

5 March 2024

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OIA 29046

Tēnā koe

I refer to your email of 30 January 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

Can I instead please receive a list of titles of advice that have been received by the Minister since 8 October, and the date they were sent?

On 27 February 2024 we advised that a decision had been made on your OIA request and that the information relevant to your request was in the final stages of preparation.

The information relevant to your request is attached. This is a list of formal advice provided to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry), from 8 October 2023 to 30 January 2024.

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; and
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

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.

Between 8 October 2023 and 30 January 2024, the Ministry also produced 69 regular Situation Reports on the conflict, and items for 11 Ministerial Weekly Reports, which also include updates on other key global issues.

Information and advice provided to Ministers on the Israel-Hamas conflict covered topics such as:

- Latest **developments in the conflict**, in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel, and in the region
- The **humanitarian situation** in Gaza, the West Bank and Israel, and New Zealand contributions to the humanitarian response;
- New Zealand's **consular response**;
- **Engagements with international partners**, e.g. bilateral ministerial calls;

- **International and multilateral** reactions to the conflict, e.g. public statements by other countries, and United Nations resolutions;
- New Zealand's statements and voting positions in the **United Nations (UN)**.
- New Zealand's **public statements on the conflict**, e.g. through press releases, statements in multilateral fora and social media.

The Ministry's advice has been consistently grounded in international law and revolves around four pillars, as follows:

- The upholding of international law and international humanitarian law;
- Opposition to the use of terror as a political tool and illegal act;
- Recognition of the right of a state to defend itself; and
- The importance of political, not military, solutions.

The Ministry's advice has also drawn from New Zealand's longstanding approach to the Middle East Peace Process, including:

- Support for a comprehensive and sustainable two-state solution, with secure and recognised borders for both Israel and Palestine (based on 1967 lines);
- Support for Israel's right to exist in peace and security;
- Support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; and
- Recognition that direct negotiations between the parties are the only way to achieve a sustainable agreement, and a call for a return to such negotiations.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/

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 Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade