

Rt Hon Helen Clark  
Prime Minister of New Zealand



8 August 2002

## Media Statement

### Statement on the formation of the Government

Prime Minister Helen Clark announced today that a coalition agreement had been reached between the Labour Party and the Progressive Coalition Party, and that the two parties would form a minority government.

The new government will have support on confidence and supply for this term of Parliament under an agreement reached with the United Future Party.

Helen Clark said that she had this afternoon informed the Governor-General of the agreements which had been reached.

**“The coalition agreement between Labour and the Progressive Coalition Party has the objective of providing stable government over the next term of Parliament in order to implement a comprehensive policy programme aimed at increasing economic growth, reducing inequality, and improving the social and economic well-being of all New Zealanders and their families in a manner which is environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable.**

“The two parties will operate in government on a good faith and no surprises basis. Agree-to-disagree provisions will apply where necessary, as provided for by the Cabinet Manual as rewritten by the previous Labour-Alliance Coalition.

“Labour will lead the broad policy programme, recognising also the Progressive Coalition’s general priorities of employment, support for low income families, health and education, and its wish to make specific progress on:

- enhancing better co-ordination and integration of industry assistance,
- implementation of a comprehensive drug strategy, and
- policy to promote a better balance of work and family responsibilities.

“The detail of the policy programme will be set out in the Speech from the Throne.

“The Progressive Coalition will have one Cabinet position.”

Helen Clark said that a formal agreement on confidence and supply was being signed with the United Future Party.

“That agreement acknowledges that the detail of the government’s policy programme will be based on the manifestos of the government coalition partners and will take account of the policy priorities of the United Future Party.

“As immediate priorities, the government will, in consultation with the Leader of United Future:

- develop by the end of the year proposals for a Commission for the Family which will have regard to relevant parts of the United Future and Labour policies,
- pass strong victims’ rights legislation,
- introduce and pass the government’s foreshadowed transport legislation which includes provisions for alternative funding options.

“United Future, like the Progressive Coalition Party, has also prioritised a comprehensive drug education strategy aimed at young people.

“The government and United Future will operate on a good faith and no surprises basis.

“The government will consult with United Future on the broad outline of the legislative programme and priorities in it; key legislative measures; major policy issues; and broad Budget parameters.

“There will be regular leadership meetings scheduled.

“United Future will also support the government on procedural motions in the House and in select committees, unless United Future has previously advised that such support is not forthcoming. Support for particular legislative measures which do not relate to confidence or supply will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.”

Helen Clark said that discussion was continuing between Labour and the Greens on establishing a collaborative working relationship during this term of Parliament.

“There are many issues on which the two parties will want to work together. Both parties are working to formalise a constructive relationship.”

Helen Clark announced the following timeline for the establishment of the new government and the reconvening of Parliament:

- Monday 12 August: Labour Caucus meets to elect its Cabinet ministers.
- Thursday 15 August: Ministers sworn in by Governor-General at Government House, Wellington.
- Monday 26 August: Commission opening of Parliament. MPs sworn in and Speaker elected.
- Tuesday 27 August: formal state opening of Parliament.
- Wednesday 28 August: Address-in-Reply debate begins.

Helen Clark said that she was pleased that the co-operation of a range of parties was enabling the formation of a government to proceed quickly and the speedy resumption of Parliament.

“There is a great deal of business carried over from the previous Parliament. In the last four months of the year, the government hopes to make good progress on its legislative programme. Ministers will also be busy implementing key programmes and policies carried through from the previous term, and those new policies pledged for action in this second term of a Labour-led government,” Helen Clark said.

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