

HON ANDREW LITTLE, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Ministerial Overseas Travel 16-10-2022 to 20-10-2022

June 2023

This publication provides the Cabinet proposal and report back on Hon Peeni Henare's travel to the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Egypt in October 2022.

The pack comprises the following documents:

- the September 2022 Cabinet paper and associated minute of decision *Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Peeni Henare* [CAB-22-SUB-0408 and CAB-22-MIN-0408]
- the November 2022 Cabinet paper and associated minute of decision *Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Peeni Henare* [CAB-22-SUB-0504 and CAB-22-MIN-0504]

This pack has been released on the Ministry of Defence website, available at:

www.defence.govt.nz/publications.

It has been necessary to withhold certain information in accordance with the following provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. Where information is withheld, the relevant sections of the Act are indicated in the body of the document. Where information has been withheld in accordance with section 9(2) of the Act, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Information is withheld where making it available would be likely to prejudice:

- the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand [section 6(a)]
- the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on the basis of confidence by the Government of any other country [section 6(b)(i)].

Information is also withheld in order to:

- maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty [section 9(2)(g)(i)]



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Peeni Henare

Portfolio **Defence**

On 27 September 2022, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Peeni Henare from New Zealand, from 3 to 12 October 2022, to travel to the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Egypt for bilateral meetings, and to visit New Zealand Defence Force operational deployments;
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by two members of staff, one of whom will be funded by the New Zealand Defence Force;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up to \$55,933 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **noted** that he will also be accompanied by officials from the New Zealand Defence Force and the Ministry of Defence whose travel costs will met by their departments;
- 5 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 5.1 Hon Nanaia Mahuta act as Minister of Defence;
 - 5.2 Hon Willie Jackson act as Minister for Whānau Ora;
- 6 **noted** that the House is not sitting during his absence.

Rachel Hayward
Acting Secretary of the Cabinet

Office of the Minister for Defence

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Peeni Henare

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Jordan and Egypt from 3 to 12 October 2022 to conduct bilateral visits with defence counterparts and visit New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) operational deployments.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle. House leave is not required as the House is in recess.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 My proposed travel would be the first visit to the Middle East region by the Minister of Defence since the outbreak of COVID-19. The programme includes travel to the UAE (4-5 October), Jordan (6-7 October), and Egypt (7-11 October).
- 4 In each of the three countries I would conduct multiple bilateral engagements with defence counterparts to discuss regional and global defence issues. I would also open a New Zealand funded and partially-presented training course for regional peacekeepers on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at the Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Peacebuilding (CCCPA).

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

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

- 5 The proposed programme would provide a very visible demonstration of New Zealand's support for peace and stability in the Middle East; the significance of our defence relationships with key partners in the region; the importance of WPS; our support for deployed NZDF personnel; and assist my improved understanding of key defence and security issues in the region.

Ministerial Party

- 6 I propose to travel with two staff members from my office for this travel, one of whom will be funded by the New Zealand Defence Force.

- 7 I will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Defence and NZDF. Their costs would be met from the departmental budgets.

Travel Costs

- 8 Indicative travel costs for my staff member and I are:

Airfares and taxes:	\$ 35,028.00
Accommodation, meals, transport:	\$ 9,540.00
Receptions/hospitality, gifts:	\$ 6,280.00
Contingency (@10%):	\$ 5,085.00
Total:	\$ 55,933.00

Acting Ministers

- 9 In my absence, Acting Ministers in my portfolios will be:

Defence: Hon Andrew Little (3-9 October) and Hon Chris Hipkins (10-12 October)

Whānau Ora: Hon Willie Jackson

Proactive release

- 10 This paper will be proactively released on the Ministry of Defence's website. Proactive release is subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

- 1 I recommend that Cabinet:

1.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand from 3 to 12 October to travel to the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Egypt;

1.2 agree that I be accompanied by two members of staff, one of whom will be funded by the New Zealand Defence Force;

1.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$ 55,933.00 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];

1.4 note that I will be accompanied by officials from the New Zealand Defence Force and Ministry of Defence whose travel costs will met by their departments;

1.5 agree that in my absence:

1.5.1 Hon Andrew Little (3-9 October) and Hon Chris Hipkins (10-12 October) will be Acting Minister of Defence; and

1.5.2 Hon Willie Jackson will be Acting Minister for Whānau Ora.

1.6 note that the House is not sitting during my absence.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Peeni Henare

Minister for Defence

Released by the Minister of Defence



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Peeni Henare

Portfolio **Defence**

On 14 November 2022, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Peeni Henare under CAB-22-SUB-0504 on his travel, from 3 to 12 October 2022, to the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Egypt for bilateral meetings and to visit New Zealand Defence Force operational deployments.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Released by the Minister of Defence

Office of the Minister for Defence

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Peeni Henare

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to the United Arab Emirates, Jordan (Amman and Operation Galant Phoenix) and Egypt (Multi National and Observers Force and Cairo) from 3 October to 12 October 2022 to conduct operational and counterpart visits.

Report

United Arab Emirates

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

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The meeting with UAE Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Mohammed Al Bowardi, reinforced the value bilateral defence ties, which served to provide the foundation for the economic and political relationship between the two countries.

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

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

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The visit also provided an opportunity to gain Emirati perspectives on a range of security issues such as Iran and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Jordan

6 The key objectives for the visit to Jordan were two-fold: to recognise the efforts of New Zealand's troops deployed to Operation Gallant Phoenix (OPG) in Jordan; and to give a fillip to the bilateral relationship in a country where our foreign policy and defence interests closely intersect.

7 A full day was spent visiting New Zealand agencies personnel at OGP. Launched in 2013 with the initial aim of tracking the flow of foreign terrorist fighters in and out of Iraq and Syria. New Zealand's multi-agency deployment currently has a Cabinet mandate until June 2023.

8 OGP has since evolved into a platform where partners collect and share information and intelligence about potential and existing terrorist threats, regardless of threat ideology. OGP is now made up of a large number of countries and a variety of agencies, including law enforcement, military and civilian personnel. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] The visit provided me with a an useful opportunity to review the benefits of New Zealand's participation in OGP ahead of Cabinet's consideration of its mandate renewal in 2023.

9 A working breakfast with US Ambassador Wooster clearly set the tone for the following bilateral meetings that were held with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Ayman Al Safadi, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Major General Yousef Hunaiti.

10 [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

11 [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

12 [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

Egypt

- 14 The Egyptian leg of the regional tour afforded the opportunity to engage with NZDF personnel deployed on Operation Farad Multinational Force and Observers (MFO); meet with recently appointed MFO Director General (DG) Elizabeth Dibble; engage with NZDF troops deployed with the MFO in the Sinai, including New Zealand's Force Commander (FC) Major General Evan Williams; and to meet with Assistant Minister of Defence for International Affairs, Mohamed Salah El-Din Hasan.
- 15 I also met with Presidential Security Adviser, Ms Faiza Abou El-Naga, and Major General Tarek Shazly, responsible for defence for greater the Cairo and Giza governorates. While in Cairo I took the opportunity to speak at the official opening of a women, peace and security training for Arab peacekeepers at the Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution, Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping (CCCPA), funded by MFAT's Global Security Fund (GSF).
- 16 As part of the engagement with Multinational Force and Observers and New Zealand Defence Force deployment I called on MFO Director General (DG) Dibble, who was travelling from Rome and transiting through Cairo on route to visit the Sinai. s6(a), s6(b)(i), s9(2)(g)(i)
- 17 The MFO mission continues to evolve and is becoming increasingly a conduit for facilitating discussions between Egypt and Israel. The MFO was currently engaging on the successor of Maj Gen Williams, with the Czech Republic to furnish a Force Commander, the first time the MFO would have a Force Commander from that nation. A formal handover and change of command ceremony would likely be held on 4 March 2023, pending confirmation of approvals from Israel and Egypt.
- 18 I met with MFO FC NZDF Major General Evan Williams both at North and South Camps s6(a), s6(b)(i), s9(2)(g)(i)
- In early 2022, NZDF engineers were surge deployed for six months into MFO to deliver key infrastructure builds and upgrades in storm water protection, ammunitions safeguarding and firing range upgrades which I visited.

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

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23 Egypt has condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine but also condemned the sanctions regimes and the impacts of the war on Egypt's food security and economy. Egypt is now suffering shortages of wheat. Early in the invasion Egypt held wheat stocks of five-six months but this has recently improved and increased to eight months. 40% of Egyptian tourism revenue came from Russia and Ukraine prior to the invasion, particularly in the Red Sea area.

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

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- 25 Co-hosted receptions were held in all three countries with attendance by a mixture of both government officials, heads of missions and military officers from the host and partner nations.
 - 26 Commemorative ceremonies were also held in the UAE at UAE's National War Memorial "Wahat Al Karama", with a wreath laying and honour guard to commemorate the UAE's fallen since independence in 1971 (the vast majority killed during its military intervention in Yemen between 2015-19); and a wreath laying in Cairo at the Commonwealth War Graves in Heliopolis where New Zealand has 138 war dead buried.
 - 27 The delegation also visited the National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation, in Cairo under the Minister's Associate Minister of Tourism portfolio.

Proactive release

- 28 I propose to proactively release this paper within 30 business days. Proactive release will be subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Peeni Henare

Minister for Defence