



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 - January 2025

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon - UAE, January 2025 (CAB-25-SUB-0193 refers)

Title of minute: Report on Overseas Travel: Prime Minister - January 2025 (CAB-25-MIN-0193 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 code:

- section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.

Office of the Prime Minister

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Christopher Luxon – UAE, January 2025

I recommend Cabinet note this report of my travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 13 to 15 January 2025. The visit was brought forward and shortened to allow me to attend the funeral of Senior Sergeant Lyn Fleming in Nelson on 15 January.

Report

- 2 During 19 hours on the ground, I was able to deliver on the objectives for the visit, namely:
 - i *To oversee signature of the UAE-New Zealand Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and UAE-New Zealand Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT). Together with UAE President, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, I witnessed the Minister for Trade & Investment and his counterpart sign both the CEPA and BIT. Signing was an important moment, with this the most comprehensive CEPA the UAE has signed (eliminating 98.5 per cent of tariffs upon entry into force) and quickly done (with negotiations having commenced in May 2024).*
 - ii *To demonstrate the value New Zealand places on the bilateral relationship with s6(a) partner in the Gulf by engaging with the UAE President and other leaders. I met with the President of the UAE, five Emirati Ministers, the Crown Prince and other members of the royal family. Those engagements were opportunities to reinforce that New Zealand sees the UAE as s6(a) partner in the Middle East, with discussions identifying areas to expand our collaboration.*
 - iii *To use our presence to leverage New Zealand's trade and economic relations with the Middle East's s6(a) dynamic and internationalised economy, in particular to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) including to New Zealand's renewable energy and infrastructure sectors. With time in the UAE abbreviated, I had time only to hold one business-facing event, which was a meeting with the head of one of the countries' sovereign wealth funds, Abu Dhabi Holding Company (a NZ\$250 billion strategic investment vehicle). s6(a)*
- 3 In addition, I was able to use my visit to UAE to boost New Zealand's profile, including a speech at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, plus a series of media engagements.

- 4 With a range of other world leaders present at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, it was clear the UAE pursues its national interests by working with whomever it can. This is a country in the middle of a tough region, s6(a) [REDACTED]
- 5 With the UAE operating in a heavily-contested environment, this visit was an opportunity to put New Zealand up in lights: it was the first bilateral meeting between our two Heads of Government in the UAE; and the opportunity to sign the UAE's most ambitious CEPA. s6(a) [REDACTED], we need to follow-through on specific commitments made, including on the CEPA s6(a) [REDACTED].

Proactive release

- 6 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO (23) 04 on the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet'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 - January 2025

Portfolio **Prime Minister**

On 9 June 2025, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Prime Minister under CAB-25-SUB-0193 on his travel, from 13 to 15 January 2025, to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to oversee the signing of the UAE-New Zealand Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and the UAE-New Zealand Bilateral Investment Treaty.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet