

Diplo Media Report 2022/01

National Centre for Research on Europe

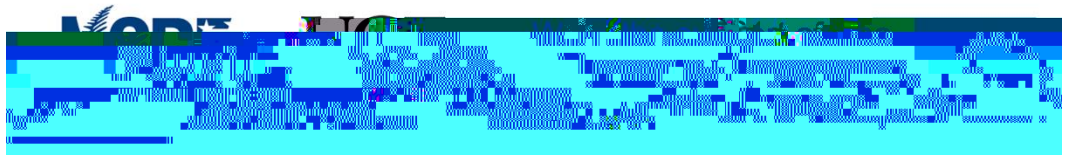
MEDIA REPORT

**The European Union and Mahuta: New
Zealand's Media Coverage**

DIPLO Project
National Centre for Research on Europe
University of Canterbury, New Zealand

The European Union and Mahuta : 1 H Z = H D O D Q G ¶ V 0 H G L D & R Y H U

Dr Serena Kelly



Media Coverage = HDODQ

March 2022 media report, Dr Serena Kelly, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

New Zealand and the European Union (EU) have long been hailed as harmonious voices on the international stage, with 1HZ = HDODQG ¶V 0LQLVWU\ RI)RUHLQJLQJ brUV DQG WKH PLQGHGQHVV RQ LQWHUQDWLRQU\ ÿ ^q•2,,.¿!• vRc q/ @ `HP† pLV...P

spark a mass of articles which linked Mahuta with the EU? As we now know, on Thursday February 24, Russia began a military invasion of Ukraine.

Sources

All of the articles included in the dataset under consideration (February 2022) were written either partially or fully by a local NZ author. Only 3/25 were co-authored by both local and international sources. These three items were published on RNZ / ABC / Reuters as the international news source. The first, published on 19 February 2022, concerned Mahuta set for 11-12 February to visit the EU. The second dual-sourced news item was published on the 23 February and concerned Mahuta summoning the Russian Ambassador over the Ukrainian crisis. This news item listed the EU as a target of Mahuta's criticism against the EU.⁵ Hence, although Mahuta was apparently physically in Europe at the time of the announcement, no mention was made about her trip. The third news item which used both local and international news sources included information from Reuters / RNZ / ABC /

Framing

Unsurprisingly, the majority of the articles under analysis emanated from a political frame (21). Of those political articles, 16 were primarily concerned with the Russia Ukraine conflict and five on the Indo-Pacific Strategy (and Forum that Mahuta attended). The Indo-Pacific Forum was mainly covered in the lead-up to the meeting, with only one article mentioning it after the fact, and then only in passing (stating that Mahuta attended).

The results of this news coverage are arguably both a positive and negative finding for scholars who DUH LQWHUHVWHG LQ WKH (8 1 V YLVL Ets. Efforts at Public Diplomacy. The Q D W L F HYHQW LWVHOI ZDV REYLRXVO\ D FRXS IRU WKH (8 1 Ws from UKD WHJ\ minded leaders in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, EU coverage would have gained more visibility in a number of countries from the attending leaders.

As demonstrated above, the results of the analysis discussed above demonstrated some positive UHVXOWV IRU WKH YLVLELOLW\ RI WKH (XURSHDQ 8QLRQ LQ WKH visit to Europe. The lead-up to the trip showed an increase in news items which included both Mahuta and the EU. It also resulted in garnering the attention of local journalists who were interested in the trip and, presumably, the outcome of the trip.

<HW WKH HVFDODWLQJ VHFUXULW\ VLWXDWLRQ RQ WKH (8 1 V ERUC FRQFUHWH RXWFRPHV IURP 0 Dhe New York Times on Live News on the Indo-Pacific Forum, journalists turned their attention to the unfolding events in Ukraine. This unfolding situation demonstrates the evolving nature of news items and the inability to predict future events of importance. What may have resulted in major and secondary news items about the EU as a political DFWRU ZDV TXLFNO\ FKDQJHG WR IRFXV RQ 1HZ =HDODQG 1 V DQ ZLWK WKH (8 1 and actions becoming less important. It was unclear if an NZ journalist accompanied Mahuta on her trip.