

Priority: **Medium**

Date: 11 July 2019
To: Hon Julie Anne Genter, Minister for Women
From: Margaret Retter, Director Policy
Subject: **APEC WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY FORUM**

Action sought:	By: Monday 22 July 2019
Agree to lead the official delegation to the APEC Women and the Economy Forum or delegate leadership of the official delegation to a Ministerial colleague or the Ministry for Women's Chief Executive.	
Agree in principle to the proposed composition of the official delegation or an alternative head of the official delegation as outlined above	
Note the information provided on the APEC Women and the Economy Forum	
Note that, within three months, this briefing will be considered for release under the Ministry's proactive release policy.	

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with information on APEC's upcoming Women and the Economy Forum (WEF), to be held in Chile from 30 September to 5 October 2019, and seeks your agreement to lead the delegation to the WEF, or agree to a proposed alternative head of delegation. It also seeks your agreement, in principle, to the proposed official delegation.

Background

APEC's work on gender issues

2. The Government is working to raise New Zealand's profile in the Asia Pacific region and APEC is a key avenue for doing so.
3. The focus of APEC continues to evolve. APEC has a strong focus on inclusive and sustainable growth, which aligns with the Government's priorities, including the new Trade for All Agenda and the Pacific Reset.
4. There is increased international recognition of the intersection between trade and gender, and we consider there to be strong benefits in New Zealand's engagement with this work.

5. New Zealand will host APEC in 2021 with a year-long programme of 12 significant events. These will culminate in Leaders' Week, when New Zealand will welcome leaders from APEC's 20 other members including China, the United States, Japan, and Russia.
6. Government agencies are expected to increase their engagement with APEC leading up to 2021, funded out of baselines.

Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy working group

7. The Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) is one of APEC's over 80 working groups. In the lead-up to 2021, the Ministry for Women (the Ministry) is working closely with APEC New Zealand, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to contribute to the PPWE. The Ministry is expected to lead the PPWE when New Zealand hosts APEC in 2021. The WEF is a component of the PPWE.
8. The main purpose of the PPWE is to advance the economic integration of women in the APEC region for the benefit of all members and to coordinate gender activities across other APEC working groups. Its mission is to mainstream, elevate, and integrate gender responsive policies and programmes focused on women's economic empowerment into APEC activities to advance gender equality.
9. The Ministry and MFAT provide policy advice on the PPWE's strategic plan, priorities, research projects, and the funding it provides for projects. Participation on this working group is a good way for the Ministry to gain insights into international best practice on gender policy.

Women and the Economy Forum

10. Chile is the APEC 2019 host and will hold the WEF, in Coquimbo - La Serena, Chile, from 30 September to 5 October 2019.
11. The theme for this year's WEF will be *Women, SMEs and Inclusive Growth*. The focus will be on; *devising strategies to attract, retain and promote women in industries traditionally dominated by men, like mining, transportation and energy; guide efforts to close the digital divide which prevents women from fully participating in trade and increase attention; and encourage economies to collect and use data about the extent of gender equality within the workplace*. An Action Plan will be developed, which is aimed at contributing to the economic empowerment of women in the region.
12. New Zealand could highlight Stats NZ's Integrated Data Systems (IDI) work, including the Ministry's recent research on Wāhine Māori owned businesses; the Ministry of Education's work to encourage more women and girls into STEM subjects, including the Ministry's work with the Māori and Pacific Trades Training initiative; the Ministry's work to increase the numbers of women in leadership; as well as the Ministry, State Services Commission, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's combined Gender Pay Gap and Pay Equity work programmes. The Ministry can also share its publications on various initiatives relating to the theme.

13. The Women and the Economy Forum is held every September and is a major event on the APEC calendar. The Women and the Economy Forum encompasses three events:
 - a two day meeting of the Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy
 - a one day Public-Private Dialogue on Women and the Economy
 - a one day High-Level Policy Dialogue.
14. The High-Level Policy Dialogue is a ministerial-level meeting and you will receive an invitation to this in due course.

You will have the opportunity to attend a number of high level events

15. In her speech to the United Nations General Assembly last year, the Prime Minister reaffirmed New Zealand's strong international reputation for its efforts to advance the rights of women and girls by identifying gender equality as a priority issue for the Government. This is further supported by New Zealand's newly approved International Human Rights Action Plan, which has gender equality as one of its four priority areas in which New Zealand can play a leading role on the world stage. Following this, your attendance at the WEF would provide you with an opportunity to:
 - contribute to the maintenance of New Zealand's international reputation
 - engage with delegates and others in attendance through bilateral and/or multilateral meetings, side events and receptions. This could include being a judge on the panel for the BEST (Business Efficiency and Success Target) awards, which seek to distinguish, spread and encourage best practice examples of Women-owned SMEs across the APEC economies
 - host a side event to showcase New Zealand's progress on a topic relating to the priority theme, for example Wāhine Māori entrepreneurship
 - learn from international best practice examples and to strengthen our working relationships with our Asia-Pacific counterparts, including on issues related to climate change, in line with the Government's Pacific Reset.

Proposed Delegation

16. New Zealand's attendance at the WEF is an opportunity to demonstrate support for Chile's APEC host year and to increase our engagement with APEC in the lead up to New Zealand's host year in 2021. New Zealand is expected to co-chair, in 2020 and 2022, and then chair and host, in 2021, the PPWE WEF. It is expected that the Minister for Women will host and chair several WEF events in 2021. The Ministry's Chief Executive will put her name forward to co-chair the PPWE WEF in 2020 and 2022. As chair and co-chair of the PPWE WEF, New Zealand will have an ability to influence the agenda.
17. Attending the WEF provides an additional opportunity for New Zealand officials to participate in the WEF side events and to gauge the way the WEF can be leveraged to help achieve better outcomes for New Zealand women and girls during our 2021 APEC host year.

Previous delegations to the Women and the Economy Forum

18. The Ministry led the New Zealand Government delegation to the WEF in Viet Nam in 2017, and supported the State Services Commission to lead the delegation to the WEF in Papua New Guinea in September 2018. A senior official from the Ministry also attended the Second Senior Officials meeting of the PPWE, held in Chile in May 2019. Ministerial attendance to the WEF in Viet Nam comprised Ministers from Papua New Guinea and the Republic of South Korea, in Papua New Guinea Ministers from Japan and Indonesia were in attendance. Other delegations were headed by a variety of senior level government officials. Chile have indicated that they will be more ambitious this year, and are planning for high levels of Ministerial attendance at the WEF.
19. The Ministry did not consider Ministerial attendance a priority in previous years, as APEC has not been a key focus area for you or the Ministry. Considering this is a tier one event for the Government, and the lead role the Minister for Women and the Ministry are expected to play in the PPWE during APEC 2021, we consider that Ministerial attendance to the Women and the Economy Forum in Chile and Malaysia (2020) would be highly desirable.

Proposed composition of the delegation

20. The Ministry recommends that you lead the official delegation, with support from one or two senior officials from the Ministry, one or two senior officials from MFAT and a staff member from your office. Ministry officials have had initial meetings with MFAT officials to discuss the WEF, and we will work together to prepare your programme.
21. If you are unable to attend the Women and the Economy Forum you may wish to delegate authority to lead the delegation to another Minister or Member of Parliament or the Ministry's Chief Executive.

Recommended dates of attendance

22. The Ministry recommends that you participate in the WEF from 2 to 5 October.

Next Steps

23. If you choose to lead the official delegation to the APEC Women and the Economy Forum the next steps are:
 - by mid-September we will provide you with a draft programme for your attendance at the WEF
 - the Ministry will work with MFAT officials on the proposed membership of the delegation. We will provide a memo on the proposed delegation for your approval by late August. MFAT officials will then seek sign off on the proposed delegation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs by early September
 - your office will arrange the necessary paperwork for your attendance at the WEF, including seeking the Prime Minister's approval, the drafting of a cabinet paper and visa requirements.

- if you choose not to attend, you could delegate leadership of the official delegation to a Ministerial colleague. This would involve writing to them to seek their agreement to head the delegation, and a letter to the Prime Minister followed by a Cabinet paper seeking approval for your chosen Minister to attend the WEF on your behalf as the head of the official delegation. Alternatively, the Ministry for Women's Chief Executive could lead the delegation, in which case no actions are required on your part.

Proactive release

24. Within three months of the date of this briefing, it will be considered for release under the Ministry's proactive release of documents policy.

Recommendations

The Ministry recommends that you:

- A: agree** to lead the official delegation to the APEC Women and the Economy Forum or;
~~Agree~~ / disagree

B: agree to delegate leadership of the official delegation to a Ministerial colleague or;
~~Agree~~ / disagree

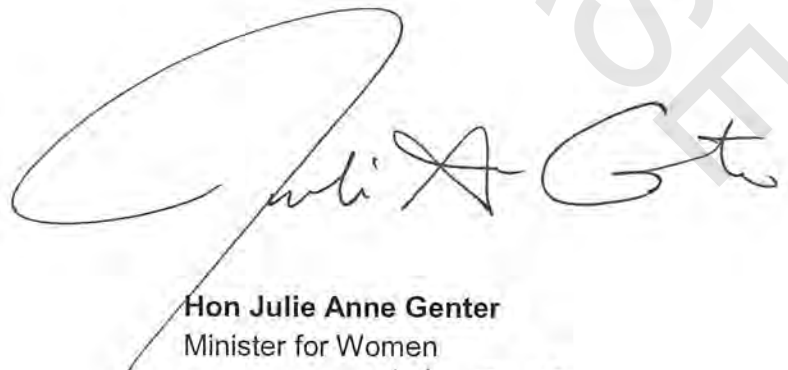
C: agree to delegate leadership of the official delegation to the Ministry for Women's Chief Executive
Agree / ~~disagree~~
- A: agree** in principle with the proposed composition of the official delegation for finalisation by early September or;
Agree / disagree

B: agree in principle with the proposed official delegation comprising an alternative head of the official delegation as outlined above
Agree / ~~disagree~~
- note** that within three months of the date of this briefing, it will be considered for release under the Ministry's proactive release of documents policy.

Noted



Margaret Retter
Director Policy



Hon Julie Anne Genter
Minister for Women

Date... 28 July 2019