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A NEW ROLE FOR NEW ZEALAND IN THE PACIFIC

Hon Derek Quigley¹

New Zealand is at huge risk strategically but the powers that be either don't seem to realise it, or if they do, are doing very little about it. This paper suggests that it could be beneficial for New Zealand to assume a lead role - in partnership with Pacific nations - in the coordination of regional climate change initiatives, and also discusses options for the New Zealand Defence Force, including joining with Australia in the formation of an ANZAC Force.

The New Zealand Ministry of Defence's *2021 Defence Assessment* has already called for a more deliberate and rigorous prioritisation of effort by New Zealand to cover the possibility of heightened confrontation there, with the Dibb and Brabin-Smith providing an Australian view of how this could be progressed. In their ASPI paper, they comment that a persistent theme in Australian strategic policy is the importance of ensuring that the South Pacific doesn't become dominated by a power that has hostile intent towards Australia.¹ And that "The promotion of Australia's interests will require continued and focused diplomatic and economic effort, such as has been set out in the government's *Pacific Step-up policy* [of 2017]". But in the immediate future, they suggest, operations to provide humanitarian relief or, if invited, aid to the civil powers are much more likely than those designed to counter the actions of a hostile major power, and that implications for preparedness should be drawn more from the former than from the latter.²

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Given this, is there the potential for an extended role for New Zealand in the region in terms of ‘diplomatic and economic effort’ that would make a difference, enhance its humanitarian credentials, provide it with visibility and credibility in the eyes of its security partners, retain the country’s independence, and improve its own security? The answer is yes.

What I am proposing is for New Zealand to take the lead, in partnership with Pacific nations, in the coordination of climate change initiatives on behalf of Australia and New Zealand and other parties who wish to be involved. The aim would be to improve regional outcomes, help people to stay and prosper in their own country, and enable Australia to step up its security activities in the wider Indo-Pacific region in association with the US and its other allies. Although the proposal could proceed on a standalone basis, it should also be implemented in conjunction with a complete reassessment of the roles and responsibilities of the NZDF, trans-Tasman security commitments, and the advantages of forming an ANZAC defence force.

But first, Australia and New Zealand will need to change the way they interact with each other. This won’t happen unless the “big brother/small brother” approach which has persisted over the years - where big brother thinks he knows best and junior continually tries to outsmart him - comes to an end. It’s not a question of anyone giving up sovereignty. Instead, it’s a matter of a mature and common-sense approach designed to improve the security interests of the participants by achieving better overall regional outcomes. To achieve this, agreement on exactly what each will do and how they will achieve it will be needed, with the policies, diplomatic effort, personnel, and resources - with the latter potentially from a much wider source than just New Zealand and Australia - coordinated and allocated accordingly.

If New Zealand were to take on this expanded role, it would be a big task, but there are a number of reasons why it should do so. The “Why” is discussed in the first part of this section. The “How” in the second section.

The Why

One reason, as stated earlier, is that the Pacific is the region in which New Zealand matters the most, wields the most influence and has the most impact driven by its Pacific identity, national security and shared prosperity. The Pacific has consequently been designated as New Zealand’s priority area for engagement rather than the wider Indo-Pacific region, with soft power the basis of its approach.

Ultimately, [our policy approaches] are about prioritising people and relationships - the importance of showing respect to others, the importance of working together to address shared challenges, and the importance of

protecting the interests of future generations, peace, prosperity and stability. ... For New Zealand, how we cooperate is just as important as what we cooperate on.³

Another reason is the obligations contained in the security agreements referred to earlier, where New Zealand and Australia have undertaken to support each other's security, closely coordinate efforts in the South Pacific, and maintain a shared focus on the security and stability of the broader region.

A further reason is that New Zealand's key defence and security partners, including both PICs and extra-regional partners, are increasingly looking to New Zealand to provide a leading role in pursuing shared security interests in the region, including to enable their own activities.⁴

Another reason is that part of the considerable aid already provided to the region – in particular from “newer” donors – suffers from poor coordination and prioritisation.

The Pacific region receives some of the most volatile aid on earth, but not all countries in the Pacific experience the problem equally. And not all donors are equally to blame. The challenge in coming decades will be for some of the region's newer donors to start demonstrating a sustained commitment to supporting the Pacific. This will require giving aid well – including managing volatility.⁵

In an attempt to improve outcomes, the Lowy Institute's Pacific Aid Map – an analytical tool designed to enhance aid effectiveness in the Pacific by improving coordination, alignment and accountability through enhanced transparency of aid flows – provides an indication of the size of this task. From 2009 Lowy has collected data on close to 50,000 projects and activities from 66 donors, with its estimate that overall, a total of 108,137 projects are involved with a total aid budget of \$29.71 billion.⁶

The need for a different approach is also illustrated by the slow progress towards achieving the UN's [Asia-Pacific] Strategic Development Goals, with a total of 26 of its agencies involved in its 2018-2022 Pacific Strategy.⁷ In its 2022 report *Widening disparities amid Covid-19*, the pandemic and climate change were said to have exacerbated development challenges, with the region, at that time, not on track to achieve, by 2030, any of the 17 goals of no poverty, zero hunger, good health and wellbeing, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice and strong institutions and partnership.

Alarming, climate change action – which is the Pacific Forum’s number one priority – was actually in regression, along with responsible consumption and production.⁸

Another reason is that the suggested approach separates climate change coordination and remedial action from the thousands of aid projects supported by over 60 government and other agency donors – with many of them having multiple sub agencies involved – and focuses on the number one priority of the 14 island countries.

A further reason for New Zealand to take over Australia’s climate change role in the Pacific is that it negates any ongoing claims by island leaders that Australia’s continuing support for new coal and gas initiatives compromise its regional climate change responsibilities. Their claim is that as Australia is the world’s third largest fossil fuel exporter, it is a major contributor to the adverse effects of global warming, and that “The latest science shows that developing new gas fields and coal mines is inconsistent with the security of the Pacific.”⁹

Another reason is that the suggested approach is likely to receive strong support from the Pacific Island countries who have been reluctant to become pawns in a great-power political contest symbolised by their rejection of the label Indo-Pacific, which is seen as framing the region as united in resisting China’s hegemonic ambitions. Island leaders have preferred to sidestep this by promoting instead the “Blue Pacific Region” which shifts the focus from geostrategic rivalries towards the specific challenges that nations with small territories but vast oceanic areas face, such as rising sea levels. As a clear demonstration of their determination not to be involved in a US/China power struggle, the PICs agreed – on 15 September 2022 ahead of COP27 – to strengthen coordination with China on climate change.

The Blue Pacific approach is that while the region’s key international partners may have made a geostrategic shift to the Indo-Pacific, Pacific leaders are determined to articulate and drive their own strategic and development priorities for the benefit of their own region, with particular emphasis on the adverse impact of climate change. Now, Forum Leaders have endorsed a 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent designed to articulate collective priorities for the benefit of all Pacific people, including climate change and oceans, economic development, technology and connectivity, and people-centred development. The Strategy is founded on the firm recognition of the strategic, cultural, and economic value that the Blue Pacific region holds, with a shared commitment to protect and leverage this value.¹⁰

The initial response by key donors to these aspirations was to set up an Indo-Pacific “economic framework” focusing particularly on supply chain resilience, infrastructure, clean energy and the digital economy as a counter to China’s initiatives. Initially, progress was slow,¹¹ with the PICs seeing this as requiring them to take sides in the US/China power contest, but on 24 June 2022 Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the UK and the

US announced the establishment of the *Partners in the Blue Pacific* (PBP) following consultations with Pacific Heads of Mission and other partners, including France and the European Union in its observing capacity. The PBP will remain ongoing, including with other partners engaged in the region as “an inclusive, informal mechanism to support Pacific priorities more effectively and efficiently.”

The extent of this initiative and its shift in emphasis, is illustrated by the White House statement announcing it.

This new initiative builds on our longstanding commitment to the region. Australia and New Zealand are of the region and members of the Pacific Islands Forum; Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States are founding Dialogue Partners. Our countries maintain close people-to-people ties to and are longstanding development partners with the Pacific Islands, reflected in our combined \$2.1 billion in development assistance for the region. We are united in our shared determination to support a region that benefits the peoples of the Pacific. We are also united in how we realize this vision—according to principles of Pacific regionalism, sovereignty, transparency, accountability, and most of all, led and guided by the Pacific Islands.¹²

But the potential for delay and inappropriate delivery is still ever present, as earlier comments illustrate. For example, in an attempt to speed up US engagement, two US politicians – one a Democrat and the other a Republican – introduced legislation aimed to shift more US foreign aid funding to the Indo-Pacific region in response to what one described as “China’s bid for hegemony” there. Their Indo-Pacific Act aims to require the State Department and the US Agency for International Development to report to Congress on the resources and activities required to achieve US policy objectives in the region, and to provide “a detailed plan to expand US diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance presence in the Pacific Island nations within the next five years.” Their legislation, the politicians claim, reflects growing concern that America’s current development efforts are losing the battle for influence in a region that is home to nearly 60% of the world’s population but accounts for only 11% of President Biden’s fiscal year 2023 budget request for US foreign assistance.¹³

A further reason is that the US is likely to support an extended role for New Zealand in the region for at least two reasons. One is that “The United States in particular shares New Zealand’s concerns about addressing strategic competition in the Pacific (and elsewhere), and is increasingly focussed on climate change as a national security issue.¹⁴ If New Zealand were to assume an extended climate change role in the Pacific this would enable the US to focus further north in association with Australia and its other allies. Secondly, the nature of New Zealand existing regional approach has already attracted US support, with this confirmed by the contents of Secretary of State Blinken’s email to

Foreign Minister Mahuta on Waitangi Day 2022, which has the added advantage that the sentiments it contains are exactly what the Pacific Forum Members would like to hear.

Our relationship is one of mutual trust, common values, and unwavering friendship. We work together to protect our natural environment, champion our diversity and cultures, and ensure a free, open, and prosperous ... region. ... We maintained a mutually beneficial security relationship – from enhancing interoperability ... to provid[ing] humanitarian assistance ... We continue to stand together and do the *mahi* – work – as we face global challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.¹⁵

Two further reasons are that New Zealand's foreign policy approach is seen within the region to be independent, with this demonstrated by its anti-nuclear approach. As a result, within the Pacific New Zealand is seen as less beholden to the US and its regional policies than Australia. And second, New Zealand has developed considerable soft power expertise from its involvement in UN peacekeeping, peace-making generally, and in particular because of its engagement in Bougainville and East Timor.

An additional reason is the way New Zealand has framed and is implementing its *Pacific Resilience* policy, with its approach based on lessons learnt from the Solomon Islands RAMSI intervention. There, the dilemma Prime Minister Howard and Foreign Minister Downer faced in deciding whether to intervene or not was based on two things: their belief that “there is no exit strategy from our own region ... [and second] that “it is worth paying a premium for regional leadership.”¹⁶ Given the situation in the Solomons now, with China having established a strong strategic presence there, this shows how difficult it is to decide what the right strategies are when the recipients are sovereign states; when a regional leadership role is thought to be non-negotiable; and when the donor's own security interests are its prime motivation for involvement.

The difficulty with “an own security motivation” approach, which predated concerns about China's involvement in the region, is highlighted in a Lowy Institute article.

Publicly, Australia's Pacific Step-up aims to win friends and influence people. Behind this facade however, a core purpose is to make sure the Pacific Islands don't embrace China, just as Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare has done. The Pacific Step-up is an engagement-type strategy [which] works with and through domestic interest groups, the governmental elite of the island nations, with rather less interest taken elsewhere across society. The problem for Australia was that the Solomon Islands' governmental elite had ambitions that advanced China's not Australia's strategic aims. The Pacific Step-Up [consequently] needs to be refo-

cused towards those who share Australia's regional ambitions, not to those who are simply the present governmental elite.¹⁷

Although New Zealand's aid approach may ultimately reflect not just its humanitarian bias, but also the limitations on what a small country can do in contrast with its much larger and more assertive Australian neighbour, Lowy's suggested refocus, in my view, misses the point. An aid selection process shouldn't be based ultimately on the donor's regional ambitions. Instead, it should be about providing help where help is needed, and in that way, building a climate of support which will ultimately result in overall improvement in the strategic environment. This is why New Zealand has framed its aid approach on the basis that:

Our long-term strategy is to achieve a stable and prosperous Pacific, in close partnership with Pacific countries, regional organisations and other development partners. New Zealand's engagement in the Pacific is guided by the principles of understanding, friendship, mutual benefit, collective impact and sustainability.¹⁸

A final reason is that the suggested approach could be framed as an alternative to New Zealand's traditional security and defence policy approach. Its basis would be the well-being imperative of prevention, with two additional advantages. First, that it would be consistent with the UN General Assembly World Summit 2005 Resolution on the *Responsibility to Protect* or R2P as it is more commonly called, which New Zealand is already bound by, and pursuant to which Member States are invited:

To prioritise efforts to manage diversity as a strength rather than as a weakness, strengthen accountability and the rule of law, ensure secure livelihoods, promote a vibrant civil society supporting a plurality of views, and guarantee non-recurrence.¹⁹

The second advantage is that it could be framed and presented as a variation on Sweden's action plan on [conflict] prevention which has attracted substantial UN and EU verbal and financial support. The Swedish plan has two broad categories: direct/operational prevention on a reactive basis to deal with immediate and imminent issues; and structural prevention in the form of long term institutional and/or grass roots change to help create, with local support, sustainable solutions to address underlying problems. Variations on both could be applied to what I am proposing.

The How

What is proposed, is for the Aid and Development Group in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Wellington, to take over the lead role in coordinating Pacific climate change initiatives, and that once New Zealand and Australia have agreed that this would be advantageous,

a working team would need to be established - with appropriate short-term secondments from Canberra - to liaise with island countries and to advance the proposal. Although both will require detailed input, the new arrangement should proceed relatively smoothly. Both countries are long-term Pacific aid and development partners and already cooperate closely on shared responsibility and initiatives to improve the quality of aid delivery generally. They also focus jointly on aid coordination, transparent donor practices and good governance, with current examples the Tonga Police Development Programme designed to increase public trust and confidence in the local Police Force, and with France in the FRANZ Arrangement which shares information and coordinates responses to natural disasters in the region. Additionally, New Zealand already manages Australia's annual aid contribution of AU\$2.2 million to the Cook Islands and Australia manages New Zealand's annual aid contribution NZ\$2 million to Nauru.

The overall objective would be to achieve better Pacific Island community resilience by articulating the importance of prioritising the inclusion of climate change initiatives into the long-term development programmes of individual nation states and PICs generally, rather than focussing on one-off short-term project-based solutions, and to communicate this effectively to donors and aid recipients.

The approach would be based on: supporting partner countries to adapt to climate change by planning, preparing for and responding to climate related impacts; promoting the shift to lower-emissions development in the region; supporting innovative solutions to climate change and climate change financing, including those that engage private sector investment. These issues would be progressed in partnership with the Pacific Forum, and as appropriate, with individual Pacific Island Countries. They would involve coordinating and prioritising New Zealand/Australian Pacific climate change initiatives as part of overall PIC developments; taking urgent steps to reverse the situation described in the UN's 2022 report on its 17 Strategic Development Goals for 2030; improving the flow of funds from existing donors by streamlining access and accreditation processes in recipient countries to overcome cash-flow delays, with estimates that it can currently take up to five years for approved finance to become available, with the result that only 20 percent of the around USD1 billion needed annually is available;²⁰ attracting support from finance and planning experts to develop options for presentation to potential private sector donors that demonstrate how simplified administrative procedures and the integrating of climate finance into wider development policies, programmes and budgets can produce better results; demonstrating – as a way to encourage more donor finance - how practical solutions, such as Fiji's initiative to overcome the impacts of climate crisis events by planning to relocate 42 villages - with six having already been moved – has worked; by establishing a Centre for Excellence to show the international community how Pacific climate change adaptation and remediation initiatives aimed at building long-term resilience are progressed; and, the benefits of doing so in “The Pacific Way.”

To those who might say that what I am suggesting is impractical, that sibling rivalry will doom it, and that the various dogs in the security and/or aid business will still want to wag their own tails even in a narrow area like climate change, I wish them well in their pursuit of the status quo. The reality is that in the current environment and amongst the PICs in particular – assuming there is a remedial model – there is no question that climate adaptation is the number one issue. Without more action than is currently taking place, it is going to overwhelm everything else – or perhaps submerge might be a better verb to choose.

Options for the NZDF

One is for a continuation of the current defence policy approach, with this likely to see New Zealand's regional participation becoming less welcome beyond the South Pacific. The reasons for this are that current state of the NZDF's capabilities; New Zealand's low level of spending on defence as a percentage of GDP, despite an increase in defence's 2022/2023 budget to approximately NZ\$6 billion in 2022/2023; the extent that it now lacks a range of lethal, networked, survivable and logistically supportable land, sea, space, air and cyber capabilities needed to enable it to adapt to both anticipated and unimagined contingencies, or the know-how to enable it to operate at a world class level. All this has resulted in the Army having an attrition rate of 16%, the Navy 12% and the Air Force's at 10%, with uncompetitive remuneration a key factor, plus workforce gaps placing limitations on how the NZDF can respond to domestic needs, let alone sustain operational activity, and generate outputs.²¹

In my view, without clear policy direction, a very substantial increase in defence spending and appropriate prioritisation of priorities, there will inevitably be continuing pressure to reassess NZDF capabilities. The first casualties are likely to be the two frigates because of their reduced relevance and their cost impact on other NZDF activities. The SAS and a small ready reaction force will be retained for domestic, PIC and occasional UN flag waving tasks. The capabilities and personnel needed for disaster relief, humanitarian tasks, search and rescue, border protection and ocean surveillance in New Zealand's immediate region will also be retained. Remaining Defence personnel not needed for these tasks will probably be retained too for political reasons, increasingly carrying out non-military tasks, in the pretence that they represent the force's surge capacity.

Under this option, New Zealand is likely to continue to go it alone with its Pacific Resilience programme; is unlikely to be able to convince Australia that it should take over the suggested PIC climate change role; will still maintain its anti-nuclear docking prohibition; will continue to prioritise its trade relations with China; and will pretend – by virtue of occasional guarded comments – that it is still a committed member of the Western alliance. This overall approach will please China, but will add to the perception that New Zealand is a defence freeloader and an unreliable ally as intimated earlier by

Brabin-Smith's and Australia's intelligence chief, Shearer comments. All this emphasises the importance of a fundamental reassessment of what the NZDF is there for, what it is likely to be asked to do, and leads to option two.

Option Two and the benefits of establishing an ANZAC force

Assuming New Zealand is still serious about its security commitments and its obligations to Australia in particular, it needs to work out what it can credibly offer that can make a difference, and progress this as a matter of urgency, with clarity essential for several reasons. First, so that those responsible for implementing decisions know exactly what is required of them. Second, so that its security partners know what it will and will not do, and can plan accordingly. "And third, so that those same partners – assuming New Zealand's response is sufficiently credible – can have confidence in it to share information and technology with it so that it can perform safely and competently, with the need for this recognised in the NZDF's Strategy²⁵ Update:

NZDF's partners need to trust that [New Zealand] will share what it should and protect what it should. They need to trust the quality of the information it shares with them and the quality of its analysis. They need to see value in working with NZDF to achieve shared objectives. NZDF's partners need to trust that it will share what it should and protect what it should. They need to trust the quality of the information it shares with them and the quality of its analysis. They need to see value in working with NZDF to achieve shared objectives. NZDF must take a long-term view of this. Trust cannot be surged and must exist before a crisis [arises].²²

The implementation of this option will see New Zealand becoming unequivocally committed to its own security and its international security obligations, motivated by the implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine; Russia, China, Iran and possibly Saudi Arabia cozying up to one another; North Korea's continual nuclear weapons sabre rattling; the reality that there is now a strong anti-West agreement between China and Russia; acceptance of the fact – as Australia believes – that China's real intentions are to displace the US as world leader, and that consistent with this, its first priority is to continue to establish primacy in the Asia-Pacific region with other countries there having to defer to its wishes.

The Australian view that the Indo-Pacific region as a whole is now in focus from a specific threat perspective with this emphasised by Australia's Director General of the Office of National Intelligence in his comments that Under China's President Xi Jinping:

We see a leader who is really battering down and hardening his country for this struggle to overtake the United States as the world's leading power. And the way station, if you like, the base camp for getting to that position

of global pre-eminence, is to establish primacy in the Indo-Pacific region. A situation where other countries in the region, across South-East Asia, across the Pacific, including Australia, have to defer to Beijing's choices.²³

Hopefully this view, which mirrors that of the US, may eventually turn out to be wrong. But what if this isn't the case? While it is fine to hope for the best in security terms, it is both irrational and negligent not to prepare for the worst, which is what Australia is currently doing and New Zealand needs to do.

Ideally, this second option should proceed on the basis of the formation of an ANZAC force, with issues like where its various components are located, what other elements might also benefit from a combined approach, and what command and control regimes should apply, matters for the two countries to decide, based on practical not sovereignty considerations.

What will be crucial will be for coordination to proceed in a way that maximises the benefits of the two countries combined capabilities, with relevance crucial. This will unquestionably require a change to NZDF priorities, with an indication of what this might entail foreshadowed by Brabin-Smith.

Perhaps the question turns on what New Zealand can realistically offer and where it can "make a difference," especially in intense, high-technology warfare. I ask the same question with respect to Australia and come up with the conclusion that our focus should be maritime (together with our significant contribution to intelligence collection and analysis). This leaves a lesser role for the army, and its funding should reflect this. Maritime issues to be addressed include how surface warships would responsibly be used (because of questions about vulnerability to emerging threats) and new directions in the nature of technology and warfare. I conclude much the same for New Zealand. New Zealand's maritime capabilities (including surveillance and intelligence) would make a valuable contribution to the stability of the South Pacific – and have the flexibility to be deployed further afield, say to the North Pacific or even the Indian Ocean, were priorities at the time to allow this and were the gesture to be deemed sufficiently important (for example in support of the Quad).²⁴

In terms of maritime capabilities, the NZDF's P-8A Poseidons could be useful not just in the South Pacific, but potentially much further afield; and the addition of New Zealand's two frigates would add 1/5th to the size of the ADF's current frigate fleet. On completion of their upgrades, their surveillance, self-defence, and combat systems will be to a standard comparable to the Australian, Canadian and UK frigates, and allow them to operate in a full range of roles.²⁵ However, despite this, as they and their Australian counterparts – which are due to be replaced in due course by Hunter-class frigates – will

still be vulnerable against a capable enemy. This raises a fundamental question: are they still likely to be relevant given the emerging technology of modern warfare, particularly as options for autonomous vehicles such as the US Navy's experiments with extra-large unmanned undersea vessels and unmanned surface ships are being considered with the development of the latter already well advanced?

Unquestionably, any NZDF components will need to be interoperable with those of the ADF to be able to make a relevant and meaningful contribution. This is unlikely to happen unless there is an integrated force with all its components properly trained and equipped, with – in the case of the NZDF – a long way for it to go despite ongoing claims in and since the 2018 Defence Strategic Policy Statement that it has the financial resources to meet the government's operational and strategic priorities; is combat capable, flexible and ready; and is a credible and trusted international partner.²⁶

What the NZDF component will need is access to much needed US and Australian technology, with – for example - an indication of how far the New Zealand Army will have to go illustrated in two ways. First - as previously mentioned – as at 2021/2022 its reported land combat capabilities prepared for global complex warfighting operations at zero. Second, the way the Australian Army is likely to conduct its operations following the implementation of its Land 8113 long-range precision strike system.

[Land 8113] offers great opportunity for the Australian Army. Through [it] Australia will acquire surface-to-surface missiles that will enable the establishment of its own defensive zone; a recreation of the No Man's Land of the First World War measured not in hundreds of metres, but thousands. I believe this acquisition will prove revolutionary in Army's contribution to national security, in co-operation with the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). ... Long-range precision strike in combination with long-range sensors will give Australia the ability to deter adversaries from manoeuvring against Australian territory and interests.²⁷

One of the key issues if an ANZAC force is to be established, will be whether New Zealand is invited to join AUKUS, and regardless of whether or not this eventuates, the need to reverse New Zealand's anti-nuclear propulsion docking prohibition. My view is that this piece of legislation has outlasted any credibility it may have had, particularly as the prohibition is designed purely for domestic political considerations and overlooks the fact that:

The reality is that New Zealand's security and prosperity only exists because of the combined deterrent effect of western forces and the ability to enforce the rules-based order. Like it or not, New Zealand still lives under the protection of the nuclear umbrella that it eschews.²⁸

A further practical issue with the formation of an ANZAC force will be how this can be reconciled with New Zealand taking on an extended Pacific aid management and coordination role, and not only doing this task independently but also being seen to be doing it independently. New Zealand's so-called "fiercely independent" foreign policy approach should help, together with its long-standing support for disarmament, its signature to international treaties and conventions that work to limit the production, proliferation and use of inhumane conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, and its established reputation for taking a firm, principled line on the elimination of nuclear weapons in the Pacific; and, that it has an established "soft power" approach in its international dealings, in contrast with Australia's more robust "Shape, Deter, Respond" attitude.

Another issue is how – if at all – the impact of the creation of an ANZAC force will have on New Zealand's trade relations with China. The creation of such a force could be framed as part of Australia's extended security approach, with an expanded climate change role for New Zealand in the Pacific seen as an essential *quid pro quo* for Australia to accept New Zealand taking on this responsibility.

What China clearly hopes for from New Zealand is a continuation of its quiescent foreign policy approach in contrast to that of Australia. The way China sees this progressing was outlined by its new Ambassador to New Zealand on his arrival there in early 2022. He stated then that the two countries have worked together to create many "firsts" in bilateral cooperation to their benefit and to the benefit of their people by contributing in that process to the promotion of regional and global cooperation. "China attaches great importance to the development of China-New Zealand relations and would like to work with New Zealand to implement the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, [and to] promote the healthy and stable development of the China-New Zealand Comprehensive Strategic Partnership by way of enhancing communications and deepening practical cooperation" he said. Time will tell whether this approach will continue.

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- 2 Dibb & Brabin-Smith, p. 20.
- 3 Hon Nanaia Mahuta, "Kia Hora te Marino: A Peaceful, Prosperous and Stable Indo-Pacific," Speech to the Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia, Jakarta, 16 November 2021, available at <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/kia-hora-te-marino-peaceful-prosperous-and-stable-indo-pacific>
- 4 Defence Assessment 2021: He Moana Pukepuke E Ekengia E Te Waka, NZ Ministry of Defence, para 122, p. 30., available at <https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/publication/defence-assessment-2021>
- 5 Terence Wood, "The volatile waters of Pacific aid," DEVPOLICYBLOG, 1 June 2021, available at <https://devpolicy.org/volatile-pacific-aid-20210601/>
- 6 See Lowry Institute Pacific Aid Map, available at <https://pacificaidmap.lowryinstitute.org/>
- 7 The signature page number 16 shows the number of UN agencies involved.
- 8 UN Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2022, p.16.
- 9 A Fight For Survival: Tackling the climate crisis is key to security in the blue Pacific, Climate Council of Australia, 2022, available at <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/a-fight-for-survival-tackling-climate-crisis-key-to-security-in-the-blue-pacific/#:~:text=Report's%20Key%20findings&text=Action%20to%20urgently%20reduce%20greenhouse,change%20poses%20for%20our%20region.>
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