Air New Zealand and Tourism New Zealand Reception to acknowledge the friendship and support of our Tourism partners in Japan

Tourism New Zealand Chair, Kerry Prendergast

Thursday, November 1, 2012 New Zealand Residence, New Zealand Embassy

It gives me great pleasure to be here to acknowledge the friendship and support of our Tourism partners in Japan.

Tourism is a major industry for New Zealand.

- It earns 15% of New Zealand's export earnings, is responsible for 8.6% of New Zealand's GDP, and employs just under one in ten working New Zealanders.
- Japan is an extremely important tourism market for New Zealand [\$238m/yr]. We have welcomed millions of Japanese travellers to our shores over the years. We are now focusing on what we can offer a new generation of Japanese tourists.

This past year has seen some welcome developments in transporting tourists between Japan and New Zealand.

- During the PM's visit in September, the New Zealand and Japanese governments concluded an updated and modernised Japan-New Zealand Air Services Agreement.
- We welcome the return of Air New Zealand's daily year-round direct flights from Japan to New Zealand, and All Nippon Airlines as new code-share partner.
- These developments will make it even easier for fans of New Zealand and fans of Middle Earth to travel to our country.

New Zealand is 100% Middle-earth, 100% Pure New Zealand.

- I know that Japanese fans are eagerly awaiting the release of *The Hobbit:* An Unexpected Journey just as much as we are in New Zealand.
- The Lord of The Rings trilogy and very soon, The Hobbit films will transport viewers to a magical land: Middle-earth.
- Those who have visited New Zealand know that whilst the characters in the films are fictional, the awe inspiring landscape is very real, and can be seen and enjoyed by anyone who travels to New Zealand.
- We hope the millions of fans of the *Lord of the Rings* worldwide, will also be inspired by the *Hobbit* movie to come to New Zealand, see Middle-

earth first-hand, and enjoy all the exciting and fun experiences New Zealand has to offer.

• I expect we will see plenty of travellers from Japan taking us up on our offer.

[Closing]

- In closing, I'd like to acknowledge the friendship and support that Tourism New Zealand has received from JATA and a large number of individuals from across the Japan industry in helping to promote New Zealand, both to the traditional senior segment and the increasing number of younger Japanese travellers
- We have been very encouraged to hear the building positivity you all have for New Zealand and our thanks to you and your teams for both your support and your warm welcome to Japan

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[Note: after each bullet point, the translator will then translate into Japanese]