

22 September 2022

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OIA 28258

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I refer to your email of 26 August 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

Please provide documentation or guidance you have for how (and why) New Zealand mediates relations with Pacific nations and China and the US. Also please list and name meetings over the past 5 years where mediation has occurred with New Zealand officials acting as a mediator between PICs and China and/or the US.

Aotearoa New Zealand does not undertake a mediation role, in either the legal sense (as a third party / mediator in legal disputes) or in common usage (an intermediary role promoting reconciliation, settlement, or compromise) between China and other countries. Your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information does not exist.

Aotearoa New Zealand is a Pacific nation, and our overriding priority has long been strong and enduring regional unity. The Pacific Islands Forum is the preeminent political regional organisation through which we discuss issues of importance to the Pacific. A strong regional architecture helps our region develop a nuanced and strategic response to all manner of challenges.

Our approach to all external partners is that it is important that engagement in the Pacific takes place in a manner which advances Pacific priorities, is consistent with established regional practices, and supportive of Pacific regional institutions. This is not just our message – it is the unequivocal message from all Pacific Islands Forum members.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade