

# JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTERS OF NEW ZEALAND AND SINGAPORE

Issued by  
**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SINGAPORE**

**19 APRIL 2022**



Prime Ministers Jacinda Ardern and Lee Hsien Loong at the Joint Conference  
*Photo: Ministry of Communication & Information Singapore / Terence Tan*

1. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong hosted Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern on an Official Visit to Singapore on 19 April 2022. The Prime Ministers acknowledged the longstanding friendship and multi-faceted, wide-ranging cooperation between Singapore and New Zealand across many fields, in spite of the challenges presented by COVID-19.

## **Reconnecting**

2. The Prime Ministers discussed their respective countries' responses to managing COVID-19. They reflected on the high value of the close cooperation and frequent discussions between health, border, transport, foreign affairs, and other officials throughout the pandemic. They welcomed reconnecting through the reopening of borders to each other, which will restore people-to-people links between the two countries.

3. The Prime Ministers welcomed a new Working Holiday Scheme for young Singaporeans and New Zealanders, who will soon once again be able to travel and work in each other's country each year.

## Bilateral Cooperation

4. The Prime Ministers welcomed the excellent progress made in the Enhanced Partnership between Singapore and New Zealand, established during Prime Minister Ardern's Official Visit in 2019. The Enhanced Partnership currently covers four pillars: (a) Trade and Economics; (b) Security and Defence; (c) Science, Technology and Innovation; and (d) People-to-People links.

5. The Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen the Enhanced Partnership by adding a new pillar on "Climate Change and Green Economy" to better reflect our recognition of the existential threat posed by climate change and our shared commitment to implement the Paris Agreement and seize growth opportunities in the green economy. Cooperation under this pillar can include energy transition technology, carbon markets, sustainable transport, and waste management as a start. A list of agreed initiatives is in the [Annex](#).

6. As the region adapts to evolving global trends and supply chain vulnerabilities, the Prime Ministers agreed that increasing economic resilience will be crucial. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Singapore and New Zealand have worked together to guard against protectionism to ensure that supply chains remained open. To help build resilience against current and future supply chain disruption, the Prime Ministers agreed to launch a Singapore and New Zealand Supply Chain Working Group. They asked officials, working closely with the private sector, to identify opportunities for collaboration in support of more productive, resilient, sustainable, and digitally enhanced supply chains for enterprises of all sizes and for improved food and energy security in both countries.

7. The Prime Ministers noted the ongoing opportunities for New Zealand and Singapore companies to work together to support the growth of exports and services to South East Asia, South Asia, and beyond. New Zealand is an important producer of food and agricultural products while Singapore is a natural transport and logistics hub for New Zealand businesses. They reaffirmed the importance of further strengthening partnerships in food and agriculture between the two countries, to enhance food security and facilitate the development of innovative food systems. They agreed to strengthen the relationship between our research institutions in areas such as alternative protein as well as collaborate on the commercialisation of new food products.

8. The Prime Ministers agreed that New Zealand and Singapore will continue to strengthen defence and security cooperation including through high-level dialogues, training exercises, professional exchanges, and cooperation at multilateral fora. The Prime Ministers were pleased to note an increase in both countries' engagement on counter terrorism and exchange of maritime security insights, and climate change. The Prime Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to the Five Powers Defence Arrangements, which marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021, and to the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus.

9. The Prime Ministers noted that there have been frequent exchanges between Singapore and New Zealand cyber security experts since a Cyber Security Memorandum of Arrangement was signed in 2019. Wide-ranging discussions have covered the resilience of critical infrastructure and SMEs to cyber incidents, cyber security workforce development, Internet of Things security, ransomware and

cooperation with the private sector for stronger cyber outcomes. The Prime Ministers directed their respective cyber security leads (Chief Executive of Cyber Security Agency of Singapore and the New Zealand Prime Minister's Special Representative for Cyber and Digital) to meet virtually to discuss opportunities to further deepen the cyber security partnership between the two countries.

## **Regional Economic and Trade Cooperation**

10. The Prime Ministers welcomed the development of stronger economic linkages between Singapore and New Zealand arising from the implementation of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the recent entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

11. The Prime Ministers noted their support for ongoing efforts to conclude, ratify, implement and upgrade trade agreements in the region that benefit our peoples and our businesses. They also welcomed the ongoing efforts by the US to work with partners on the establishment of an Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Both countries will continue to support the upgrade of the ASEAN Australia New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) as well as the expansion of existing agreements such as the CPTPP and the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) to economies that can fully adhere to the agreements' high standards.

## **Global Developments**

12. The Prime Ministers exchanged views on global developments.

13. The Prime Ministers reiterated their strong condemnation of the invasion and occupation of Ukraine and demanded Russia's immediate withdrawal. They agreed that actions by Russia are a flagrant violation of fundamental principles of international law and risk long-term global instability, and called on all parties to protect civilians and respect human rights. They also called on all parties to facilitate unhindered humanitarian assistance to those in need in Ukraine.

14. The Prime Ministers reiterated their shared commitment to an open, inclusive, rules-based and resilient Indo-Pacific region, which supports and promotes free trade and open markets, and respects the rights of countries to lead their national existence free from external interference, subversion and coercion. They reaffirmed the importance of ASEAN Centrality, and agreed to continue to work closely with ASEAN in ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum. They also reaffirmed their shared determination to strengthen the WTO and the rules-based multilateral trading system.

15. In the maritime domain, the Prime Ministers reaffirmed the right of freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the seas accorded by international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, in particular UNCLOS, which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. They

affirmed the need to respect states' ability to conserve, sustainably develop, and effectively manage their maritime natural resources in accordance with international law, in particular UNCLOS. They reaffirmed that all concerned parties must abide by the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and reiterated their support for ASEAN-led efforts to develop an effective and substantive Code of Conduct for the South China Sea that upholds the legitimate rights and interests of all parties and is consistent with UNCLOS. They also affirmed the importance of acting consistently with the relevant Standards and Recommended Practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the relevant instruments and conventions of the International Maritime Organization.

16. The Prime Ministers shared their deep concerns regarding the situation in Myanmar following the 2021 military coup. Both Prime Ministers agreed that the Five-Point Consensus on Myanmar adopted at the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting on 24 April 2021 should be fully implemented as soon as possible and reiterated calls for the violence to end, for inclusive dialogue between all parties in Myanmar, for the release of all political detainees including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint and foreign detainees, and for the Myanmar military authorities to avoid actions that would be inimical to eventual national reconciliation in Myanmar. They appreciated the constructive role played by ASEAN in facilitating a peaceful solution in the interest of the people of Myanmar. Singapore and New Zealand also remain committed to supporting ASEAN's efforts in alleviating the humanitarian situation in Myanmar.

17. The Prime Ministers reiterated their support for multilateral and UN engagement on Myanmar including the work of the UN Special Envoy for the Secretary General and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar and called for UN representatives and agencies to be granted full access to Myanmar.

18. Both Prime Ministers underscored that New Zealand and Singapore are staunch supporters of international law and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter. They agreed that New Zealand and Singapore will continue to work together to strengthen their bilateral relationship and uphold international law and the multilateral system, and to stay in close contact on regional and global issues of concern. On climate change specifically, the Prime Ministers acknowledged the need for intensified global effort to counter climate change, and committed to work together to build on the outcomes of the COP26 in Glasgow and the recommendations of the latest deeply concerning IPCC reports.

19. Both Prime Ministers also agreed that to ensure global security, prosperity and the meeting of challenges such as climate change in the coming decades, it is important to support regional and global institutions and approaches that facilitate constructive dialogue between all countries.

## **INITIATIVES FOR THE NEW "CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREEN ECONOMY" PILLAR UNDER THE SINGAPORE-NEW ZEALAND ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP**

- Singapore and New Zealand will establish a regular climate change policy dialogue between officials of both sides.

- Singapore and New Zealand will jointly provide capacity building training on carbon markets to ASEAN countries.
- Singapore and New Zealand signed an Arrangement of Cooperation on Low Carbon Hydrogen in July 2021 to jointly develop hydrogen standards and certifications to facilitate the development of international trade of hydrogen.
- Singapore and New Zealand have agreed to work together on sustainable aviation – by way of a Memorandum of Arrangement – in recognition of the need to drive the development of a sustainable aviation ecosystem.
- Singapore and New Zealand have agreed to exchange information on policy and technology perspectives on low-carbon shipping and decarbonisation, and explore opportunities to trial the use of low-carbon fuel, such as hydrogen and ammonia, in shipping and port operations. Both countries will also encourage, in coming decades, the establishment of green shipping corridors.
- Singapore and New Zealand have agreed to exchange policy and technical insights and to look for opportunities to encourage the rapid uptake of zero and low emissions vehicles.
- Singapore and New Zealand have agreed to regularly hold knowledge-sharing dialogues on waste management technology and strategy.
- Singapore and New Zealand agree to further discuss areas for joint research on low carbon technology, with a view to support joint research projects.