

MINISTER OF DEFENCE VISIT TO SOLOMON ISLANDS

Briefing Document

6 – 9 August 2022



NZDF photo: New Zealand and Fiji Commanders during Operation Solomon Islands Assist

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TAB ONE: SOLOMON ISLANDS VISIT OVERVIEW

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Visit objectives and overview

Your visit to Solomon Islands is to attend commemorations marking the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal, providing the opportunity to engage with the Solomon Islands Government and deployed New Zealand Defence Force personnel, alongside paying respects to those who fought in the Solomon Islands during WWII.

This will be the first visit to Solomon Islands from a New Zealand Minister since the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions.

s6(a)

s6(a)

Programme overview

Your programme dedicates time to Guadalcanal commemorative events to recognise the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal, hosted by the nations principally involved in the conflict; the United States, Japan, Australia and Solomon Islands.

While New Zealand was not initially involved in this operation, New Zealand forces became subsequently involved in the naval battles around the island, the RNZAF conducted air operations from Solomon Islands and the Army used this location as a base for island hopping operations. There will be no specific New Zealand commemoration. *[Handling note: a historical background brief on Guadalcanal is included under tab three].*

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

The programme also includes a visit to NZDF personnel deployed to the Solomon Islands Assistance Force (SIAF) and Forum Fisheries Agency to provide a deeper insight into maritime patrolling in the Pacific.

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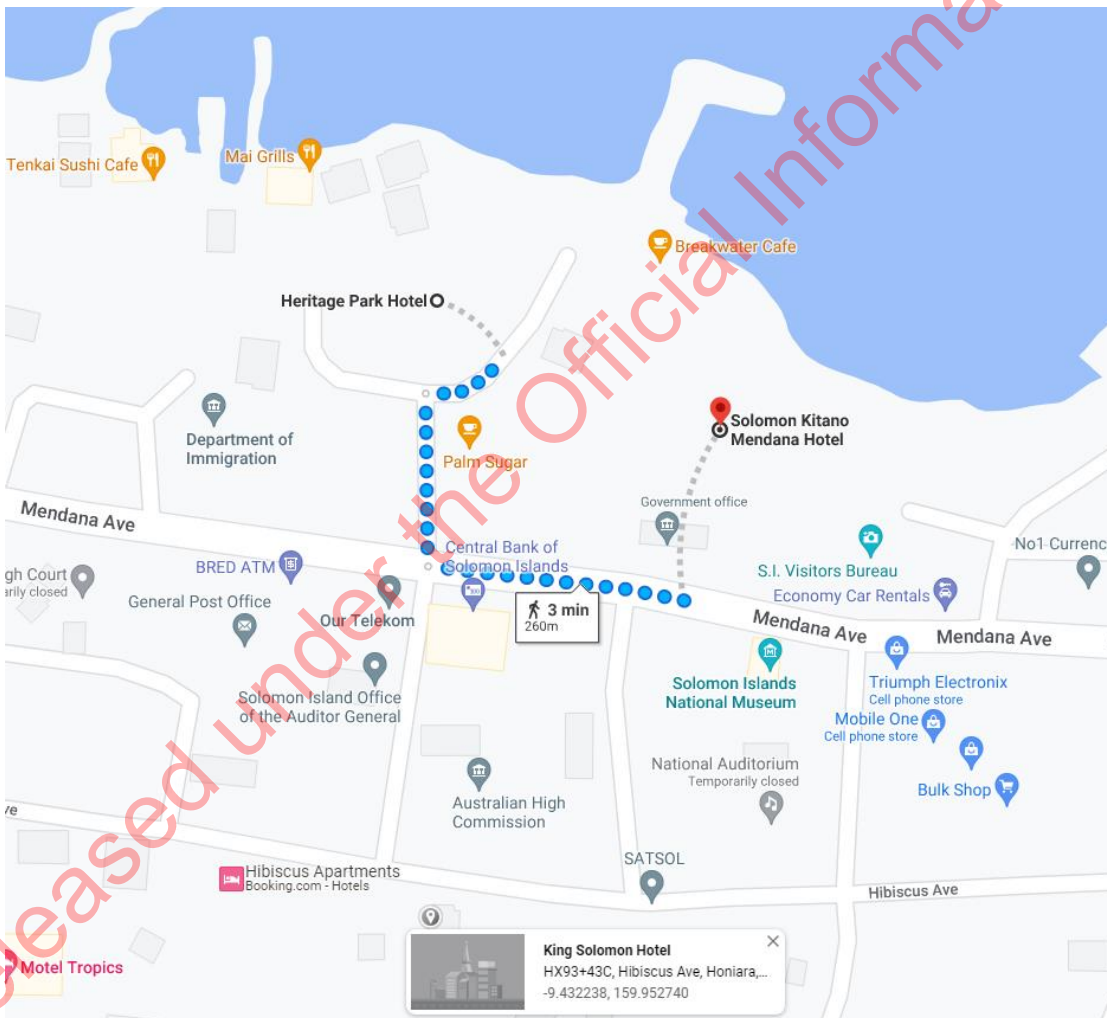
Visit programme

s6(a)

Accommodation

The New Zealand delegation is staying across three hotels in Honiara due to accommodation availability during the Guadalcanal commemoration period. The three hotels are in close proximity to one another (refer map below).

You will be residing at the Heritage Park Hotel, with other VIPs (including Secretary of Defence, Commander Joint Forces) located a three minute walk away at the Mendana Hotel. The rest of the New Zealand delegation will be at the King Solomon Hotel.



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Health and safety considerations

Physical security

A security briefing will be provided on arrival, led by the in-country New Zealand Police Team Leader.

2. There is a large quantity of unexploded ordnance (UXO) across Solomon Islands left by both Japanese and US troops following WWII. All sites to be used for the Guadalcanal commemorations have been screened for UXO by Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, and cleared accordingly.

3. [REDACTED] s6(a)

4. Royal Solomon Islands Police Force will provide police escorts for the delegation convoy for the commemorations.

COVID-19 measures

5. Community transmission of COVID-19 is present in Solomon Islands. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

[REDACTED] However, while the Solomon Islands border has opened, there are public health requirements of newly arrived passengers. High levels of concern remain in the community regarding the arrival of new variants of COVID-19 via international visitors. It will therefore be important for the delegation to be seen to be respectful of the local context, and to abide by common practice COVID-19 measures.

6. We advise that masks are worn by all delegation members while at official events, unless impracticable (such as for meals). Travellers should bring hand sanitiser. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] we recommend that delegation members carry and undertake daily self-administered Rapid Antigen Tests. The High Commission has limited supplies of masks and RATs as back up.

Malaria and other possible mosquito-borne diseases

7. A number of transmissible diseases are present in Solomon Islands, in particular malaria. Mosquito nets will not be provided as standard in accommodation as most have mosquito screens. However, they can be provided if requested in advance. We also recommend that all participants be prescribed anti-malaria medicine and insect repellent.

Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

New Zealand High Commission in Solomon Islands

July 2022

TAB TWO: MEETING BRIEFS

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Formal message: Prime Minister Ardern bilateral with Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare at the Pacific Islands Forum (13 July 2022)

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

Prime Minister Ardern and Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare held a formal bilateral meeting in the margins of Pacific Islands Forum in Suva. The Prime Ministers traversed a range of bilateral and regional issues including the Solomon Islands-China security agreement; Covid-19 response and recovery; economic support; and strategic competition. The Prime Minister sought Sogavare's perspectives on Solomon Islands' security needs s6([REDACTED], recalling Aotearoa New Zealand's long-standing security and policing relationship with Solomon Islands. If Solomon Islands identified any specific security gaps or needs, Prime Minister Ardern reassured Sogavare that Aotearoa New Zealand would actively consider ways it could help fulfil these. s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

HOHENGA – ACTION

For information.

PŪRONGO – REPORT

1. Prime Ministers Ardern and Sogavare held a formal 45 minute bilateral at the Official Residence in Suva on Wednesday 13 July. Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta attended – as did her counterpart Jeremiah Manele. Senior officials in attendance included s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], DS PDG (Needs), Acting DM PACREG (McIvor) and the respective High Commissioners to Fiji (Darlow) and Joseph Ma'ahanua.

2. New Zealand media were present for short opening remarks, in which both Leaders highlighted the strength and depth of the bilateral relationship. Leaders exchanged gifts (a Matariki book and a shell money necklace respectively) and recalled their shared experiences of studying at Waikato University.

COVID-19 recovery and economic update

3. Prime Minister Ardern commenced by asking Sogavare for his reflections on the domestic Covid-19 and economic situations in light of border closures and pressures on health systems and supply chains. s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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s6(b)(i)

Prime Minister Ardern noted that Aotearoa New Zealand was similarly experiencing challenges in the 'global reconnection' phase and was open to discussions on how to continue to support Solomon Islands deal with Covid-19's health and economic impacts.

Security situation

4. Turning to security matters, Prime Minister Ardern highlighted the interdependence between economic well-being and stability: "if we don't have economic security, it impacts on broader security – both are interlinked". On the latter, the Prime Minister noted New Zealand's support for the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP), and underscored the well-established community policing model as practised in Aotearoa New Zealand, Solomon Islands, and shared across our region. Aotearoa New Zealand had been supporting Solomon Islands for years

s6(a)

5. s6(a)

6. s6(b)(i)

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7. [redacted] s6(b)(i)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

8. On policing, Prime Minister Ardern observed that New Zealand, like the Pacific, policed by consent. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] Minister Mahuta confirmed that Aotearoa New Zealand's policing support would be extended by 24 months with extra funding, demonstrating our commitment to Solomon Islands' security priorities.

9. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted] We had responded to Solomon Islands' request for security support last November as soon as practicable, and looked forward to further discussions on how to ensure we, alongside Australia and others in the region, continued to meet the security needs of Solomon Islands. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] Prime Minister Ardern emphasised New Zealand's broader commitment to consult with and work alongside Pacific partners on security issues, [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]

[redacted] New Zealand was keen for the region to "lean towards each other" on security issues [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]

TĀKUPU – COMMENT

10. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]

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s6(a)



MUTU – ENDS

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Meeting with Minister for National Security & Correctional Services, Anthony Veke

Purpose

1. **Strengthen** your relationship with Minister Veke following your bilateral engagement at the Shangri-La Dialogue.
2. **Highlight** the importance of New Zealand's security engagement with Solomon Islands, including our willingness to support to the development of their Maritime Security Strategy.
3. **Explore** opportunities for further engagement with Minister Veke, [redacted] s6(a)

Biography

First elected to national parliament in 2019, Veke was the Minister of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening prior to the September 2019 Cabinet reshuffle, when he was appointed Minister of Police, National Security and Correctional Services.

Between 2006 and 2018 Veke held a number of senior positions in the Guadalcanal Provincial Government, including several ministerial positions, Deputy Premier, and Premier. [redacted] s6(a)



You last met with Minister Veke in June 2022 at the Shangri-La Dialogue.

Key messages

Introductory remarks

- [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)
- [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)
- [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)
[redacted] s6(a)
- [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)
- [redacted] s9(2)(g)(i)

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New Zealand – Solomon Islands security partnership

- We welcome Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' and Prime Minister Sogavare's statements that the region will look to the Pacific first to provide its security needs, particularly when any gaps are identified.
- [Redacted] s6(a)
- [Redacted] s6(a)

New Zealand Defence Force contribution to Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF)

- New Zealand is proud of the success of the Pacific-led Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF). More than 79 New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police personnel have now contributed to SIAF. New Zealand also deployed an Offshore Patrol Vessel and with 80 embarked NZDF personnel.
- Between 2003-2017, more than 2000 New Zealanders also served in the Pacific Islands Forum Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI).
- As a Pacific nation, the deployment is an important demonstration of New Zealand, and Pacific Islands Forum partners', longstanding commitment to supporting peace and stability in the Pacific.

[Redacted] s6(a)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

New Zealand support for Solomon Islands Maritime Security

- Following our discussion at the Shangri-La dialogue, I have instructed my officials to engage with officials from your department to discuss possible New Zealand support to Solomon Islands on Maritime Security, in addition to our long standing support via the FFA and regular maritime patrols to detect and deter illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- [Redacted] s6(a)

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s6(a)

- Welcome Minister Veke's insights into other areas where Solomon Islands is seeking support. Also welcome Solomon Islands input as we develop our own Defence Policy Review.

s6(a)

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Engaging on geostrategic challenges as a region

- In navigating a challenging geostrategic environment, our firm view is that we are stronger when we work together as a region.
- [Redacted]
- New Zealand's strong view is that issues with regional impact should be discussed as a region through the Pacific Islands Forum.
- New Zealand is firmly committed to working together as a Pacific family to meet our region's security needs, as set out in the *Biketawa* and *Boe Declarations*, and the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* agreed at the PIF Leaders' meeting. It was positive to see Leaders reaffirm the concept of regionalism and a family first approach to peace and security, in this year's Pacific Islands Forum communique.

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If raised: New Zealand policing support

s6(a)

- New Zealand is committed to our longstanding and close partnership with Solomon Islands, including on security matters.
- We remain ready to support Solomon Islands, and will continue to do so.
- s6(a)

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Meeting with United States Deputy Secretary of State, Wendy Sherman

TBC: Sunday 7 August, 1800-1830

Purpose

The US Deputy Secretary of State is visiting New Zealand as part of a wider tour of the Pacific, following her visit to Solomon Islands for the Guadalcanal commemorations. We are seeking a bilateral meeting for you and Deputy Secretary Sherman in Honiara s6(b)(i)

Deputy Secretary Sherman will then meet meet Prime Minister Ardern and a range of officials in New Zealand on Tuesday 9 August.

The objectives for this meeting are to:

1. Reinforce New Zealand's value as a defence and security partner.
2. Reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to the international rules-based system.
3. Welcome opportunities to work together to support the needs of Pacific countries, including on climate change – the Pacific's greatest self-identified security concern.



Biography and context

Wendy R. Sherman was confirmed by the Senate on 13 April 2021 and sworn in as the 21st and first female Deputy Secretary of State on 14 April 2021. Prior to assuming this position, Deputy Secretary Sherman was professor of the practice of public leadership and director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School. She was also a Senior Fellow at the School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and a Senior Counselor at Albright Stonebridge Group.

From 2011-2015, Deputy Secretary Sherman served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, where she travelled to 54 countries and led the US negotiating team that reached agreement on the Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action for which, among other diplomatic accomplishments, she was awarded the National Security Medal by President Barack Obama.

She previously served at the State Department as Counselor under Secretary Madeleine Albright, as Special Advisor to President Clinton and Policy Coordinator on North Korea, and as Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs under Secretary Warren Christopher.

She also previously served on the President's Intelligence Advisory Board, was Chair of the Board of Directors of Oxfam America, and served on the US Department of Defense's Policy Board and Congressional Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Proliferation, and Terrorism.

Deputy Secretary Sherman attended Smith College, and received a B.A. cum laude from Boston University and a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Maryland.

She is married to Bruce Stokes and has a daughter, Sarah, and two grandsons.

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Key messages

- The bilateral defence partnership with the US is built on deep roots, shared values, and history. It is deeply important to New Zealand. The visit of the USS Howard to New Zealand in November 2021 was a clear symbol of this close relationship.
- Acknowledge Prime Minister Ardern's recent successful visit to the United States and meeting with President Biden, including the release of the US-NZ Joint Statement. The Statement notes that defence and security will become an ever-more important focus of our strategic partnership. It also notes that our countries will work together to expand our cooperation in other ways. One such way could be looking for opportunities to support Pacific countries as they address climate change.
- Emphasise the importance New Zealand places on supporting Pacific priorities, respecting Pacific-led institutions, and working regional issues through Pacific-led regional mechanisms. This approach was reaffirmed at the recent Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Fiji.
- New Zealand has a long and proud history of contributions to international security operations. Most recently, the NZDF has deployed to Solomon Islands in response to unrest in 2021 and has personnel in Europe supporting international military assistance to Ukraine. Cabinet also recently extended the mandates for NZDF deployments in Africa and the Middle East. These deployments reflect our commitment to working with partners in the maintenance of the international rules-based system.
- Acknowledge the US' significant contributions to Ukraine in support of their self-defence, and thank the US for its leadership. You may wish to outline New Zealand's military contributions to Ukraine, which include deploying a NZDF C-130H Hercules aircraft and 66 personnel to Europe to provide intelligence, liaison, and logistics contributions to partner efforts to support the self-defence of Ukraine. We have also deployed 30 personnel and ammunition to the United Kingdom to train the Ukrainian Army in the use of the L119 light field gun, as well as donating surplus aiming systems.

Engagement in the Pacific

- Cooperation with the US supports a peaceful, secure, stable, and resilient Pacific. New Zealand welcomes the US' desire to engage more with the Pacific, s6(a), s6(b)(i)

s6(a), s6(b)(i)
_____.
- Acknowledge the recent launch of the US-led Partners of the Blue Pacific initiative, which provides a good initial framework to coordinate closely with partners, at officials level, in response to Pacific priorities.
- _____ s6(a)

- Emphasise the importance New Zealand places on working regional issues through Pacific-led regional mechanisms. This approach was reaffirmed at the recent Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Fiji. Note our overriding priority in the Pacific Islands Forum remains strong and enduring regional unity.
- Two of our ships departed New Zealand late July to provide a range of maritime security and other support to Pacific partners for the next three months. This is part of our Operation Mahi

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Tahi and includes maritime patrols by Orion aircraft to detect and deter illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
- You may wish to reflect on your time at the Shangri-La Dialogue and your speech at the session on climate change and green defence. New Zealand is pleased to contribute to the Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM)-led Pacific Environmental Security Forum (PESF) and INDOPACOM Community for Indo-Pacific Climate Security Forum (CIPCS), both aimed at improving Indo-Pacific countries resilience against climate change and other environmental impacts.

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

- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED]
- | [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

s6(a)

- New Zealand's current extensive programme of investment includes the introduction into service of four Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft (NZ\$2.4 billion) and five Lockheed Martin C-130J Hercules (NZ\$1.5 billion) to replace our current fleet.
- Other recent major capability enhancements include:
 - the completion of the major upgrade for the frigates;

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- the entry into service of the new tanker *Aotearoa* and dive-hydro vessel *Manawanui*; and
- New armoured *Bushmaster* vehicles and networked communications for the Army.
- The cumulative expenditure on these and other projects has lifted New Zealand's defence expenditure.
- I have launched a Defence Policy Review. This will help shape our future investments to ensure they are relevant to the challenges identified in in our recent Defence Assessment..

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Background

Military Information

Defence budget	US\$801 billion (2021) – around 3.5 per cent of GDP
Military personnel	Total – approx. 2.2 million Active – approx. 1.4 million Reserve – approx. 857,000
Deployments (as applicable)	UN Command and UN Military Armistice Commission (Republic of Korea) Op Gallant Phoenix (Jordan) Multinational Force and Observers (Egypt)

Defence relationship milestones

1965	Joint Logistics Pool to support Antarctic research established with the US (Defence cooperation in this area continued throughout the period of the 1984-2012 'rift').
1984	NZ Government refused diplomatic clearance for a visit to New Zealand by a US Navy warship, as a result of which US 'suspended' its responsibilities for NZ under ANZUS and curtailed defence relations. At the heart of the issue was disagreement over New Zealand's anti-nuclear policies.
2010	Wellington Declaration on a new strategic partnership between New Zealand and the US, signed by respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs.
2012	Washington Declaration on Defence Cooperation, which signalled the re-birth of the bilateral defence relationship.
2016	The visit by USS Sampson to New Zealand for the Royal New Zealand Navy's (RNZN) 75 th Anniversary in November 2016; the first by a US warship since the 1984 rift. Along with a number of vessels in New Zealand for this event, the ship assisted with the response to the Kaikoura earthquake.

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Bilateral defence relationship

The US is an essential security, intelligence, and defence partner for New Zealand. The US has the largest security and defence capability globally, and we have shared interests in a safe, prosperous, and sustainable world.

2. New Zealand's defence engagement with the US is broad and deep, and spans almost all NZDF capabilities. Engagement occurs at all levels and includes shared defence deployments, maritime security, counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance.

3. There is a high tempo to bilateral defence engagement, supported by the interoperability of our forces and the platforms they use. New Zealand and the US regularly participate in joint training exercises, across a large number of domains. New Zealand places great value in these exercises, which make a significant contribution to the generation of NZDF capability. NZDF is currently participating in Exercise RIMPAC, which kicked off in late June.

4. The visit of the USS Howard to New Zealand in November 2021 was a positive engagement for our two navies and a clear symbol of our close bilateral relationship. The USS Howard's visit was the second US Navy ship visit since the 1980s and the introduction of New Zealand's nuclear-free legislation, following the visit of the USS Sampson in 2016 for the Royal New Zealand Navy's 75th anniversary, and which was diverted to Kaikoura to assist with response efforts in the aftermath of the 2016 earthquake.

Defence cooperation

5. [Redacted] s6(a)

[Redacted]

7. As the US continues to promote its concept of "integrated deterrence" (all of government and working in partnership with like-minded countries), which will feature heavily in its upcoming National Defense Strategy, [Redacted] s6(a)

8. The New Zealand Ministry of Defence has agreed to chair the INDOPACOM Pacific Environmental Security Partnership Policy Working Group (PWG) and is currently drafting a three-year work plan. [Redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

[Redacted] New Zealand hosted the Forum in 2019 as a joint MOD-MFAT initiative. [Redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

Partners in the Blue Pacific

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9. The Partners in the Blue Pacific initiative was launched in June 2022. It currently comprises New Zealand, Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, s6(a)

US re-engagement in the Pacific will bring with it increased presence, resources, and attention across a wide range of issues where collective action will be essential to make progress (e.g. climate change, IUU fishing, and economic prosperity).

10. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Strategic Commitments & Engagements, New Zealand Defence Force
July 2022*

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TAB THREE: BACKGROUND BRIEFS

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Defence Engagement with Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands does not have a military force, [REDACTED] s6(a)

2. The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI, 2001 - 2013) is an important part of the NZDF's history in the region and relationship with Solomon Islands. The NZDF contributed over 1,500 personnel over the course of the deployment.

3. Defence engagement with Solomon Islands has [REDACTED] s6(a) a focus on maritime surveillance, ship visits and patrols, humanitarian assistance-related activities, and activities that support ongoing peace and stability. These activities signal New Zealand's intent to support stability and prosperity in the region, [REDACTED] s6(a)

4. Defence has a regular presence in Solomon Islands through one seconded NZDF Officer who is the Surveillance, Planning and Liaison Officer (SPLO), situated within the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in Honiara.

5. New Zealand has opportunities to engage with Solomon Islands officials through other security forums, including:

- a. MFAT led: The Pacific Islands Forum (Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, other ministers for specific thematic meetings)
- b. Defence (Navy) led: South West Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces Meeting
- c. Police led: Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police
- d. MFAT/MPI led: Forum Fisheries Agency
- e. Customs/MFAT led: Oceania Customs Organisation

Second World War legacy

6. NZDF supports regular operations led by the Australian Defence Force to remove unexploded ordnances from the Second World War (the Australian-led operation is named "OP Render Safe"). We are committed to regularly conducting this activity in the South Pacific while the need persists.

7. This activity last took place over two weeks in October 2019, when the NZDF DEPLOYED 21 maritime and land experts in explosive ordnance disposal, to work alongside the ADF and RSIPF in the New Georgia Islands in Western Province.

8. [REDACTED] s6(a)

9. New Zealand Defence also participated in WWII commemorative events, such as the 75th Anniversary of the Guadalcanal Battle, one of the Second World War's most significant campaigns.

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10. HMNZS OTAGO took part in the official Guadalcanal 75th activities. While the NZDF role in events was limited, we were involved in a number of ways, including the Air Force providing SAR support during the engagement.

11. The NZDF takes part in an annual commemoration on Mono Island to commemorate the 27th of October 1943, when New Zealand and American soldiers landed and recaptured the island from Japanese Forces in WWII.

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force
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Solomon Islands Deployment

Key points

- The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) currently has four personnel deployed as part of the Australian-led Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF) embedded in the Multinational Police Support Group. Fiji and Papua New Guinea also have Police and Military embedded into this force.
- The mandate for the NZDF deployment expires in May 2023. [REDACTED] s6(a)
- Six NZ Police advisors are also in Solomon Islands under New Zealand's International Development Cooperation (IDC) funded, long term policing advisory support programme, Solomon Islands Policing.
- [REDACTED] s6(a)
- [REDACTED] s6(a)

Background

Following the November 2021 riots New Zealand's Defence engagement with Solomon Islands has been led by the NZDF contribution to the Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF).

2. In response to the rapid deterioration of the security situation in Solomon Islands' capital Honiara, on 29 November 2021, Cabinet agreed in principle to a New Zealand deployment in conjunction with Australia's security support to Solomon Islands under those two countries' Bilateral Security Treaty (BST).

3. On 30 November 2021, the Solomon Islands Government formally requested assistance from New Zealand and on 1 December, Ministers with Powers to Act (MWPTA) agreed to a deployment of up to 60 NZDF and 11 NZP personnel for up to 30 days. The Australian-led joint regional presence became known as the Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF) and was instrumental in helping to stabilise the security situation and prevent further violence and destruction of property in Honiara.

4. On 23 December, the deployment period for up to five NZDF personnel was extended to 31 March 2022; and then again extended in March 2022 until no later than 31 May 2022.

5. More recently, on 23 May 2022 MWPTA agreed to extend the deployment to no later than 31 May 2023.

6. The security situation in Solomon Islands has remained stable since early December, underpinned by significant support from the SIAF.

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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7. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted].

8. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force
July 2022*

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**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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New Zealand Support to Solomon Islands on Maritime Security

Key points

- At the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2022 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
- Following this discussion the Secretary of Defence has had an initial discussion with his Solomon Islands counterpart - Permanent Secretary Karen Galokale, to discuss ways for New Zealand to support to Solomon Islands on maritime security. *[Handling note: formal message attached below]*.
- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Background

Solomon Islands National Security Strategy - Maritime Security

- While Solomon Islands does not have a maritime security strategy their 2020 'National Security Strategy' does refer to maritime security.
- The Strategy highlights that as Solomon Island depends largely on its maritime resources it is critical that their maritime boundaries are protected. It also states that national capacity to protect Solomon Islands maritime boundaries and territorial integrity, and to mitigate threats must be developed.
- The Strategy identifies seven areas for "strategic action". These are:
 1. Develop a maritime strategic plan
 2. Support Institutional strengthening and information sharing.
 3. Improve coordination and collaboration among maritime related agencies.
 4. Strengthen and enhance marine security capabilities.
 5. Enhance cooperation with Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), regional and international organization on maritime.
 6. Initiate a Coast Guard to support Police Maritime and Solomon Islands Marine Safety Administration (SIMSA).
 7. Strengthen the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) Maritime capacity.

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New Zealand's Maritime Security Strategy

- The Maritime Security Strategy was published in December 2020 by the Ministry of Transport/Te Manatū Waka, the lead agency for maritime security policy in New Zealand.
- Increasing pressure on our maritime security has demanded a new vision and approach for the maritime security sector, and the Strategy ensures we have a sector that is able to continue to secure our marine economic, cultural and environmental interests for future generations.
- The Maritime Security Strategy is not intended to depict the full range of Defence Force activities across the maritime domain, but rather provides a New Zealand-wide perspective across the sector, of which Defence is only one of a number of contributing agencies.
- Defence was actively involved in the strategy development and governance. Other agencies involved include Transport (lead), Customs, MPI, NZDF, MFAT, Police and Maritime New Zealand.
- The purpose of the Strategy is to drive the development of a more efficient and effective maritime security sector that achieves the following:
 - Maritime domain awareness
 - Effective engagement with domestic and international partners to support the system of international rules and norms
 - Prevention of threats by seeking opportunities to mitigate threats early
 - Responsive with the right mix of interventions
- The Strategy recognises the need for New Zealand's maritime security arrangements to evolve, and improves the sector's ability to support collective policy development, investment advice, analysis, and assessment of risks and opportunities.

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
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Formal Message: Secretary of Defence meeting with Solomons Permanent Secretary on
Maritime Security – 4 July 2022

Rāpopoto – Summary

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

[Redacted]
[Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Hohenga – Action

[Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Pūrongo – Report

[Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted] They had previously met in person at the meeting between Minister of Defence Henare
and Solomons Minister of Police, National Security and Correctional Services (Minister Veke) in
the margins of the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2022. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

2. [Redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

3. [Redacted] s6(b)(i)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted] s6(b)(i)
[Redacted]

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4. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

5. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

6. [Redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

7. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Tākupu – Comment

8. [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

9. [Redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Mutu – Ends

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**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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Solomon Islands – China Security Agreement

Key points

- As Pacific neighbours, New Zealand has worked hard to ensure we are meeting one another's needs, as established by regional frameworks and reconfirmed in the family first approach agreed at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting.
- We consider the Pacific response to unrest in Honiara late last year to have been successful at supporting the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force to quickly and effectively quell the violence.

- [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

- [Redacted]
[Redacted]

Background

- On 24 March, a leaked draft Framework Agreement on Security Cooperation between Solomon Islands and China appeared on social media. Over the following days both Solomon Islands and China confirmed their intention to enter into the agreement. It was initialled by both countries on 31 March, and signed on 19 April 2022.

- [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

- New Zealand continues to engage with Solomon Islands, China, Pacific countries and likeminded partners on the agreement. [Redacted] s6(a)

[Redacted] The Biketawa Declaration sets out that responses to security crises should first and foremost be managed amongst Forum Members.

- [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

- [Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

- [Redacted] s6(a)
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

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Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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- [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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Forum Fisheries Agency

Key messages

- The New Zealand Defence Force has a regular presence in the Solomon Islands through one seconded NZDF Officer who is the Surveillance, Planning and Liaison Officer (SPLO), situated within the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in Honiara.
- New Zealand also engages with the FFA through the Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group (“Pacific Quads”), who coordinate assets (ships, planes) to support FFA-led maritime surveillance operations. This forum enables New Zealand (and other like-minded partners) to showcase what it can offer Pacific Island countries. New Zealand is represented at a senior level.
- New Zealand regularly contributes air and surface assets to annual FFA-led maritime surveillance operations. These aim to deter illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing across the region, with participation from the 17 FFA member countries across their combined 200-mile EEZ.
- [REDACTED] s6(a)
- FFA is a long standing and trusted partner for New Zealand. [REDACTED] s6(a)

Background

- The Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency is an intergovernmental agency established in 1979 to facilitate regional cooperation and coordination on fisheries policies between its member states in order to achieve conservation and optimum utilisation of living marine resources for the benefit of the Pacific region.
- FFA is an advisory body providing expertise, technical assistance and other support to its members who make sovereign decisions about their tuna resources and participate in regional decision making on tuna management through agencies such as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).
- Based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, FFA's 17 Pacific Island members are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

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- The FFA has approximately 80 staff at the regional FFA headquarters who support their national contact points in departments of foreign affairs and fisheries in each member jurisdiction. FFA focuses its work on:
 - Fisheries management – providing policy and legal frameworks for the sustainable management of tuna.
 - Fisheries development – developing the capacity of members to sustainably harvest, process and market tuna to create livelihoods.
 - Fisheries operations – supporting monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries as well as treaty administration, information technology and vessel registration and monitoring.
 - Corporate services - supporting the organisation's work through administration, human resources, budgeting and other corporate functions.
- New Zealand has been a member of FFA since its inception in 1979. New Zealand has a unique role in the FFA membership in terms of our triple coastal state, distant water fleet, and donor status. New Zealand provides core funding to FFA at NZD 3.6 million per annum and project funding of over NZD 4.8 million per annum focused on reducing illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in the Pacific, improving management of the South Pacific longline fishery, and increasing economic returns to FFA members from their tuna fisheries.

*International Branch, Ministry of Defence
Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch, New Zealand Defence Force
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Policing support in Solomon Islands

Key messages

- New Zealand Police (NZP) has a long-standing presence in Solomon Islands, with officers being based in-country since the beginning of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in 2003.
- Aotearoa New Zealand currently funds the Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme (SIPSP), which is implemented by NZP and will run until at least mid-2024. SIPSP is highly valued by the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), and is a cornerstone of our support for peace and stability in Solomon Islands. SIPSP is complimentary but distinct from the ongoing NZDF deployment to the Australian-led Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF).
- The SIPSP programme is focused on crime prevention and community-orientated policing approaches. NZP is uniquely positioned to support RSIPF with these approaches s6(a)

- _____ s6(a) _____

Background

Since July 2017, Aotearoa New Zealand has funded, under Official Development Assistance (ODA)¹, the Solomon Islands Policing Support Programme (SIPSP), implemented by New Zealand Police (NZP). SIPSP followed Aotearoa New Zealand’s policing contribution to the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) over 2003-2017.

9. The overarching goal of the SIPSP is the “Reduction in crime, victimisation and social harm” within Solomon Islands. NZP work in partnership with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) on crime prevention and community policing. NZP are considered regional leaders in community policing and the programme is highly valued by the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and RSIPF. s6(a) _____

_____ There are currently six SIPSP advisors in-country.

10. The ongoing NZDF deployment to the regional Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF) is distinct from but complementary to the SIPSP. As the SIAF deployment is operational, it cannot be funded through ODA. NZDF and NZP coordinate closely to ensure that

¹ ODA rules set out strict parameters for police and security activities that are eligible; at a very broad level, advisory and capability building support is eligible while operational activities are not.

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their activities with RSIPF are not duplicative or counterproductive, and are consistent with regional frameworks.

Solomon Islands' security sector [redacted] s6(a)

11. **Australia** has a wide-ranging and flexible arrangement for security support to Solomon Islands, with well-established cooperation across both policing and defence. There are approximately [redacted] Australian Federal Police Programme Advisors in-country and Australia has recently implemented a new phase of its policing support.

12. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
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[redacted]
[redacted]

*Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
August 2022*

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MFAT Country Paper – Solomon Islands

Summary

Aotearoa New Zealand's relationship with Solomon Islands is distinctive, underpinned by over a century of engagement. Solomon Islands is our partner in one of our largest bilateral International Development Cooperation programmes. We are committed to being a valued, valuable, and values-based partner as Solomon Islands faces current and long-term political, economic, social, and cultural challenges and inequalities.

Historical and current context: overview

2. Solomon Islands gained independence from Britain on 7 July 1978. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3. Solomon Islands is currently facing some of the most profound challenges in recent years as a result of recent crises: the November 2021 civil unrest, global COVID-19 pandemic, and Solomon Islands' own ongoing national COVID-19 outbreak, compounded by the current global economic downturn and inflation. New Zealand has expressed public concern over the Solomon Islands Government's recent decision to sign a Framework Agreement on Security Cooperation with China.

Development programme

4. Solomon Islands is our partner in one of New Zealand's largest bilateral International Development Cooperation (IDC) programmes. The total core allocation for the current triennium is NZD 86.52 million. Our development programme focuses on building state capability for Solomon Islands to deliver to all its people, strengthening social and economic resilience, and enabling sustainable management of natural resources.

Defence and security

5. Australia has maintained the lead for security assistance (closely followed by New Zealand) since prior to the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI, 2003-2017). When RAMSI concluded in 2017, Solomon Islands and Australia signed a Bilateral Security Treaty (BST).

6. New Zealand has a long-standing security partnership with Solomon Islands. The current programme in our policing advisory partnership, operating since 2017, has successfully delivered capability building across RSIPF to implement the Solomon Islands Crime Prevention Strategy and contributed to promoting good governance and the realisation of human rights.

7. On 24 November 2021, protests [REDACTED] s6(a) escalated into civil unrest and rioting. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED]. Solomon Islands requested a Pacific security response, led by Australia under the BST. New Zealand personnel joined Australia, Papua New Guinea and Fiji to coordinate under the Solomon Islands International Assistance Force (SIAF). Following the arrival of SIAF, calm was rapidly restored.

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Trade and economic

8. New Zealand's trading relationship with Solomon Islands is modest. The main commodities we import from Solomon Islands include wood and wood products and coconut oil (NZD 17 million). Our top exports to Solomon Islands are mainly sugars, sugar confectionary, meat, dairy products, iron and steel (NZD 40 million). Solomon Islands is heavily dependent on foreign investment and development assistance.

9. Solomon Islands' GDP contracted by 4.5% in 2020 and 0.5% in 2021 (ADB figures). The economic cost of the November 2021 unrest has been estimated by the Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) at SBD 800 million (approximately NZD 154m). CBSI has projected the economy to decline by -7.3% in 2022, anticipated to be one of the largest declines in GDP of any Asia-Pacific economy in 2022.

10. Solomon Islands is a party to the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER Plus). Additionally, labour mobility is of high political interest. Prior to COVID-19, New Zealand's RSE Scheme peaked at around 900 workers per year.

COVID-19 outbreak

11. Solomon Islands first detected possible community transmission of COVID-19 on 16 January 2022. As of 19 July, Solomon Islands has reported 21,544 confirmed cases and 153 deaths. However, it is expected that actual numbers outstrip those confirmed as the rapid spread of COVID-19 has exceeded the testing capability of health authorities.

12. Only 21% of the eligible population was fully vaccinated at the time of the first outbreak. Solomon Islands has experienced waves of both the Delta (January-February) and Omicron (April-May) variants. Approximately 45% of the eligible adult population are now fully vaccinated, and COVID-19 has spread to all provinces in Solomon Islands.

13. Solomon Islands communities have been severely impacted by COVID-19. The health system has come under serious strain, and livelihoods, including food security, have been severely impacted.

14. Aotearoa New Zealand has provided significant support for pandemic preparedness and response to Solomon Islands prior to the detection of community transmission. This has included NZD 3 million in budget support for the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, NZD 2 million of funding to support the vaccination roll out, an x-ray machine, rehabilitation of a small isolation ward, emergency PPE, COVID-19 testing equipment, and rain jackets and lifejackets for the provincial vaccination roll out. New Zealand also donated 28,800 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine via COVAX in June 2021, and 100,800 doses of the Johnson&Johnson/Janssen in March 2022.

15. Once COVID-19 arrived in Solomon Islands in January 2022, Aotearoa New Zealand responded swiftly with the provision of PPE, RATs, vaccines and humanitarian supplies for the most vulnerable. The High Commission in Honiara has used NZD 250,000 to support the expansion of storage facilities for PPE in Honiara and the delivery of emergency food aid in Honiara in response to short term food shortages caused by lockdowns. New Zealand also delivered over 1 million masks and other PPE, and 140,000 RATs, on NZDF flights in February and April 2022. These were aimed at supporting the COVID response across the whole of Solomon Islands and the safe reopening of schools.

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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Key facts

Geography / Demographics

LAND AREA	27,556 sq. km, spread over 922 islands located 3,500km north west of Wellington. Nine provinces: Guadalcanal, Malaita, Western, Isabel, Choiseul, Makira, Central, Rennell and Bellona and Temotu
POPULATION	687,000 (World Bank estimate)
CAPITAL CITY	Honiara
LANGUAGE	English (official), Solomon Islands Pijin, plus around 80 local languages

Political

POLITICAL SYSTEM	Unicameral Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. 50 single member constituencies elected on a first-past-the-post system. The MPs then elect the Prime Minister.
LAST ELECTION	3 April 2019
NEXT ELECTION DUE	Expected in 2023
HEAD OF STATE/GOVERNMENT	Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare

Economic

GDP	USD \$1.6 billion (2020 est.)
GDP PER CAPITA	USD \$2,328 (2020 est.)
ANNUAL BUDGET	SBD 4.5 billion (2022)
MAIN EXPORTS	Logs (66%), fish (12%), palm oil and kernel (8.5%), coconut oil and copra (1.9%)
PRINCIPAL EXPORT DESTINATIONS	China (64.7%), Italy (9.8%), Netherlands (4.2%), Switzerland (3.0%)

*Pacific Melanesia and Micronesia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
New Zealand High Commission in Solomon Islands
July 2022*

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
6 -9 August 2022**

Biography: Australia Head of Delegation Pat Conroy, Minister for International Development and the Pacific

Pat Conroy also holds the portfolio of Minister for Defence Industry and has represented the Lake Macquarie region in Federal Parliament since 2013. Conroy was previously Shadow Minister for International Development and the Pacific, and Shadow Minister Assisting for the Climate Change, Defence, and Government Accountability portfolios. s6(a)



During the election campaign, Conroy outlined his expectation that Australia's ODA budget allocations would eventually reach 0.5 percent of Gross National Income. Minister Mahuta met Conroy on the side lines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Rwanda and Conroy was also at the Pacific Islands Forum in Suva.

Background

Australia has extensive and enduring involvement in Solomon Islands' security sector dating back to 'the Tensions' (late 1990s-early 2000s) and the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission in Solomon Islands (RAMSI), 2003-17.

2. s6(a)

3. Last November, Australia deployed a multiagency force under Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) command as part of the Solomons International Assistance Force (SIAF) in response to civil unrest in Honiara. SIAF's quick deployment was enabled by the 2017 Bilateral Security Treaty (BST), which also allowed third countries like Aotearoa New Zealand and Fiji to deploy military personnel.

4. In addition to SIAF, Australia's security support is focussed on maritime security, including combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, unexploded ordnance (UXO) disposal, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), infrastructure (including provincial border outpost strengthening) and telecommunications, police capacity building and training. Australia has supplied two Guardian-class patrol boats and six aluminium long boats to the RSIPF.

5. Australia's estimated Official Development Assistance (ODA) spend in the Solomons for 2022-23 is AUD\$161m and Australia is Solomon Islands' largest donor. Australia's ODA support is centred on health security (including Covid-19 vaccines), stability and economic recovery.

*Australia Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
July 2022*

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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Additional Talking Points – Australia

- Note Australia's role as New Zealand's only formal ally and most important defence relationship and security partner. Australia is an indispensable partner for New Zealand and our impact in the Pacific in particular depends on us working closely together across the full range of Pacific needs, not least defence and security.
- I enjoyed meeting Minister Marles at the Shangri-la Dialogue. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]
- Note that a 2+2 Ministerial meeting between Foreign Affairs and Defence was agreed at the recent Australia New Zealand Leaders Meeting in the build up to next years 40th anniversary of Closer Economic Relations and the 80th anniversary of the opening of diplomatic missions in each other's countries.
- We look forward to continued cooperation with Australia in the Pacific. Like Australia, we are prioritising defence contributions aimed at supporting the stability and security of our Indo-Pacific region (with an emphasis on the Pacific).
- Thank for support with Australia as part of the Solomons International Assistance Force (SIAF) in response to civil unrest in Honiara. Note that we are keen to coordinate closely with Australia to continue to support the Solomons to meet their security needs.

Defence Industry

- Taking opportunities to demonstrate a shared commitment to growing Trans-Tasman industry collaboration and to build resilience in the regional supply chain is something I strongly support and encourage.
- The Australian Defence market represents a significant opportunity for Aotearoa businesses. Under Closer Economic Relations (CER) and the Australia and New Zealand Government Procurement Agreement, New Zealand businesses qualify as 'local' in the provision of support to the Australian Defence Force through the Australian Industry Capability programme.
- Awareness of this, while improving, needs to be constantly reinforced. I look forward to working with you raising awareness of the opportunities for Australian and New Zealand businesses in our respective Defence markets.
- I am meeting the Managing Director of Rheinmetall Defence Australia, Gary Stewart, in Wellington next week. [REDACTED] s9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. We welcome these long-term partnerships.

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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Biography: Japan Head of Delegation State Minister ONIKI Makoto



Oniki (born in 1972) is a ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) member of the House of Representatives serving in his fourth term. He was appointed State Minister of Defence in October 2021, upon the establishment of the Kishida Cabinet.

He was first elected to the Diet in 2012 and has held the Cabinet-level position of Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Environment (2015-2016).

He is from the city of Fukuoka (sister city with Auckland). Prior to becoming a member of parliament, he served as a member of Fukuoka prefectural assembly for ten years. He played rugby in high school and visited New Zealand in 2011 for the Rugby World Cup.

Biography: General YAMAZAKI Koji



Yamazaki (born in 1961) was appointed Chief of Staff, Joint Staff in April 2019.

He joined the Ground Self-Defence Force in 1983 after graduating from the National Defence Academy.

Prior to assuming the current role, he held positions such as Vice Chief of Staff, Joint Staff (2015-16), Commanding General, Northern Army (2016-17) and Chief of Staff, Ground Self-Defence Force (2017-19).

Biography: Vice Admiral SAITO Akira



Saito (born in 1966) was appointed Vice-Chief of Staff, Maritime Self-Defence Force in December 2021. He joined the Maritime Self-Defence Force (MSDF) in 1989 after graduating the National Defence Academy.

Prior to assuming the current role, he held positions such as Principal of the MSDF Officer Candidate School, Director General of Operations and Plans Department of the Maritime Staff Office (2018-20), and Commander of Maritime Self-Defence Force Fleet Escort Force (2020-21). He studied at the US Naval War College (completing the Naval Command College Diploma) in 2008.

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
6 -9 August 2022**

Additional Talking Points - Japan

- Acknowledge the strength of the defence relationship between New Zealand and Japan, particularly in the broader context of 2022 marking the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations.
 - We are pleased that HMNZS AOTEAROA and our Chief of Navy is planned to be participating in the 70th Anniversary International Fleet Review in November.
- New Zealand is committed to working closely with likeminded partners to support peace and security in the wider Indo-Pacific region.
 - Point out our support for Japan’s role [redacted] s6(a) in the region, and acknowledge the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (known as QUAD) made up of Japan, US, Australia and India.
 - Acknowledge the JMSDF’s Indo-Pacific Deployment 2022 (IPD22) to realise a ‘free and open Indo-Pacific’. We welcome the JDSF’s participation in these commemorations, and we would welcome a future ship visit to New Zealand.
 - We encourage all our partners in the Pacific to focus on supporting long-term resilience outcomes in the Pacific, in line with Pacific priorities and with a high degree of Pacific ownership. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
- New Zealand is committed to progressing opportunities for tangible defence cooperation with Japan in the Pacific.
 - [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
 - [redacted] s6(a)
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 - [redacted] s6(a)

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**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
6 -9 August 2022**

Biography: US Head of Delegation Wendy Sherman, US Deputy Secretary of State

[Handling note: an additional meeting brief is provided under tab two].

Wendy Sherman is deputy to Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Prior to joining Biden's administration she was director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School. Sherman held senior positions in both the Clinton and Obama Administrations. Under President Obama she led the US negotiating team for the Iran nuclear deal, and under President Clinton she was responsible for coordinating policy on North Korea. Sherman has been closely involved in the Russia/Ukraine crisis [REDACTED] s6(a)



[REDACTED] She most recently met with both Prime Minister Ardern and yourself on her visit to Wellington [REDACTED] s6(a). **Note:** Sherman's father was a marine during World War Two. He fought and was wounded at Guadalcanal.

Key messages

- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)

Biography: Caroline Kennedy, Ambassador to Australia

Caroline Kennedy is President Biden's Ambassador to Australia. From 2013 - 2017 she was US Ambassador to Japan. Prior to her time in Japan, Kennedy worked on education reform efforts in New York, creating public-private partnerships to promote arts education, school libraries, and performing arts spaces. An attorney and author, Kennedy has published multiple books on law, civics and poetry. She a graduate of Harvard University and Columbia Law School and is Honorary President of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation. **Note:** Kennedy's father, President John F. Kennedy, took part in the Solomon Islands campaign as a patrol boat captain in World War Two.



Key messages

- [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

**Minister of Defence visit to Solomon Islands
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New Zealand's Involvement in Solomon Islands During WWII

New Zealand troops from all three services supported the US against Japan in Solomon Islands.

On 7 December 1941 Japan attacked both American and British territories in Asia and the Pacific. The US had provided materiel support for the British effort since 1940; it now became a full participant in the war.

The immediate impact of the Japanese attacks was sobering. Japanese troops landed in the Philippines and Malaya, and Japanese carrier-borne aircraft crippled the US battle fleet at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii. The Japanese swept down the Malay peninsula to capture Singapore on 15 February 1942. Darwin, on Australia's northern coast, was bombed four days later and Japanese forces moved as far south as Solomon Islands from their pre-war holdings just north of the equator. The Japanese also invaded Burma and attacked Ceylon (Sri Lanka), both British territories.

Bolstering the Defences

These events shocked New Zealanders, who found themselves directly threatened for the first time. An unprecedented mobilisation began. By mid-January 1942, 43,000 men of the Territorial Force were on duty. Urgent action followed to throw up defence works at vulnerable points. An infantry brigade was sent to Fiji as forward defence, reinforcing another brigade deployed there in 1940.

Guadalcanal

The US South Pacific Command launched a counter-offensive in August 1942. Forces that landed on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands were soon embroiled in a desperate struggle. After the Japanese were finally defeated there, the Americans drove north through the Solomons until late 1943, when the focus shifted to the central Pacific.

New Zealand's Role

New Zealand supported this counter-offensive. Its military forces were placed at the disposal of the South Pacific Command. It provided a base for organisation and preparation, a place of recuperation and recovery for American troops, and food and other supplies. Local industry was developed to meet American needs.

Prisoners of War

Japanese prisoners of war were brought to New Zealand from September 1942, and 800 were held in a camp at Featherston. On 25 February 1943, 31 were killed instantly and 17 died later from bullet wounds when they made a suicidal charge on guards, one of whom was killed (the only New Zealand serviceman to die from enemy action on New Zealand soil in two world wars). Because of this incident, more Japanese died at New Zealand hands than vice versa during the war.

Air and Naval Forces

New Zealand also provided forces from all three armed services for the Solomons campaign, where they served under American command. The Royal New Zealand Air Force made a major contribution. In all, 20 squadrons served in the Solomons, and there were 8,000 airmen deployed there in 1945. The Royal New Zealand Navy sent the cruisers Achilles and Leander successively to Solomon Islands waters. Both were damaged by

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enemy action and had to be withdrawn for repair. Four minesweepers were deployed in January 1943, and 12 motor launches later.

Third Division

A 13,000 strong, two-brigade division, the 3rd NZ Division, under the command of Harold Barrowclough, was deployed to New Caledonia in November 1942. It later moved forward into the Solomons, where it took part in three landings. Manpower problems at home forced its withdrawal and disbandment in 1944.

Pacific Commandos

The landings at Guadalcanal (and New Georgia and elsewhere) were supported by the deployment of the Pacific Commandos – a NZ trained and led force that included Fijians, Tongans, Solomon Islanders and personnel from what is now known as Papua New Guinea. The Commandos were initially raised in Fiji as a guerrilla force to disrupt potential Japanese landings. When the US took responsibility for the defence of Fiji from New Zealand, the New Zealanders attached to the commandos remained in Fiji with a training and mentoring role.

The first group of 30 commandos deployed to Guadalcanal in December 1942. At that stage the US forces held a beachhead 10 miles long and extending up to 2 miles inland. Patrols, supported by Solomon Islanders, were conducted inland to ascertain the perimeter and disposition of Japanese forces allowing US forces to extend their perimeter. The Commandos then undertook training of Solomon Islanders on Malaita and at the beginning of February 1943 were deployed on 'mopping up' operations as the Japanese attempted to withdraw.

In April 1943 1st Commando deployed to Guadalcanal to support future operations. Its deployed strength was 430 men – 44 New Zealanders, 156 Fijians, 28 Tongans, 200 Solomon Islanders and four Englishmen. It operated in four different languages – English, Fijian, Tongan and Pidgin English. They initially continued patrolling on Guadalcanal and close-by islands looking for Japanese stragglers or those who refused to surrender.

In July 1943 the Commandos were deployed to support the US landings on New Georgia. They were adept at moving through the jungle, coping with arduous patrolling, identifying Japanese positions, guiding US forces into position for attacks, and dealing with snipers and isolated positions. Based on the scouting of the Commandos, US forces were repeatedly able to commit forces to critical positions. At times, they were engaged in heavy fighting.

Later that year, the Commandos supported the landing on Vella Lavella. By October 1943, half the strength of the unit was suffering from malaria and needed to be withdrawn from the malarial zone. They returned to Suva. Subsequent medical testing found that over three quarters of the unit were no longer fit for service and it was disbanded in May 1944.

The Commandos concept was highly successful and its contribution, particularly in the heavy fighting on New Georgia, was well-regarded by US Forces. It was also important to the Pacific partners as it allowed them to meaningfully contribute to combat operations. There is a memorial at Henderson Airfield to the Kiwis, Fijians, Tongans and Solomon Islanders who died serving in this force in the Solomons (Figure 2). 35 members of the Pacific Commandos received gallantry awards or were Mentioned-in-Despatches while a number also received US awards.

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Figure 1: From August 1942, the Americans landed at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in the attempt to push back the Japanese. A year later members of the New Zealand 3rd Division began to assist them. Here New Zealand troops from that division sort out equipment on the beach at Guadalcanal.



Figure 2: A memorial to the Pacific Commandos is located at Henderson Airfield.

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Formal Message: 51st Pacific Islands Forum report – 28 July 2022

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

With a palpable sense of relief and enthusiasm, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders embraced a policy programme of Pacific regionalism – and each other – following three years of largely virtual diplomacy since they last met in Tuvalu in 2019. In doing so, Leaders delivered a high-level political engagement to steer the strategic direction of the region in an increasingly complex global context. On the positive side of the ledger was Leaders largely recommitting to a unified Forum through the Suva Agreement; the launch of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*; a declaration that the Pacific is facing a Climate Emergency; and agreement and direction on a range of other priority issues such as sea-level rise, nuclear, and fisheries issues. The 2050 Strategy, in particular, will now serve as the rallying point for the region in both its articulation of the region’s ambitions and priorities as well as serving as the basis for engagements with external partners. Further, Leaders agreed on the importance of looking to the region first on matters of security. The meeting saw a return, from next year, to regular meetings, with Leaders agreeing to the Cook Islands, Tonga, and Solomon Islands taking up chairing responsibilities in 2023, 2024, and 2025 respectively. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] Leaders chose to leave the flag flying throughout the week, and the door open, in anticipation of Kiribati returning to fold in due course.

HOHENGA – ACTION

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- **RRO:** to note Leaders’ agreement that the Cook Islands host of the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2023.
- **DEVPP/CCD:** to note Leaders’ emphasis, based on advocacy from Prime Minister Ardern, on the urgent requirement for decarbonisation of the energy sector towards renewable energy.
- **All:** for information

PŪRONGO – REPORT

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1 The 51st Pacific Islands Forum came at a critical time for the region. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] the Pacific has never been so strongly in the spotlight. In this context, and with the relevance to our security and prosperity, New Zealand went into the Forum with three primary objectives:

- Emphasise New Zealand's support for a Member-led resolution that secures Micronesian Members' continued participation in the Forum;
- Support the adoption of the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, as an ambitious, guiding document for our region; and
- Facilitate and participate in discussions regarding the regional security context and architecture.

2 We report against each of these objectives below, as well as other priority policy decisions and directions from Leaders stemming from their Retreat on issues such as climate change (including energy resilience, sea-level rise, and Vanuatu's efforts to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice); nuclear issues; fisheries; and the Forum Observer report on the New Caledonia referendum.

The Forum Chair sets the scene

3 Pacific Islands Forum Chair, Fiji Prime Minister Bainimarama, opened the week [REDACTED] s6(a),
[REDACTED] s6(b)
[REDACTED] (i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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The Suva Agreement [redacted] s6(a)

6 As reported (SVA and PACREG Formal Messages of 8 June and 10 July respectively refer), Fiji was able to present to Leaders a package of reforms sufficient to – almost – maintain the unity of the Forum. Throughout the preparatory work of senior officials, endorsed by Foreign Ministers, it was clear that the Suva Agreement was being interpreted as a political commitment by Leaders, enabling officials to agree the parameters of those commitments and to take a “phased approach” in implementation. This was made explicit in paragraph 11 of the Leaders’ Communique.

7 In our formal bilateral meeting, [redacted] s6(b)(i)

Bainimarama passed the Suva Agreement to Prime Minister Ardern for signature. [Comment: Prime Minister Ardern and Minister Mahuta have discussed this issue across 60 virtual bilateral engagements since February 2021. [redacted] 9(2)(g)(i)

[redacted] As outlined in the Communique, officials will now continue discussions on implementation, reporting again to Leaders later in the year.]

8 [redacted] s6(a)

[redacted] the Suva Agreement laid a foundation of unity for the remainder of the week.

[redacted] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent – a rallying point for the region

9 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at their 2019 meeting in Tuvalu noted that escalating climate change impacts, coupled with the intensification of geostrategic competition was exacerbating the region’s vulnerabilities. In this context, Leaders agreed that the future of our Blue Pacific Continent could not simply be left to chance, but required a long-term vision, a carefully considered regional strategy, and most importantly the collective commitment to achieve it. Leaders commissioned the development of such a strategy, noting that it must ensure social, cultural, environmental and economic integrity, sovereignty and security in order to protect people, place, and prospects in the Blue Pacific. The result, after three years of work – including extensive public consultations in New Zealand – was the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent* (attached).

10 [redacted] s6(a)

[redacted] the Strategy assumed centre-stage for the week as the

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region's response and answer to the challenges of the moment. Secretary General Puna described it as our guiding document as we "look to secure our future in an evolving global context", while Bainimarama referred to it as our "north star". The Strategy provided substance to Fiji's "festival of regionalism", in the articulation of the region's priorities and ambitions as well as providing the basis for a strong policy response to the geostrategic environment. As noted by many voices, through the Strategy the region could assert itself and chart its own course from a position of strength. Furthermore, Leaders agreed that the Strategy laid the foundation for engagement with (large) countries and other actors from outside the region, firmly establishing the expectation that partners should now engage with the region through the lens of the Strategy.

11 On the latter point, Leaders also reaffirmed the importance of utilising existing regional mechanisms, including the Pacific Islands Forum, for engagement with partners, "especially where multiple Pacific Island countries are concerned." [REDACTED] s6(a)

12 Leaders highlighted that effective delivery would require a fit-for-purpose regional architecture, with collective commitment from all regional agencies and relevant stakeholders. Leaders broadened the mandate of the review of regional architecture to include political settings; institutional processes; governance mechanisms; and engagements and partnerships, with officials tasked to report back to Leaders the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Meeting.

Regional security – "Pacific first"

13 [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] Prime Minister Ardern raised with Leaders the importance of non-militarisation and the need for us as a region to reinforce the underlying principle that the region has the collective capacity and commitment to meet our own security needs.

14 In delivering these messages – and in particular the view that it is not in our collective interests to see militarisation in the Pacific – Prime Minister Ardern made clear to other Leaders her expectation that New Zealand would consult Forum Members on Pacific security matters, including joint exercises, deployments, and policy developments [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED] a principled stance that prioritised Pacific stability. [REDACTED] s6(a), [REDACTED] s6(0)(f)

[REDACTED], Leaders reaffirmed the "concept of regionalism and a family first approach to peace and security." Leaders also noted the upcoming work of officials to ensure the alignment of the Boe Declaration

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and 2050 Strategy, as part of efforts under the Strategy to ensure the regional architecture is fit-for-purpose.

Leaders declare a climate emergency

15 Climate change did not receive the same degree of focus this year, in part due to the work of Foreign Ministers, but also the need to focus on unity – [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] Leaders reconfirmed that climate change remains the single greatest existential threat facing the Blue Pacific, declaring that the Pacific is “facing a Climate Emergency that threatens the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of its people and ecosystems, backed by the latest science and the daily lived realities in Pacific communities.” Leaders committed to working together at COP27 and welcomed the interest from Australia to host a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties in partnership with the Pacific. Throughout these discussions, Prime Minister Ardern raised the issue of the region’s reliance on fossil fuels for energy production, with Leaders emphasising in the Communique the “the urgent requirement for decarbonisation of the energy sector towards renewable energy.”

16 Leaders also recalled the *Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise*, re-emphasising the threat of climate change and sea-level rise to the livelihood and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific. Leaders called on other states and regions to “formally support” the Declaration – language introduced in this Communique that, in the circumstances, did not attract further comment (our thanks to LGL for support throughout the drafting session). [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Other issues

18 Forum Foreign Ministers in their meeting covered a number of other issues, allowing Leaders to confirm collective positions without further discussion:

- **Nuclear issues:** Leaders noted the report of the Secretary General on the Treaty of Rarotonga; reiterated strong concerns regarding the proposed release of treated water from Fukushima and the potential threat of nuclear contamination to the health and security of the Blue Pacific, and reaffirmed the importance of ensuring “international

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consultation, international law, and independent and verifiable scientific assessments”. While Leaders did not seek a report from the CROP Taskforce on Nuclear Legacy issues, Leaders did note the progress of the work of the Taskforce, including arrangements for a Preliminary Independent Review relating to Nuclear Contamination in the Pacific;

- **Economic returns from fisheries:** under this standing agenda item, Leaders encouraged Members to continue efforts to stay at the forefront of regional tuna fisheries management, address IUU fishing, and to secure sustainable benefits from tuna resources;
- **Forum Observer report on New Caledonia referendum:** Leaders welcomed the Observer report and supported the Forum’s continued engagement with New Caledonia through established Forum processes. [REDACTED] s6(a)
- **Niue ocean initiative:** Leaders commended and supported the Government of Niue on its Ocean Conservation Credit initiative as a sustainable financing mechanism, noting the ongoing challenges in accessing climate finance; and
- **Forum Chair:** Leaders agreed to the Cook Islands as the host of the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2023, the Kingdom of Tonga in 2024, and Solomon Islands in 2025. [REDACTED] s6(a)

TĀKUPU - COMMENT

19 Given the uncertainties of the last 18 months, [REDACTED] s6(a) this festival of regionalism can only be described as a success. As seen in the meetings in Suva throughout June and July, officials, Ministers, and now Leaders have relished the opportunity to connect in person, to understand more fully respective views, and reconfirm our commitment to each other as a unified region. [REDACTED] s6(a) Forum Members are well aware of the attention the region is receiving from larger powers and the strategic benefit of functioning as a bloc. We anticipate – including through implementation of the *2050 Strategy* – increasing emphasis in coming months and years on the “centrality” of the Forum.

20 The launch of the *2050 Strategy* itself was a lesson in regionalism, with the ceremony a celebration of the culture of the Pacific as a source of strength. While the Strategy is the product of a consensus drafting process, coming after nearly three years since Leaders last met in a world changed gives it a significance it might otherwise have missed. The Pacific now has a rallying point and Leaders are returning to their countries with unity, strength, and a plan. We also have the direction of Leaders to use the Strategy as the basis to ensure our regional architecture – including security – is fit-for-purpose. Taken together, this gives us some

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confidence [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

21 [redacted] s6(a) while officials begin the work of implementing the
directions and decisions of Leaders. [redacted] s6(a)
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

MUTU - ENDS

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