

In Confidence

Office of the Minister for Pacific Peoples

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Aupito William Sio

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Indonesia from 6-7 December 2018 to represent New Zealand at the 11th Bali Democracy Forum.

Report

- 1 The 11th Bali Democracy Forum (the Forum) themed ‘Democracy for Prosperity’ was hosted in Nusa Dua, Bali from 6-7 December 2018. It was well attended by 88 countries and six international organisations including Pacific participation through Foreign Ministers from Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.
- 2 The Forum is an Indonesian-led initiative established in 2008 with the aim of promoting progressive democratic governance in the Asia-Pacific region. Over the years, it has become a regional platform to share experiences in building democratic institutions. New Zealand has supported the Forum since its inception. Of significance, New Zealand and Indonesia celebrated 60 years of diplomatic relations in 2018.
- 3 At the Forum, I delivered New Zealand’s Statement. I set out Government’s commitment to the wellbeing of the people of Aotearoa New Zealand and the delivery of the Wellbeing Budget 2019 being an important step to embedding wellbeing in New Zealand’s public policy. I also outlined the Pacific Reset; it’s commitment to building deeper relationships with Pacific Island countries and pointed to New Zealand being the first self-governing country in the world to give women the right to vote in 1893 – celebrating 125 years.
- 4 I also participated in one of two panel discussions held on the first day of the Forum speaking to their topic of “*Making Democratic Institutions and Inclusive Prosperity Sustainable*”. I shared experiences on New Zealand values of the rule of law, equality and human rights, MMP and the workings of our Coalition Government. I emphasised the importance of having diversity to ensure government fairness and accountability, and how being ‘united’ is not necessarily about agreeing with all, but understanding and accepting there are differences, and that leadership required leaders to listen, and capture a diverse range of voices.
- 5 Other panellists included Nauru’s President Baron Waqa, Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne, Foreign Minister for Timor-Leste Dinisio Soares, Yongmei Zhou from the World Bank and Stanford University academic Donald Emerson. There was a good blend of perspectives and personalities to ensure robust discussion.
- 6 During the Forum I held a number of bilateral discussions including a meeting with Indonesia’s Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi [REDACTED]

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- 7 I also took the opportunity to speak with Singapore's Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Malaysia's Deputy Secretary General for Multilateral Affairs s6(a)
- 8 In parallel to the main Forum, there were also two forums being held for youth, civil society and media; the Bali Democracy Student Conference and the Bali Civil Society and Media Forum. At the conclusion of the Forum programme, representatives from all three forums combined to deliver statements from their respective discussions.
- 9 I believe that future conference participation from New Zealand youth, civil societies and media will be of mutual benefit to both our countries especially in identifying ourselves with the Forum's broad Asia-Pacific grouping and further promoting New Zealand's democratic credentials.
- 10 It is worth noting that New Zealand's participation in this Forum is important for strengthening our ongoing mutual working relationship with Indonesia.

Proactive release

- 11 I propose to release this paper proactively following due diligence being carried out in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The paper will be made available on the Ministry for Pacific Peoples website within 30 days of being taken to Cabinet.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Aupito William Sio

Minister for Pacific Peoples