



# Cabinet External Relations and Security Committee

## Minute of Decision

---

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

---

### Managing Foreign Terrorist Fighters

**Portfolio**                      **National Security and Intelligence**

On 19 February 2019, the Cabinet External Relations and Security Committee:

- 1        **noted** that a very small number of New Zealanders have travelled to the Middle East to join Daesh's caliphate;
- 2        **noted** that foreign terrorist fighters are increasingly seeking to leave the conflict zone or are being detained by local forces;
- 3        **noted** that a New Zealand foreign terrorist fighter could also emerge from a conflict zone in another part of the world;
- 4        **agreed** that New Zealand's objectives in taking decisions about New Zealand foreign terrorist fighters be to:
  - 4.1      support the protection of New Zealand's national security;
  - 4.2      bring foreign terrorist fighters to justice, where possible;
  - 4.3      rehabilitate, where possible;
  - 4.4      treat children of foreign terrorist fighters with particular care;
- 5        **agreed** that in pursuit of these objectives, decisions about individual foreign terrorist fighters be guided by:
  - 5.1      the individual's circumstances and risk profile;
  - 5.2      determining whether New Zealand has the appropriate jurisdiction;
  - 5.3      international and domestic law;
  - 5.4      principles of necessity, proportionality and practicality;
- 6        **agreed** that where New Zealand is taking actions concerning the children of foreign terrorist fighters in the exercise of its jurisdiction, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration;

7 **directed** officials, in taking decisions about individual foreign terrorist fighters, to consult with the Minister of Justice and Minister Responsible for the NZSIS on the application of the objectives and principles described above.

Janine Harvey  
Committee Secretary

---

**Present:**

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern  
Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon Grant Robertson  
Hon Andrew Little  
Hon Stuart Nash  
Hon Ron Mark

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Ministry of Defence

**Hard-copy distribution:**

Minister for National Security and Intelligence  
Minister of Justice

Released under the Official Information Act 1982