

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 Fiji from 12-15 May 2019 as the Government's representative at the 3rd Climate Action Pacific Partnership Conference hosted by the Fijian Government in Suva.

Report

- 1 From 13-14 May 2019, I attended the 3rd Climate Action Pacific Partnership (CAPP) Conference hosted by the Fijian Government in Suva. The CAPP was established under Fiji's COP23 Presidency and was originally conceived as a partnership for Pacific Small Islands Developing States with New Zealand and Australia being invited to attend the first CAPP in 2017.
- 2 The key objectives of my attendance and participation at the Conference was to underscore New Zealand's firm commitment to standing with the Pacific on international climate change matters, reiterating the priority New Zealand attaches to building Pacific resilience, reaffirming to Pacific partners New Zealand's climate leadership and our genuine commitment to transitioning to a low emissions economy as well as helping to progress conversations in the region on various dimensions of climate change subjects being discussed.
- 3 I was supported by senior MFAT officials including New Zealand's new Climate Change Ambassador, Kay Harrison and through bilateral meetings and informal discussions, I took the opportunity to introduce our Ambassador to regional leaders.
- 4 I delivered New Zealand's Statement on the opening day of the Conference highlighting our areas of priority around climate change and highlighted our commitment to partnering alongside the Pacific. I outlined that our focus as part of the Pacific Reset aimed at better understanding the development challenges each country faced, their aspirations and how New Zealand can better partner with each to meet them.
- 5 The themes raised by leaders during the Conference included a need for greater ambition, the importance of youth, partnership with business, oceans, reality of major disasters setting countries back economically and loss of lives and calls for a 'climate emergency'. Through the screening of a pre-recorded video, the Environment Minister from Chile and President of COP25, confirmed that COP25 will be a "Blue COP".
- 6 The Conference was timely for New Zealand as it was held almost a week after we introduced the Zero Carbon Bill into the House. Throughout the Conference, there were numerous favourable mentions regarding New Zealand's climate change actions including Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama mentioning in his opening address that New Zealand's new Zero Carbon Bill deserved commendation as a

clear commitment to becoming carbon neutral and also Cook Islands Prime Minister Henry Puna commending the Just Transition Summit in Taranaki which he had recently attended.

- 7 I held several bilateral meetings including meeting with Samoa's Prime Minister Tuila'epa [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] I also held constructive talks with Fiji's Minister responsible for Climate Change and Attorney General Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Tokelau's Ulu Kalolo, Marshall Islands Minister David Paul and with Director of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Kosi Latu.
- 8 Of particular noting was the topic of Tokelau and their inclusion in Pacific matters in the context of climate change. During my meeting with the Ulu, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]
- 9 Leaders were in good spirits throughout the Conference however [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]
- 10 Fiji Prime Minister Bainimarama, announced in his closing address for the Conference, that the next CAPP would be hosted by the Cook Islands, supported by Fiji's COP23 Trust Fund. Acknowledging that the CAPP provides a useful venue for Pacific delegations to meet and engage in bilateral discussions, discussions need to be more than talking about the enormity of the challenge of addressing climate change. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]

Proactive release

- 11 I intend to release this paper in part within 30 business days with redactions made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Aupito William Sio

Minister for Pacific Peoples