

27 September 2022

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Tēnā koe

I refer to your email of 29 August 2022, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*'All documents - including notes and aide-memoires - prepared for Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's telephone call with the Irish Taoiseach on 7 June 2022.'*

On 1 September 2022, we wrote to you seeking clarification on your request and noting that we interpreted your request to be for:

*'Key documents, such as briefing notes and talking points, prepared in advance of the 6 June 2022 meeting. Not including documents and communications which are administrative or logistical in nature'*

On 1 September 2022, you confirmed that you were happy with this interpretation.

The information relevant to your request – namely, the brief for call titled *Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern phone call with Taoiseach of Ireland, Micheál Martin*, is attached. We have withheld some information under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, we have identified no public interest in releasing the information that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) and enclosed documents on the Ministry's website.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: [DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC' followed by a stylized flourish.

Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

## Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern phone call with Taoiseach of Ireland, Micheál Martin, 8pm Tuesday 7 June



Micheál [Mee-kuhl] Martin has been Ireland's Taoiseach [tee-shock], or Prime Minister, since 2020. As part of a coalition agreement his party (Fianna Fáil, centre-right) have with traditional rivals Fine Gael (also centre-right) and the Green party, Martin shares the position of Taoiseach with Leo Varadkar. Martin has the first 2.5 years; Varadkar will take over for the second 2.5 years in December 2022, when Martin will become Tánaiste (deputy Prime Minister).

Martin is an experienced politician having been Minister of Foreign Affairs; Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Health; and Education at various times between 1997 and 2011. Martin is from Cork, where he was Mayor from 1992 to 1993.

### Objectives

- s6(a), s9(2)(j)
- Emphasise that New Zealand is a close, reliable and constructive partner for Ireland, with warm, long-standing people-to-people links. Drawing on those links, make the case for Ireland supporting an EU FTA with New Zealand – reflecting on President Higgins' excellent 2017 visit to New Zealand in the first days of your role as Prime Minister.
- Outline New Zealand's close engagement on key issues for Ireland including our response to Russia's illegal invasion of **Ukraine**. Discuss the trajectory of the Ukraine conflict, including the impacts Russia's invasion will have on the European Union.

### Key points

#### Bilateral

- Acknowledge the pressures Ireland faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

s6(a)

- Note the strong friendship between New Zealand and Ireland. We are excited about the potential growth in the New Zealand-Ireland relationship following the opening of Embassies in each other's countries (*both opened in 2018*).
- Ask how Ireland's term on the UN Security Council (2021-22) has gone, particularly in light of the Ukraine developments, with Russia of course being a permanent, veto-wielding member. s6(a)

*Ireland is a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) 2021-2022. Ireland's priorities for its term are: to advance peace and security, conflict resolution, climate action, sustainable development, and gender equality. It held the presidency on the UNSC in September 2021.*

- Note that we work well together on the international stage, where we want the same things. We believe in the importance of the multilateral rules-based system, the protection of fundamental human rights; we have ambitious climate change objectives and we both have independent voices on global issues.
- Convey how much the Speaker valued his visit to Dublin last week (1-3 June), when he was able to participate in the launch of the New Zealand Business Network in Ireland – which was attended by a number of current and former Irish Ministers. We look forward to further official visits now that our borders are open.
- s6(a) regarding the Northern Ireland protocol and seek an update from the Irish perspective.
- s6(a)
- Note that New Zealand has been happy to contribute to that peace and stability through our part in the International Fund for Ireland.

*The Northern Ireland Protocol, established as part of complex Brexit arrangements effectively imposes a border in the Irish Sea between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. The Unionists strongly oppose the protocol, s6(a)*

s6(a)

*Martin has said that British “unilateralism flies in the face” of the approach that delivered the peace process, which involved both governments working “hand-in-glove and together”.*

*In recent Northern Ireland elections, for the first time a party committed to Irish reunification (Sinn Fein) beat the unionists. s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)*

*New Zealand is a founding member and contributor to the International Fund for Ireland. The Fund was established in 1986 as an independent organisation by both the Irish and British Governments to promote economic and social advance, as well as encourage contact and dialogue between Nationalists and Unionists throughout Ireland. The Fund's attempts to bridge the gaps between New Zealand's continued support of the Fund is welcomed by Ireland and the UK, s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)*

### **Russia's invasion of Ukraine**

- New Zealand has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the EU and like-minded partners since day one regarding Russia's appalling actions in Ukraine.

- To date, New Zealand has **sanctioned more than 750 individuals and entities** that are influential or strategically important to the Putin regime. We have provided over \$33m in assistance to Ukraine, ranging from NZDF deployments (C-130 Hercules, intelligence and logistics personnel, and an artillery training team), lethal and non-lethal military assistance, humanitarian assistance, and support for human rights monitoring and accountability initiatives.
- More support will be announced later in June. Seek Martin's views on the Ukraine conflict.
- Acknowledge the significant support that the EU and Ireland have provided Ukraine, noting that Ireland has a policy of neutrality (and is a non-NATO member, and Martin will not be at the summit in Madrid).

### EU- New Zealand FTA

- Thank Martin for Ireland's support for the EU-NZ FTA to date. Commend Ireland for its advocacy for free trade, including its involvement in the 'Friends of Free Trade' group within the EU.
- Register the priority New Zealand attaches to concluding a high quality EU FTA. **Underscore the shared interests** that characterise our relationship with Ireland beyond the FTA, and **emphasise the shared value in us cooperating** to counter those who, like Russia, would try and disregard international rules and laws.
- Underline that New Zealand has been working hard to ensure we deliver on our shared commitment with the EU to substantively conclude the FTA later this month.  
s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(j)
- Acknowledge that sensitivities exist among Ireland's agricultural sector but that New Zealand's requests are pragmatic and reasonable s9(2)(g)(i), s9(2)(j)
- The situation in Ukraine underscores the importance of values, democracy, and defending the rules-based system. It is now more important than ever that partners like New Zealand and the EU strengthen and deepen our economic partnership, and the FTA is part of that. s6(a)
- This FTA presents opportunities in terms of **sustainable development**. There is no better partner for Ireland and the EU on these critical issues than New Zealand.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
June 2022