

News story: United Kingdom and New Zealand to increase cooperation in the Pacific and on global challenges

During the meeting, which took place at the Churchill War Rooms, Mr Johnson and Mr Peters exchanged views on a wide range of foreign policy issues of concern to both countries, including defence and security challenges and the importance of cooperation to preserve and advance the international rules-based system at a time when it is under stress.

The two foreign ministers also discussed a range of bilateral issues, including future negotiations on a bilateral Free Trade Agreement once the UK departs the European Union in March 2019, and Mr Peters reiterated New Zealand's support for the UK following the attack in Salisbury.

Following the meeting;

UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK is one of the Pacific's oldest friends and we want to play an even more valuable role as a partner to Pacific Island countries. We have agreed that the United Kingdom and New Zealand will co-host a Wilton Park forum on Pacific climate change issues in the United Kingdom in December 2018.

Pacific Island leaders have shone a light on the grave impacts of climate change. This forum will further highlight Pacific challenges and priorities, and show how the Pacific can be an early example for how to develop global responses to climate change.

We both agreed that initiatives taken by Heads of Government and Ministers this week will give new energy and focus to the Commonwealth and underline its continued relevance in promoting a more prosperous and sustainable future.

New Zealand Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters said:

Secretary Johnson and I discussed the United Kingdom's plans to scale up its engagement in the Pacific. I made it clear that New Zealand welcomes these plans and offered practical support for the UK's efforts, including potentially through regular dialogue on Pacific issues, staff secondments, and practical development cooperation.

One example of collaboration will come in late 2019, when New Zealand is due to open a newly-built High Commission in Honiara,

Solomon Islands, on a site shared with the British High Commission.

Our discussions also underlined the ongoing strength of the ties between us, as well as the scope that exists for even deeper cooperation in many areas – whether through policy dialogue on priority issues, secondments and exchanges between government agencies, or practical initiatives to work together domestically and around the world.

Further information