



# GOVERNMENT OF NIUE

## Office of the Premier

### PRESS RELEASE

#### PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND PACIFIC MISSION TO NIUE- 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2018.

##### 13<sup>TH</sup> March 2018

The Premier of Niue said he was very pleased to host the new Prime Minister and her delegation to Niue recently.

“We held some excellent discussions on our current initiatives and policy directions. The Prime Minister and her delegation were pleased to hear we were aiming to be self-sustaining within 5-10 years. “

The discussions included Niue’s future plans but also addressing current infrastructure, social and economic issues.

“We discussed the challenges we face with ageing and outdated infrastructure and what needs to be done to invest in these for the future. New Zealand shares our vision for renewal energy sources for power generation and they have agreed to provide funding of \$5m so we can achieve 80% reliance on renewable energy.

“This funding will be for solar power generation and batteries for storage of excess power. Solar energy is cleaner for the environment and brings Niue closer to its climate change targets and less dependence on fossil fuels. We estimate annual savings of approximately \$1m.

Niue and New Zealand have agreed to an initial injection of \$750,000 to help with water issues and roads repairs.

New Zealand will advise the annual funding arrangements once the New Zealand budget has been approved.

The Premier said that the biggest change though was New Zealand’s agreement to allow full access to the New Zealand pension without having to live in New Zealand to qualify.

“For many years our folk have had to travel to and live in New Zealand to qualify but now we can qualify here in Niue and will be paid subject to the scheme.

“We argued that we are New Zealand citizens and members of the Realm of New Zealand and should be treated as citizens. I believe this will help our population as well.

I understand that it is between 2 x \$600 for a married couple or up to \$760 for a single person.”

The Premier said he had preferred that Niue provide a visit that was laid back to suit Niue's style.

"I'd like to thank everyone involved with visit and to say she and her delegation all enjoyed the simple program and easy style we showed.

"In many respects she is the daughter of Niue."

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