

Aide Memoire — Cabinet 23 May: NZDF Support Options for Ukraine—Artillery Training Team, Surplus Equipment and Training Ammunition

- The United Kingdom has made a specific request of Aotearoa New Zealand to assist the UK in the provision of urgent military assistance to Ukraine. The request involves:
 - deployment of a NZDF training team of up to 30 NZDF personnel until 31 July 2022 to the UK to train Ukrainian soldiers; and
 - the supply of 360 rounds of ammunition for training purposes and surplus weapon aiming systems, all from existing NZDF stocks.
- The equipment and training are requested urgently by Ukraine. Reinforcing Ukrainian artillery capability as soon as possible will be pivotal to Ukraine’s self-defence efforts over the next four-to-five weeks.
- Separate advice on the next phase of Aotearoa New Zealand’s support to Ukraine is being prepared for Cabinet in June. This advice will include a strategic framework to guide decision-making on all forms of New Zealand support to Ukraine and provides principles for considering future requests from our partners.
- This framework would ensure that New Zealand’s national interests are served as the situation continues to evolve, and avoid our response being a series of short-term, reactionary decisions.

MFAT advice

- The war in Ukraine has entered a new phase with the concentration of Russia’s military activity in the south and east and strong resistance from Ukraine. The provision of military assistance from partner countries, including Aotearoa New Zealand has been crucial for Ukraine’s self-defence.
- Aotearoa New Zealand’s contributions to date have been well-received by Ukraine and by our partners.
- As the conflict evolves into this new phase, there is a case for Aotearoa New Zealand, as part of the ongoing international effort, to provide further assistance to Ukraine.
- Ahead of the advice to Cabinet in June, the UK has made this urgent request to help meet Ukraine’s need for artillery. This request therefore needs to be considered independently.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)

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- This proposed activity represents a practical, niche opportunity for Aotearoa New Zealand to provide a valued and immediate additional contribution to the self-defence of Ukraine.
- This activity would complement earlier Cabinet decisions to deploy assets and personnel to Europe and the provision of equipment and weapons to Ukraine.

Responding positively to this request would further support New Zealand's international interests.

- This activity would be consistent with international law, as New Zealand is entitled to support Ukraine's self-defence. The deployment does not present a significant risk of being a party to the conflict, as New Zealand would not be directly participating in hostilities
- New Zealand Defence Intelligence assesss the threat to personnel as s6(a) as the training would be exclusively conducted in the UK and the NZDF personnel would not enter the territories of Ukraine, Belarus or Russia.
- s6(a)
- A [joint] Press Release has been prepared for release should Cabinet agree to the deployment.

*Ukraine Response Unit
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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