



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

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United Nations Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space: Proposed Accession

Portfolios Economic Development / Foreign Affairs

On 30 May 2016, following reference from the Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee (EGI), Cabinet:

Background

- 1 **noted** that growing a New Zealand-based and internationally credible space industry offers great economic, social, environmental, and security development opportunities;
- 2 **noted** that on 2 December 2015, EGI:
 - 2.1 agreed to the high-level design of a new domestic regulatory regime to enable safe, secure and responsible space launches from New Zealand;
 - 2.2 noted that agreement to New Zealand's accession and signature to the *Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies* (the Moon Agreement) and the *United Nations Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space* (the Registration Convention) will be sought separately;

[EGI-15-MIN-0175]

Moon Agreement

- 3 **noted** that further analysis is required to fully understand the implications that accession to the Moon Agreement would have for New Zealand;
- 4 **agreed** to defer consideration of accession to the Moon Agreement to October 2016;

Registration Convention

- 5 **noted** that the Registration Convention is an integral part of the international space regulatory framework, and that accession is consistent with New Zealand's position as a responsible launching State;
- 6 **noted** that the Registration Convention is a binding treaty, and that accession would make it mandatory for New Zealand as a launching State to establish and maintain a register for space objects launched into outer space;

- 7 **approved** the text of the Registration Convention, attached as Annex One to the paper under CAB-16-SUB-0237;
- 8 **noted** that as accession to the Registration Convention is a binding treaty action, the Registration Convention and an accompanying National Interest Analysis (NIA) must be tabled in the House of Representatives and referred to the relevant select committee for Parliamentary treaty examination;
- 9 **approved** the text of the NIA, attached as Annex Three to the paper under CAB-16-SUB-0237;
- 10 **agreed** that the Registration Convention and the NIA be presented to the House of Representatives for the purposes of Parliamentary treaty examination, in accordance with Standing Order 397;
- 11 **noted** that:
- 11.1 New Zealand must introduce legislation in order to comply with New Zealand's obligations under the Registration Convention;
 - 11.2 the Space Activities Bill (the Bill) has a category 2 priority on the 2016 Legislation Programme (to be passed in 2016);
 - 11.3 it is proposed that the Bill be introduced in early July 2016;
- 12 **noted** that on 2 December 2015, EGI agreed that the Bill will provide for New Zealand to create and maintain a register of space objects as described by the Registration Convention, as this is integral to a New Zealand-based space launch programme [EGI-15-MIN-0175];
- 13 **agreed** to New Zealand's accession to the Registration Convention, subject to the successful completion of the Parliamentary treaty examination process and the passage of the Bill;
- 14 **noted** that the Registration Convention will enter into force for New Zealand on the date of the deposit of its instrument of accession.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet
