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in the diplomatic and military discussions of the Coalition of the Willing to date, and for the UK's steadfast leadership of the grouping.

- We welcome the recent Paris Declaration and the progress that is being made in negotiating an end to the war in Ukraine. New Zealand continues to support a just and lasting peace settlement for Ukraine that does not legitimise territorial changes achieved by force.

s6(a)

s6(a)

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

Military Information

Defence budget	£60.2 billion (FY 2024/25)
Military personnel	137,102 Regular Forces, 31,940 Volunteer Reserves
Deployments in common with New Zealand	Multinational Force Observers

Background

The UK is one of New Zealand's key security, defence, and intelligence partners, predicated on shared history, values, interests, and perspectives on a broad range of security challenges. Our services maintain close working relationships founded on a common operational history, well-established working practices, and strong people to people links. The Five Power Defence

Arrangements is the primary defence link into South East Asia for both New Zealand and the UK.

2. New Zealand's defence relationship with the UK is deep and broad. This is reflected in the centrality of the UK to New Zealand's support to Ukraine and our partnership in the Pacific (e.g. the NZDF deploying on the UK Offshore Patrol Vessel HMS TAMAR).

Joint Statement on Enhanced Defence Cooperation

3. In September, you signed a new Joint Statement on Enhanced Defence Cooperation between New Zealand and the United Kingdom, during your meeting with her UK counterpart, Secretary of State for Defence John Healey. The new statement updates the NZ-UK Joint Statement on Defence Cooperation signed in 2015.

4. The new Joint Statement includes three objectives that set the direction of the defence relationship:

- a) Cooperate to enhance security and stability, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.
- b) Enhance combined effectiveness in operations through interoperability.
- c) Facilitate effective defence industrial and technology collaboration.

s6(b)(i), s9(2)(f)(iv)

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)

International Branch, Ministry of Defence

Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force

Europe Division and International Security and Disarmament Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

January 2026

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s6(a)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

s9(2)(g)(i)

Biography



The Hon. Richard Marles is a senior member of the Labor party and was appointed Minister of Defence in June 2022.

His previous roles include Deputy Leader of the Opposition, as well as Shadow Minister for Defence; Immigration and Border Protection; and Trade. Born in 1967, he was raised and educated in Geelong before undertaking studies in Law and Science at the University of Melbourne, where he earned a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and a Bachelor of Science.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- I am looking forward to meeting up with you again at the upcoming Australia-New Zealand Ministers Meeting (ANZMIN) and Defence Ministers' Meeting (DMM).

s6(a)

[If raised: Pacific Response Group]

- We are grateful to Australia for its initial hosting of the Pacific Response Group headquarters. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) is looking forward to taking over the hosting on 1 July this year.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Background

s6(a)

2 At the time of writing, dates and agendas for the ANZMIN and Defence Ministers' meetings are under consideration by Ministerial offices in Australia.

s6(a)

International Branch, Ministry of Defence

Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force

January 2026

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Key messages

- I have deep regard for President Zelenskyy's courageous leadership and the resilience of the Ukrainian people against years of challenging circumstances.
- You will know that New Zealand is steadfast in our support for Ukraine's self-defence and for its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- To that end, in December, New Zealand announced a NZ\$15 million contribution to NATO's Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) initiative. New Zealand is proud to be, alongside Australia, one of the first non-NATO contributors to the PURL.
- More broadly, New Zealand's support to Ukraine has encompassed military, humanitarian, economic, and diplomatic assistance, as well as sanctions against Russian individuals and entities. New Zealand has also contributed funds for the procurement of weapons and ammunition for Ukraine, including battlefield drones.
- As part of the New Zealand Defence Force's deployment in support of Ukraine's self-defence, New Zealand will continue to deploy up to 100 personnel to work with partners in Europe to support Ukraine's self-defence, across the themes of training support; staff augmentation; and command, liaison and support.
- New Zealand supports a just and lasting peace settlement for Ukraine, that does not legitimise territorial changes achieved by force.

- [Redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)

[If raised: Coalition of the Willing]

- New Zealand has participated in military planning discussions to better understand what functions or role coalition forces might play following any ceasefire or peace settlement,

[Redacted] s6(a)

[Redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)

Background

s9(2)(g)(i)

New Zealand's total support for Ukraine is valued at NZ\$183 million. Most recently, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence announced on 4 December a \$15 million contribution to NATO's PURL initiative to procure critical US weaponry and ammunition for Ukraine. This follows a further tranche of sanctions under the Russia Sanctions Act, targeting Russia's oil industry and shadow fleet that was announced on 31 October.

New Zealand Defence Force support to Ukraine

2. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has had personnel deployed to Europe in support of Ukraine for nearly four years under Operation TĪEKE. During this time NZDF contributions have developed and matured as Ukraine's needs have evolved.

3. The deployments have been highly valued by Ukraine and likeminded partners. NZDF personnel have been involved in a range of activities in support of Ukraine including delivering training to members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU), providing specialist intelligence support to the UK, and holding key roles in multi-national organisations supporting Ukraine such as the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine initiative (NSATU)..

International Branch, Ministry of Defence

Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force

January 2026

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Biography

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

s6(a)

Defence Spending and Capability

- New Zealand's increased commitment to defence, including the recent decision to double defence spending, reflects a significant uplift in combat capability, lethality and readiness.
- This commitment also underlines New Zealand's role as a dependable and capable defence partner – we recognise the significant role that the US is playing in supporting collective security efforts, and we acknowledge the importance of others, including New Zealand, making a meaningful contribution to these efforts for our mutual benefit.
- Since the Defence Capability Plan was announced in April, we have already made two significant procurement decisions – maritime helicopters and military transport aircraft. These decisions are a strong demonstration of New Zealand's commitment to becoming increasingly combat capable and enhancing our interoperability with key partners, including the US, and Australia.
- We want to be a force-multiplier for Australia – our mutual ally, with whom we're working to meet security challenges in the Pacific. We want to be interoperable, if not interchangeable. We are aligning practices and procedures, and where we can we are working to align our procurement practices and processes with Australia for more efficient capability acquisition.

s9(2)(g)(i)

s6(a)

Background

The defence relationship between New Zealand and the United States has evolved significantly over the past decades.

2. Key milestones include the signing of the Wellington Declaration in 2010, which reaffirmed shared democratic values and established a framework for strategic cooperation, and the Washington Declaration in 2012, which expanded defence collaboration, particularly in maritime security and peacekeeping. At the military-to-military level we continue to have a shared understanding of the strategic challenges in the Indo-Pacific and have often worked together to support peace and stability in the region.

3. Defence cooperation between NZ – US is extensive and spans nearly all New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) capabilities. This includes joint deployments, maritime security, counterterrorism, peacekeeping, and humanitarian missions. [REDACTED] s6(a)

4. The relationship benefits from high levels of interoperability, supported by shared platforms like the P-8A Poseidon and C-130J Hercules aircraft, [REDACTED] s6(a). Regular joint training exercises are a cornerstone of the partnership, contributing significantly to NZDF capability development.

5. NZDF regularly participates in joint exercises with the US and other partners, including RIMPAC, Talisman Sabre, and Pacific Partnership. These exercises enhance interoperability, and readiness.

National Defense Strategy

6. The US Department of War released the long-anticipated National Defense Strategy (NDS) on Friday 23 January 2026. Highly consistent in content, theme and tone with the US National Security Strategy and Trump Administration statements and positions more generally, the NDS places the highest priority on US homeland defence as part of a renewed focus on the Western Hemisphere. [REDACTED] s6(a)

8. The NDS does not specifically reference New Zealand (nor many other US allies and partners, including Australia). [REDACTED] s6(a)

International Branch, Ministry of Defence

Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force

Americas Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

January 2026

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Biography

Christian Klein, Chief Executive Officer



Born in Germany, Klein holds a diploma in International Business Administration from the University of Cooperative Education in Mannheim Germany.

Klein started his career at SAP in 1999 as a student. He has held various positions across the company, including Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer. In 2019 he was named Co-CEO before being appointed as sole CEO in April 2020, with his current board term to expire in 2030.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

- Our NZDF has been partners with SAP for thirty years, with SAP products forming the backbone of many of our organisational functions. The NZDF consider SAP to be a strategic partner, s9(2)(g)(i)
- The latest SAP Defence and Security suite of products represents a timely and essential upgrade for the NZDF that will improve our organisational readiness and interoperability. s9(2)(g)(i)
- s9(2)(g)(i)
- s9(2)(g)(i)
- s9(2)(g)(i)

Background

s9(2)(g)(i)

2. The New Zealand Government through the Defence Capability Plan, has approved a significant investment in Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) capability for the NZDF (under

the Future ERP Programme).

s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)

3. This capability uplift will be implemented progressively over several years, with the largest elements being the transformational organisational change needed by the NZDF

s6(a), s9(2)(b)(ii)

4. The modern defence ERP capability represents a significant shift from the legacy corporate-style ERP, which was primarily focused on finance, procurement, and HR, with logistics and engineering added on as separate components. In contrast, the new system has been purpose-built around Force Element Structures (the units and capabilities that can be deployed, sustained, and combined for military operations) as well as supporting operational requirements.

s6(a)

6. The NZDF's Future ERP Programme is a multi-year roadmap of delivery, and to improve delivery certainty and reduce risk,

s9(2)(g)(i)

Government Chief Digital Officer Engagement with SAP

7. GCDO manages the Government's primary relationship with digital suppliers, including SAP.

8. SAP holds an All of Government Cloud Framework Agreement (CFA), enabling agencies to procure Public Cloud and Professional Services under standardised terms.

s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i)

9. On 1 July 2024, GCDO established the Cabinet-mandated Back-office Digital Transformation initiative to standardise and simplify government back-office systems and processes, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).

10. This initiative is expected to deliver \$160 million in savings over ten years and enable agencies to focus on service delivery for New Zealanders.

s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(f)(iv)

International Branch, Ministry of Defence

Capability branch, Ministry of Defence

January 2026

Biographies

David Appel, Vice President US Federal



Based in Leesburg, Virginia, USA, Appel has been with AWS since 2002 and leads its U.S. Federal and national security public sector businesses. He supports civilian, defence, and intelligence agencies in adopting Cloud, AI, and advanced digital technologies. In this role, he partners with government leaders to modernise mission-critical systems and deliver secure, scalable digital solutions. Appel has also shaped AWS's approach to highly regulated public sector environments, helping establish Cloud computing as a core capability for missions requiring the highest levels of security, resilience, and compliance.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Michael Punke, Vice President Public Policy



Based in Montana, USA, Michael has been at AWS since 2016. A Cornell qualified lawyer specialising in international trade, and author of *The Revenant*, Michael has held several senior US government policy and economic positions.

Under President Obama he was Deputy United States Trade Representative and U.S. Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation, with responsibility for several major international trade negotiations including the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

Michael blogs for AWS on topics including facial recognition, cloud security, and data privacy.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Key messages

AWS as a government partner

- Amazon Web Services (AWS) is a key All of Government cloud services provider to the New Zealand Government. We note an increasing uptake of AWS services in New Zealand public service agencies.

Defence

- Microsoft is the NZDF's strategic partner for a range of IT services and support, including the provision of cloud computing via the Azure Services Platform. However, this does not preclude the use of other suppliers, including AWS.
- The Defence Capability Plan identifies an Information Environment and includes several investments across the environment in digital, electronic warfare and cyber security capabilities. s9(2)(g)(i)
- For Defence, industry, national security and business security are intertwined. With the acceleration of cyber risks, businesses working with Defence need to meet our security

requirements. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

- [REDACTED] s6(a)

Cloud

- Adopting a broader range of Cloud suppliers (a multi-Cloud approach) can help spread risk.
- The GCDO intends to update the Cloud First Policy to support a diversified approach that maintains resilience, leverage, and innovation across New Zealand's digital ecosystem.

[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

- [REDACTED] s9(2)(b)(ii)
- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

Digital Identity and Digital Public Infrastructure

- While building DPI components is cheap, the implementation, integration and change to make DPI successful is hard.
- What lessons do you have from other jurisdictions around successful implementation and behavioural change?

[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

Background

- GCDO manages the Government's primary relationship with All of Government digital suppliers and engages with AWS regularly.
- Amazon Web Services (AWS) holds an All of Government Cloud Framework Agreement (CFA), enabling agencies to buy Public Cloud and Professional Services under standardised terms.
- Agency spend with AWS was \$16 million in the 12 months ending December 2025. We are seeing consistent growth in AWS usage through the CFA which brings additional discounts for all consuming agencies.
- Amazon has recently announced a further reduction of 16,000 jobs across the organisation. This follows 14,000 primarily corporate roles in October 2025. At this stage, we are not aware of how this may impact AWS.
- This aligns with a wider trend among large firms to pursue operating efficiencies and rebalance workforce composition, in response to slowing economic conditions and accelerating adoption of AI enabled capabilities.

Recent Engagements

- On 1 December 2025, you met with [REDACTED] s9(2)(a), Director of Government Transformation (Global), and Koren O'Brien, Country Manager, New Zealand Public Sector. The focus of

the meeting was digitising government, global insights, New Zealand's digital progress, and AI adoption and regulation.

- On 13 February 2025, you met with Michael Punke, Vice President for Global Public Policy, and David Levy, Vice President Worldwide Public Sector. The meeting's focus was Cloud infrastructure, Data Centre security, biometrics, and Digital Public Infrastructure.
- On 21 October 2025, GCDO met with Michael Punke. The meeting focused on government use of Cloud infrastructure, the AWS New Zealand Data Centre Region, Public Cloud Data Centre Certification, and managing Cloud concentration risks.

Artificial Intelligence

- GCDO is public sector lead for AI in New Zealand. Government is seeking to leverage AI to enhance customer experience, improve service delivery, and achieve productivity and efficiency benefits.
- Results from the recent 2025 Survey of Public Service AI Cases shows that New Zealand's Public Service organisations have made excellent gains in AI adoption over the last year:
 - a) AI cases are increasing; 272 AI cases were reported by all participating agencies (207 AI cases in public service organisations, compared to 108 AI cases in 2024).
 - b) AI is moving rapidly into operational use: 55 AI cases are now in full operation.
 - c) A pipeline of over 200 AI cases exists: AI adoption rates will continue to climb quickly as agencies move AI cases into operations from planning and development.
 - d) This time last year we knew of only 88 cases, so the pipeline has grown by 127%.
- AI technology is primarily being used to support agencies' routine functions. These AI cases include assisted searches of information, digital detection, analysis and summaries of data plus AI providing workflow automation of administrative tasks.

s9(2)(b)(ii)

Cloud Diversification

- Government has had a Cloud First Policy since 2012 (updated in 2024), directing agencies to prioritise Public Cloud services over traditional on-premises IT systems to modernise technology, improve efficiency, and deliver better digital services.
 - As Cloud adoption has increased, government has become more dependent on a limited number of Cloud suppliers, requiring greater consideration of system wide availability, security, and resilience.
 - Adopting a broader range of Cloud suppliers (a multi Cloud approach) can help spread risk.
- s9(2)(b)(ii)
- AWS can provide essential Cloud capabilities which, alongside other suppliers, can help reduce supplier concentration and support a robust multi-Cloud environment.

TAB FIVE: BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS

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Background: Munich Security Conference

Background

The Munich Security Conference (MSC) is an annual forum for debating international security policy, held at the Bayerischer Hof hotel in Munich. It brings together 400+ heads of state or government, ministers, personalities from international and non-governmental organisations, high-ranking representatives of industry, media, academia, and civil society to engage in discussion on the world's most pressing security concerns. All formats are governed by the Munich Rule calling for "maximum interaction between speakers and participants".

2. MSC provides a platform for multilateral and bilateral meetings, side events and relevant foreign and security policy announcements. Since it was first held under a different name more than 60 years ago, MSC has developed from an exclusively trans-Atlantic gathering to an event featuring a much more global security outlook and audience. Personal attendance is by invitation only, but the official programme is followed by media and livestreamed. The Conference receives support from the German Government.

Munich Security Conference 2026

3. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

4. The Conference will be opened by Germany's Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who visited New Zealand in 2017. Conference Chairman Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, former State Secretary of Germany's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will host and facilitate the three-day programme.

5. MSC 2026 will officially start on Friday 13 February, with a focus on global security challenges, including: European security and defence, the future of the transatlantic relationship, the revitalisation of multilateralism, competing visions of the global order, regional conflicts, and the security implications of technological advances.

6. The MSC will release its annual Munich Security Report on 9 February. The report provides data and infographics on key contemporary security policy issues and acts as a scene-setter for the Conference.

Attendance at the Munich Security Conference in 2026

7. Your attendance at MSC will be a second for New Zealand at ministerial level, following your first visit in 2025. DPMC's National Assessments Bureau Director [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) will also attend this year's MSC and the relevant intelligence agencies' track.

8. The list of confirmed participants will only be published on the first day of the Conference, but the organisers expect this year the highest global coverage ever, with up to 150 countries present. Leading German politicians are confirmed to attend, led by Chancellor Merz. A large bi-partisan US delegation can also be expected again. 60 heads of state have confirmed their attendance.

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

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Background

New Zealand's total support for Ukraine is valued at NZ\$183 million. Most recently, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence announced on 4 December a NZ\$15 million contribution to NATO's PURL initiative to procure critical US weaponry and ammunition for Ukraine. This follows a further tranche of sanctions under the Russia Sanctions Act, targeting Russia's oil industry and shadow fleet that was announced on 31 October.

New Zealand Defence Force support to Ukraine

2. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has had personnel deployed to Europe in support of Ukraine for nearly four years under Operation TĪEKE. During this time NZDF contributions have developed and matured as Ukraine's needs have evolved.

3. The deployments have been highly valued by Ukraine and likeminded partners. NZDF personnel have been involved in a range of activities in support of Ukraine including delivering training to members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU), providing specialist intelligence support to the UK, and holding key roles in multi-national organisations supporting Ukraine such as the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine initiative (NSATU).

s6(a)

4. On 22 April 2025, the New Zealand Government announced an 18-month extension to Operation TĪEKE: up to 100 NZDF personnel will remain deployed to Europe from 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2026. These personnel will deliver support across the continent across the themes of training support; staff augmentation; and command, liaison, and support.

s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)



Coalition of the Willing and the Ukraine peace process

s6(a)

10. Presidents Trump and Zelenskyy met at Mar-a-Lago on 28 December, with Trump describing the meeting as “terrific” and that they were “getting a lot closer” to a peace deal. However tangible progress was limited. Zelenskyy maintained the US-Ukrainian peace proposal was “90 percent agreed” – the same level as before their meeting – while Trump cautioned that “thorny” issues remained, particularly around territorial questions in the Donbas region, which he described as “unresolved”.

11. On 6 January 2026, UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron hosted a leaders-level meeting of the Coalition of the Willing in Paris to maintain momentum towards a just and lasting peace for Ukraine. Following the meeting, France released the *Paris Declaration – Robust Security Guarantees for a Solid and Lasting Peace in Ukraine*.

12. The Declaration outlines the agreed components of the Coalition’s post-conflict support to Ukraine, including participation in a proposed US-led ceasefire monitoring and verification mechanism; support for the Armed Forces of Ukraine; a Multinational Force for Ukraine binding commitments to support Ukraine in the case of a future armed attack by Russia; and a commitment to deepen long-term defence cooperation with Ukraine.

s6(a)

Background

s6(a)

2. Tensions between the Philippines and China remain high. China Coast Guard vessels continue to act aggressively towards Philippines vessels in the South China Sea. s6(a)

Pacific Security Maritime Exchange (PSMX)

3. The PSMX is a network of partner states that aims to disrupt North Korea's evasion or violation of UN Security Council maritime sanctions. These UN Security Council resolutions include sanctions related to oil smuggling and ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programs. PSMX headquarters are based in Japan, s6(a)

s6(a)

5. PSMX members provide varying contributions, including assets and personnel. New Zealand is a core contributor to the PSMX. s6(a)

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

Background

Defence supports wider all of government efforts to strengthen Pacific resilience. This includes building the strength of regional defence institutions and their connections to other parts of the Pacific security architecture. [REDACTED] s6(a)

2. Ensuring that the region is prepared to resolve its own regional security needs through mechanisms like the Pacific Response Group and deployments of NZDF when requested to support Pacific needs – including in non-traditional defence activities like logistics support, HADR and fisheries.

3. We are also taking opportunities to enhance and support Pacific leadership in the defence space, to embed the sense of the Pacific helping the Pacific as the primary way in which the region responds to security needs. As an example, we have had Fiji forces assist in HADR events in New Zealand and we've utilised NZDF assets to transport Pacific forces for HADR responses in other Pacific countries.

4. Promoting tactical interoperability and organisational alignment between Pacific forces. This includes for example, developing leadership training models with and for Pacific defence forces through the Pacific Leader Development Programme (PLDP). PLDP leadership programmes merge New Zealand and local teachings and have touch points with New Zealand at all levels, including Tier I leadership. In addition, the NZDF in partnership with MFAT has funded and built Leadership Centres across the South Pacific. These leadership programmes merge New Zealand and local teachings and have touch points with New Zealand across all levels of personnel.

5. The NZDF also funds and administers the Mutual Assistance Programme (MAP) in the Pacific, delivering training to individuals and teams, providing resources to support partner nations, funding the provision of Technical Advisors and secondments, and responding to other requests for assistance as required. The MAP is designed to build partner capacity, develop NZDF capability, nurture people-to-people relationships, and enhance New Zealand's reputation across the Pacific.

Background

The security situation in the Middle East remains dynamic and complex, marked by Israel's two-year long incursion into Gaza, Iran and its proxies' destabilising activities, and the evolving impacts of the late-2024 fall of the al-Assad regime in Syria.

The Situation in Gaza

2. Since agreement to the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict of 29 September 2025, the security situation in Gaza remains volatile. [REDACTED] s6(a)

3. Humanitarian conditions within Gaza have improved markedly, but there continues to be high levels of acute food insecurity and shortages of essential supplies. [REDACTED] s6(a)

4. [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

5. On 15 January 2025, the US announced transition to phase 2 of the Peace Plan. Quickly following this, the US invited New Zealand, [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i) to join the Board of Peace (BoP). [REDACTED] s6(a)

6. While the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) has been authorised via United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803, [REDACTED] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

Iran

7. On 13 June 2025, Israel and Iran entered into an intense exchange of missiles after Israel launched air strikes on Iranian military and nuclear sites, during which Israel killed key Iranian nuclear scientists and military commanders. On 22 June 2025, they conducted strikes on Iran's Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan nuclear facilities. A ceasefire was brokered by the US after Iran's 24 June counterstrike on Al Udeid in Qatar, the US Central Command's primary air base.

8. In early-mid January 2026, there has been increasing unrest in Iran, relating initially to economic conditions. This unrest was followed by US threat of potential US military strike on Iran. Open-source information also highlighted an increase in tension between Iran and Israel in this period. New Zealand is monitoring this situation very closely, including through our Embassy in Tehran.

Syria

9. Since the fall of the al-Assad regime in December 2024, Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) has established a provisional government and is seeking legitimacy. HTS remains a UN and New Zealand designated terrorist organisation, [REDACTED] s6(a)

10. New Zealand cannot de-list HTS independently, as its designation is tied to the UN Security Council listing. The issue remains stalled at the Security Council, [REDACTED] s6(a)

11. Security tensions in southern Syria remain high, [REDACTED] s6(a) and continued clashes involving Druze and Bedouin communities.

12. Since early January 2026, in northern Syria, Syrian Interim Authority forces have pushed the SDF from significant territory. Kurdish forces previously oversaw around 8,000 ISIS detainees, and the conflict has resulted in key facilities transferring to Interim Authority control. Some detainees escaped during the fighting, though most were recaptured, with an estimated 100 still at large. International concern is rising that instability could enable an ISIS resurgence.

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NZDF deployments in the Middle East & Africa

Mission	Mandate	Description
Middle East maritime security	s6(a)	Personnel deployed to the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) and other coalitions focused on promoting maritime security in the Middle East.
UN Treaty Supervision Organisation (UNTSO)	Up to eight personnel across the full area of operations	UNTSO acts as a neutral observer and arbiter across Israel's highly contested borders with Lebanon, Syria (including the Golan Heights) and Egypt. UNTSO was the UN's first peacekeeping mission and is the NZDF's longest standing deployment.
Multinational Force & Observers (MFO)	Up to 28 personnel across the Sinai Peninsula	The MFO supervises and facilitates compliance with the terms of the 1979 Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel. It's been effective in maintaining stability on the border.
Civil-Military Coordination Centre (CMCC)	One liaison officer for up to three months, until 3 May 2026. Based in Israel	The CMCC is a newly established (Oct 25) US-led international body designed to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict. [Redacted]
Operation Gallant Phoenix (OPG)	s6(a) based in Amman, Jordan	OPG, a US-led initiative, is an intelligence fusion centre established in 2013. Initially designed to track foreign fighter flows into Iraq and Syria, it now provides a platform for coalition partners to collect, monitor and process material regarding potential and existing terrorist threats and trends at home and globally.
s6(a)		

s6(a)

Key messages

- New START expired on 5 February 2026. It was the last major strategic arms control treaty between the United States and Russia, [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)
- [redacted] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) It also increases headwinds for the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.
- New Zealand supported New START and continues to be in favour of further strategic arms control negotiations and agreements, in line with broader and long-standing support for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

Background

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (“New START”) was a bilateral agreement between the United States and Russia that entered into force for an initial ten-year period in 2011, and which was extended for five years in 2021. It expired on 5 February 2026 and there is currently no process in place to negotiate a successor agreement.

2. The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (“New START”) was a bilateral agreement between the United States and Russia that entered into force for an initial ten-year period in 2011, and which was extended for five years in 2021. It expired on 5 February 2026 and there is currently no process in place to negotiate a successor agreement.

3. New START placed limits on the number of Russian and American strategic nuclear warheads (1,550), delivery vehicles (700) and launch vehicles (800), and established an intrusive system of reporting and inspection for both sides. [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)

4. Although a bilateral treaty, New START was a major stabilising element underpinning international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. [redacted] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

[redacted] s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

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

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Geography and demographics

<i>Land area</i>	357,592 km ² (NZ 268,000 km ²)
<i>Population</i>	83.65 million (2026)
<i>Capital city</i>	Berlin
<i>Language</i>	German
<i>Currency</i>	Euro



Political

<i>Political system</i>	Federal Republic of 16 states (Länder), each with own constitution, legislature and government.
<i>Legislature</i>	Bicameral Federal Assembly - 630 seat Bundestag (lower house), elected under an MMP system; and the 69-seat Bundesrat (upper house) nominated by state governments.
<i>Government</i>	Cabinet headed by the Federal Chancellor, who will be the leader of the largest block in the Bundestag
<i>Head of State</i>	Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier
<i>Head of Gov't</i>	Federal Chancellor Frederich Merz
<i>Last election</i>	February 2025 (Bundestag); February 2022 (Presidential)
<i>Next elections</i>	February 2029 (Bundestag); February 2027 (Presidential)

Economic

<i>Nominal GDP (2026):</i>	US\$5.33 billion
<i>GDP per capita (2026)</i>	US\$ 63.3 billion
<i>Real GDP growth (2024):</i>	0.9%
<i>Trade with New Zealand (Stats NZ, year ending June 2026)</i>	
<i>Total two-way trade</i>	NZ \$5.57 billion
<i>NZ exports</i>	NZ \$1.9b (main exports: travel, meat & edible offal).
<i>NZ imports</i>	NZ \$3.67b, (main imports: mechanical machinery, vehicles, pharmaceuticals).

Bilateral relationship

Germany and New Zealand enjoy a healthy and supportive relationship based on common interests and values, making us natural, like-minded values partners in international affairs, trade and commerce, science and cultural exchange. Both countries have fostered these links through numerous high-level political visits in recent years.

Trade in Goods and Services

2. Germany is a key trading partner for New Zealand. Representing NZ\$5.57 billion in two-way goods and services trade (2025), it is our largest EU trading partner and 8th largest globally. Goods trade is skewed in Germany's favour due to the prominence of high-value machinery and vehicle imports. Germany has traditionally been an important source of investment (NZ\$1.044 billion year to March 2025), tourism (69,000 visitors in 2024), working holiday visas (6,100 in 2024) and international students (1,995 in 2024).

Science and Technology

3. Germany is New Zealand's largest science partner in Europe with more than 300 science and research collaborations between universities and institutions. The latest bilateral Joint Committee Meeting to review the progress made under the Agreement took place in February 2025.

Political update

4. In March 2025, the Bundestag – and later the Bundesrat – approved a constitutional amendment suspending Germany's "debt brake" to allow unlimited defence spending above 1 % of GDP, create a €500 billion special fund for infrastructure (with at least €100 billion for climate projects) over 12 years, and permit federal states to borrow up to 0.35 % of GDP. With these changes, Germany is set to meet the NATO target of spending 3.5% of GDP on defence and an additional 1.5% of GDP on defence-related infrastructure.

5. As of May 6, 2025, Germany's federal government is comprised of a coalition of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its Bavarian sister party the Christian Social Union (CSU) together with the Social Democrats (SPD). The new Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz is leading the Government with a relatively thin 12 seat majority and no majority in the Bundestrat (the German senate). Chancellor Merz did not reach a majority in the first round of voting for his candidacy, unprecedented in Modern German history.

s6(a)

Economic overview

7. Germany has the world's third largest economy, the largest economy in Europe and is the largest net contributor to the EU budget. s6(a)

8. Germany retains a significant trade surplus at US\$182.3 billion in 2025. Motor vehicles (VW, BMW, Mercedes, Daimler) continue to be Germany's most important export goods, followed by machinery (Bosch, Siemens) and chemical products (BASF, Bayer). Germany's largest export market is the US, and its most important source of imports is China. In 2024, the US overtook China to become Germany's number one two-way trading partner again.

Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Formal Message: Munich Security Conference 2025: Minister of Defence Leads New Zealand's Participation

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

- The 61st Munich Security Conference (MSC) took place from 14-16 February 2025, convening over 50 Heads of State/Government and 150 Foreign and Defence Ministers. New Zealand was represented by Minister of Defence Hon. Judith Collins KC.

s6(a)

- Minister Collins was a keynote speaker at a Main Stage panel event focused on the connections between the European and Indo-Pacific security spheres. The Minister also held bilaterals with Ukraine, NATO, Canada, the UK, the Fijian Prime Minister and the German opposition.

s6(a)

HOHENGA – ACTION

s6(a)

PŪRONGO – REPORT

1. The 61st Munich Security Conference (MSC) took place from 14-16 February 2025, convening over 50 Heads of State/Government and 150 Foreign and Defence Ministers to address the most pressing international security challenges.

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TĀKUPU – COMMENT

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MUTU – ENDS

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