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RON MARK

MINISTER OF DEFENCE, NEW ZEALAND

Ron Mark, Minister of Defence, New Zealand

Tuhia ki te rangi

Tuhia ki te whenua

Tuhia ki te ngakau

O nga tangata

Ko te mea nui

Ko te aroha

Tihei Mauri Ora!

E nga tangata whenua, Singapore

Tena koutou

E te iwi o te Moana nui a Kiwa

Tena koutou

Apiti hono, tatai hono

Ratou kua wehe atu kit e po

Apiti hono, tatai hono

Tatou e tu ana ki te ao

My apologies to the translators but this being a very prestigious meeting of distinguished representatives from all over the world, my people back home would be disappointed in me if I did not acknowledge you all, and our host, Singapore, appropriately in our native tongue.

Greetings to colleagues, fellow panellists, ladies and gentlemen, friends and family; as we would say back home, greetings, *whanau*.

Firstly, thank you to our Singaporean hosts for your very warm hospitality, and the International Institute for Strategic Studies for the invitation to speak on a topic very important to New Zealand. As with my esteemed colleagues on the panel today, I will share with you my nation's perspectives on how to assure long-term stability in relations among the states with vital interests in the security of the region.

The greatest challenges confronting our nations at present are global, but in order for us to address them, we need to act local. We must create better links between our communities and our nations because together we are stronger in the face of the many challenges facing our region and the world today.

In New Zealand, that thinking manifests itself through our 'community, nation, world' framework that guides our work and our engagement. Today, I wish to put forward New Zealand's view on this

topic, across four themes: tackling global challenges; understanding our individual motivations; forging genuine people-to-people links; and maintaining agile, contemporary security architecture.

Tackling global challenges: our international rules-based order is under pressure. Strategic competition and territorial disputes threaten to compromise our national interests. Our defence forces are increasingly responding to more frequent and powerful natural disasters. Transnational crime and violent extremism threaten our social fabric, and cyber attacks compromise our financial, communications and political integrity.

During this period of turbulence, we must always remember the small nations who are particularly susceptible to these complex and compounding challenges. We are particularly seeing this dynamic play out in areas where our national interests converge, such as the busy maritime trade routes of this region. We all want a safe, secure and prosperous region, regardless of any of our geographical locations. And one clear global challenge that requires a collective response, including from our militaries, is the climate crisis.

New Zealand's 2018 Defence Assessment on climate change and security laid out the very real security implications of climate change. When the effects of climate change intersect with a complex array of environmental and social issues, they threaten to undermine human and social development. They will likely be a significant contributor to both low-level instability and more violent conflict.

Climate migration has the potential to heighten security concerns in the Pacific, and extend into both the maritime Southeast Asia and South Asia. Militaries are a key player in our response to this, because we are involved in both ends of the scenario. We bring enviable resources and value, specifically in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) responses and in stabilisation activities. But we are also some of the heaviest consumers of fossil fuels and polluters through carbon emissions. This is where the collective action comes in, and real work has already begun on this issue. Through our strong, honest relationships, we have a better chance to address these challenges. Our combined efforts will be pivotal in maintaining resilience and achieving long-term stability in the region and more globally.

Understanding individual motivations: to meet these challenges, we must all be clear and transparent in communicating our individual motivations. How New Zealand articulates our motivations and views on our strategic environment is set out in our Strategic Defence Policy Statement. It reinforces how we see the world and the fundamental principles underpinning our defence policy. It reflects New Zealand's long-standing interests and deeply held values. And it proudly states how our military delivers value for the community, our nation and the world.

And as you know, New Zealand is a Pacific country. We are linked by history, culture, politics and demographics, and we are of the Pacific. This is personal. We are family.

And our prosperity and security is intrinsically linked to that of all other Pacific Island nations. And on that note, I do want to thank John Chipman and IISS for holding the first special session on the South Pacific and look forward to it being a fixed part of the Shangri-La Dialogue going forward.

In February 2018, my government announced Pacific Reset. The Reset is both a vision and a commitment to lift our ambition as part of the Pacific community. It is about changing our mindset to

address the increasingly complex issues in our region. It emphasises both what we are doing in the region, as well as how we operate. Foremost, it is about genuine partnership and mutual respect. In many ways, the Pacific region is where New Zealand matters most and can have a more positive impact. It is our neighbourhood and where we most certainly act locally.

Through our Strategic Defence Policy Statement, we raised the priority placed on our defence force's ability to operate in the Pacific to the same level as New Zealand's own territory, the Southern Ocean and Antarctica.

Later this month, I will unveil a plan to grow our defence-force capability and capacity to project and sustain operations throughout the Pacific region. This is crucial because our maritime area of responsibility spans over 9% of the Earth's surface, stretching from the South Pole and Antarctica to the equator. Yet, we are a nation of just 4.8 million people. Our ability to respond to challenges across this vast area is an issue of foremost importance, as we face concurrent threats across the region.

By communicating our motivations openly in this way, it means you, our international partners, can clearly see what we stand for, and where we are prepared to take action. If we are all transparent in our motivations, we reduce the risk of misunderstanding and miscalculation.

The next step is getting to know each other, genuinely. It is our shared motivation for a safe, secure, prosperous region that brings our community together. And at the heart of our efforts in the Pacific is a focus on building deeper, more mature political partnerships with Pacific Island countries and institutions.

On that note, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Dame Meg Taylor. The Boe Declaration issued last year calls for additional collective Pacific action to address new and traditional security challenges, including climate change. It is one of the most significant statements on regional security by Pacific leaders in a generation. It is a clear articulation from the Pacific of our security needs. It gives us a compass for action and we must follow it. And I urge all other nations to heed the same call.

For collective action to be effective, we need a common set of rules. The Pacific's peak body, the Pacific Islands Forum, is supported by many existing regional architectures such as the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM). I attended the most recent engagement with regional defence ministers last month in Fiji, where we agreed to adopt ten recommendations aimed to promote information sharing, collaboration on defence, climate change and security.

In the Pacific, New Zealand is also a key member of an agreement between France, Australia and New Zealand to coordinate disaster reconnaissance and relief assistance in the Pacific. This is vital as we have seen increasingly harsh weather events happening more frequently, with more devastating effect, affecting more people.

We underpin our relationships with exercises – including *Tropic Twilight*, *Southern Katipo*, *Sky Train* – which we use to build confidence and develop practical military-to-military cooperation for the benefit of our work in the Pacific. These exercises often include a range of partner militaries, including both the United States of America and China. We are also building partnership programmes with the

Pacific militaries and security forces to increase their capacity and capabilities in areas of mutual interest, including leadership development, gender integration and peacekeeper training.

But the Pacific is not alone in facing this tapestry of global challenges. In the Indo-Pacific, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) has gone from strength to strength over the past nine years. Supporting and continuing to strengthen ASEAN is vital to promoting regional resilience, and the ADMM-Plus remains New Zealand's principal forum for multilateral defence engagement in Asia.

But our security architecture is only useful if it remains relevant. It cannot descend into dialogue for dialogue's sake. To maintain relevance, we must continuously adjust and adapt to new challenges, working together to ensure our security architecture remains fit for purpose and energised.

So, in conclusion, today, I ask all states with interests in the security of the region to resolve to come together collectively to tackle global challenges; to be clear on their individual motivations; to forge genuine understanding and people-to-people links; and to maintain agile and contemporary security architecture.

Environmental security concerns – including the intensifying impacts of climate change – are ones that, especially as defence ministers, we should not ignore. From my perspective, the best chance we have to maintain resilience and enjoy long-term stability in the region is for all countries to embrace ASEAN's One Community vision and commit to collective action globally and to stand strong together.

A famous chief and leader of my Ngati Porou tribe on the east coast of the north island of New Zealand, Sir Āpirana Ngata, once said, 'What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.' We owe it to our people to be successful because ultimately, all they want is to live in a safe and secure world. And we can do that if we work together.

No reira

Tena koutou

Tena koutou

Tena tatou katoa

Dr John Chipman, Director-General and Chief Executive, IISS

Thank you, Minister Mark, for many things, but in particular three. Firstly, in common with your Australian counterpart, reminding us of the centrality of the climate-change challenge for your people. Secondly, for adding to the previous triptych of important words – trust, rules and norms – the fourth word, transparency. Finally, for your kind endorsement of our decision to, indeed, have a special session at this Shangri-La Dialogue on Pacific Island nations – and I can promise you that we will want to make that a regular feature of this SLD process. And indeed, the Executive Director of IISS-Asia, Tim Huxley, and I have been talking about how we might do, as the IISS, much more work on Pacific Islands security. And I hope we will be able to work with you in advancing that aim and finding other ways to bring together the Pacific Island leaders in pursuit of that common aim of peace for your people. So, thank you very much.