



Proactive Release

The following document has been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, on behalf of Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Prime Minister:

Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Nicola Grigg - February 2025

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon and Hon Nicola Grigg - Viet Nam, February 2025 (CAB-25-SUB-0192 refers)

Title of minute: Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Nicola Grigg - February 2025 (CAB-25-MIN-0192 refers)

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand
- section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

Office of the Prime Minister

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon and Hon Nicola Grigg – Viet Nam, February 2025

I recommend Cabinet note this report on Minister Grigg's and my travel to Viet Nam between 25-28 February 2025.

Report

- 1 My travel to Viet Nam represented my fifth visit to a Southeast Asian priority partner in the last year, with me now having visited all but one of the six priority countries identified under the Foreign Policy Reset. Over the course of three days on the ground in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, I was able to achieve our objectives, namely:
 - 1.1 *Deepening our high-level political relationships and elevating our partnership:* marking our 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations by formally upgrading to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (placing us in an elite top tier of countries afforded such status), and meeting with all four of Viet Nam's leaders: Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, President Luong Cuong, Chairman of the General Assembly Tran Thanh Man, and General Secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam To Lam.
 - 1.2 *Uncovering new opportunities for our businesses in Viet Nam:* with the Business Delegation led by Minister Grigg inking 16 deals worth NZD \$131m over three years, and unlocking opportunities for even more bilateral business to be done between us.
 - 1.3 *Demonstrating New Zealand's commitment to our partnership with ASEAN:* through delivering a keynote address to the ASEAN Future Forum alongside my counterparts from Viet Nam, Malaysia, and Timor-Leste, with this an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to ASEAN s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) the future of the ASEAN-New Zealand relationship, as we mark 50 years of relations this year.
- 2 My bilateral meetings were an opportunity to celebrate the momentum in our relationship and advance New Zealand's interests. The following themes were evident:
 - 2.1 All four leaders expressed a genuine affinity for New Zealand and heralded the elevation of our relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership as a sign of the deepening "strategic trust" between us. Seeing each other for the third time in only twelve months, Prime

Minister Chinh was extraordinarily generous in his hosting of me, with us having built a genuine friendship at the highest level – symbolic of the relations between our two countries.

2.2 It was also clear that Viet Nam's favour for New Zealand is built on the people-to-people links that connect us, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) trusted and quality education destination. I was pleased to see VietJet announce their plans to establish new routes to New Zealand in 2025, and hope that we may capitalise on this greater connectivity to boost our education and tourism numbers even more.

2.3 Across all my engagements, whether political or business-related, I was struck by the opportunity presented by Viet Nam. It's the fastest growing economy in ASEAN, home to a population of over 100 million, has a burgeoning middle class, increasingly discerning consumers, and a robust industrial base well-connected across Southeast Asia. With Viet Nam poised to hit double-digit GDP growth and high-income status in the coming years, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i) This includes as we push to achieve the US\$3 billion two-way trade goal that Prime Minister Chinh and I set last March.

3 I feel that my visit marked a genuine step-change in our two countries' political ties, trade and economic cooperation. I was especially thrilled that we used my visit to Ha Noi to elevate our bilateral relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership – a status enjoyed by very few of Viet Nam's partners. It will be important that the system now mobilises to execute the Plan of Action that underpins it. I expect Ministers to lean on their agencies to ensure that delivery of the Plan rises to meet our high level of ambition.

Proactive release

4 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO (23) 04 on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. The paper will be subject to redaction as appropriate on the grounds set out under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Christopher Luxon

Prime Minister



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.

Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister and Hon Nicola Grigg - February 2025

Portfolio **Prime Minister**

On 9 June 2025, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Prime Minister under CAB-25-SUB-0192 on his travel, together with Hon Nicola Grigg, from 25 to 28 February 2025, to Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam for bilateral engagements.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet