

4 November 2025

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OIA 30465

Personal Details removed for
Proactive Release

Tēnā koe Personal Details removed
for Proactive Release

Thank you for your email of 25 September 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"Under the Official Information Act, please provide all correspondence within the FMAT divisions and with outside governments, organisations and members of families of those on board Global Sumud Flotilla regarding the Global Sumud Flotilla.

On 6 October 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) contacted you to discuss the scope of your request, because as it was originally framed it captured a significant volume of information.

On 6 October 2025, you agreed to refine the scope of your request to be for:

"please provide all advice sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the office"

Attached is the email chain in scope of your request. Some information is withheld 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;
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;
- 9(2)(g)(ii): to protect officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written over a faint horizontal line.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Re: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]
Date: Tuesday, 7 October 2025 6:53:30 am
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

To note, MFA has a range of media engagements this morning that I'd expect to touch on events in the Middle East, including the flotilla: Herald Now at 7:05am, Morning Report at 7:18am and Sean Plunket/the Platform at 7:35am.

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Office of Rt Hon Winston Peters
New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs
Phone/WhatsApp: s9(2)(a)

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 6:39:53 AM
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Re: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

Ace, thanks.

s9(2)(g)(ii)
s9(2)(a)

[Seemail][Restricted]

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 6:36:14 AM
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL] [RESTRICTED]

Hi s9(2)(g)(ii)

Confirming that's correct- no NZers deported overnight. We're informed that all three should be leaving on a bus to Jordan tomorrow. We will come back with a full report, including media lines, later this morning.

Let me know if you have any other questions.

Thanks
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

X-MFAT-MOBILE

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Date: Tuesday, 07 Oct 2025 at 6:21 AM
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Re: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

Thanks s9(2)(g)(ii)

BBC reporting 170 activists were deported overnight. Can we assume the s9(2)(a)
was not among them?

s9(2)(g)(ii)

s9(2)(a)

[Seemail][Restricted]

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Monday, October 6, 2025 3:53:09 PM

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL] [RESTRICTED]

RESTRICTED

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

Below is an update on developments overnight/ today on the Gaza flotilla:

- ANK continues to engage with Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, seeking updates on the situation of the New Zealanders, although the sheer numbers the Israeli system is dealing with means that it can be difficult to get through to officials and obtain information. s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

- HOM ANK will engage with Israeli MFA at a high level to reiterate our expectations about the treatment of detainees, including New Zealanders, given the reports regarding treatment and conditions for detainees.
- We have seen media reports of further deportations – see [Israel departs 29 more Gaza aid flotilla activists | Reuters](#) and [4 Italian activists from Global Sumud aid flotilla deported after Israeli attack on Gaza-bound mission](#). We are not aware of any New Zealanders being included in these deportations, and as noted below, we have asked to be informed before any movement of New Zealanders.
- We have received indications through contacts that there may be a deportation via Jordan on Tuesday, but this is not certain. Again, we may not receive advance notice of further deportation flights.
- ANK continues to work with the s6(a) on providing consular support for the New Zealanders detained. We have received a report on the second New Zealander, and are awaiting the third.
- During this morning's press conference, Green Party co-leader Chlöe Swarbrick acknowledged MFAT's work in engaging with both the detainees' families and Green Party leadership to keep them informed of developments, but called on the Government to do more to bring the detainees home. She also encouraged the public to direct their communications to elected representatives.
- According to [reporting](#) that we have seen, there are two New Zealanders taking part in the "Thousand Madleens to Gaza" flotilla. This flotilla can be tracked [here](#), and will soon be entering the Israeli buffer zone, where the vessels may be intercepted.

If you have any questions, please let us know.

Best regards

s9(2)
(g)
(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(ii)

I sometimes work outside of core hours. Please don't feel obliged to reply to any email you get from me out of normal working hours.

RESTRICTED

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Monday, 6 October 2025 9:37 am

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

Postscript to this – the press conference will be taking place today at 11am at the Ellen Melville Centre in Auckland Central.

Best regards

s9(2)
(g)
(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(ii)

I sometimes work outside of core hours. Please don't feel obliged to reply to any email you get from me out of normal working hours.

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Sunday, 5 October 2025 10:23 pm

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[RESTRICTED]

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

Just one further development this evening- Chloe Swarbrick let me know this evening that the three families intend to hold a press conference. The aim is to share specific information about the detainees and "keep the public's attention focussed on what matters and the political/policy decision makers". Not sure when this is happening yet, but have asked.

Will be in touch with further information tomorrow.

Best regards
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

X-MFAT-MOBILE

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Date: Sunday, 05 Oct 2025 at 12:07 PM

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Re: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

s9(2)(g)
Great thanks(ii)

s9(2)(g)(ii)
s9(2)(a)

[Seemail][Restricted]

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Sunday, October 5, 2025 12:04:06 PM
To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL] [RESTRICTED]

RESTRICTED

s9(2)(g)
Kia ora (ii)

There's not a great deal to report today, but would note the following points:

- You'll have seen the reports of 137 individuals deported to Istanbul on a Turkish Airlines flight. **No New Zealanders were on this flight.** s6(b)(i) and we expect this may be the same for the other deportation flights, although we will ask Israeli MFA to notify us before there are any movements of New Zealanders.
- We have received a more detailed report from s6(a) following their visit on Friday – s6(a) are endeavouring to send through s6(a) s6(a), s6(b)(1)
- I've had a phone call with Chloe Swarbrick this morning to update her on developments overnight. She has asked us to follow up on a couple of points (return of personal property, further detail on deportation/ legal processes), so we will work with ANK on these issues.
- Consular Division is in daily contact with families of the detainees, and have been passing on messages between them.

If there's anything else you need before 1pm, please give me a call. I will be in touch if there's any further information that the PM needs to know ahead of his media round tomorrow morning.

Best regards
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(ii)

I sometimes work outside of core hours. Please don't feel obliged to reply to any email you get from me out of normal working hours.

RESTRICTED

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Sunday, 5 October 2025 9:51 am
To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Re: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

Thanks s9(2)(g)(ii)

Appreciate it. Let me know if you have any new info before 1pm. The PM expects to be asked again at his stand up at 230pm this afternoon. Then a further update by 6pm would be great - ahead of the PM's Monday morning media round starting at 7am.

Cheers

s9(2)(g)(ii)
s9(2)(a)

[Seemail][Restricted]

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Saturday, October 4, 2025 5:16:20 PM
To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

Confirming receipt. Thank you for the update.

Best,
s9(2)(g)
(ii)



s9(2)(g)(ii)
Private Secretary (Foreign Affairs) | Office of Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs | Minister for Racing | Minister for Rail

s9(2)(a)

[Restricted]

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Saturday, 4 October 2025 5:10 pm

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL] [RESTRICTED]

RESTRICTED

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

Hope you're having a good weekend. A quick update on today's developments on the Global Sumud Flotilla:

- Representatives from the s6(a) were at the Ketziot processing facility for almost 12 hours today, and they were able to speak with all three New Zealanders. We only have a summary from s6(a) at this stage, and are waiting for a more fulsome report tomorrow.
- s6(a)

- Two of the NZers are on hunger strike, but are drinking water (I understand this may now be public knowledge). s9(2)(a)

- s6(b)(i)

the situation is still fairly

s9(2)(g)(ii) fluid and I have both had communications with Green Party co-leaders today s9(2)(g)(ii) with Chloe Swarbrick by phone, me by email). They are pleased to be receiving updates but are also keen for more information about the individuals when we're able to provide that. I will contact Chloe again tomorrow morning s9(2)(g)(ii) is now travelling).

- We expect there will be no further significant updates until Monday, given the Shabbat in Israel today. s6(b)(i) so we will report

further on Monday. There are three points that we are specifically asking s6(a) to follow up on:

- s9(2)(a)
- Any concerns s6(a) about the conditions and treatment of flotilla participants at the processing centre
- Understanding further detail about the deportation process.
- Updated media lines are below.

Updated media lines

- MFAT is aware that all vessels in the flotilla have now been intercepted by the Israeli Navy. Israel has advised that all passengers are safe and are being transferred to processing facilities.
- New Zealand has a long-standing 'do not travel' advisory in place for Gaza. The advisory explicitly warns New Zealanders against any attempt to enter Gaza by sea in breach of Israeli Navy restrictions, including participation in flotillas to deliver aid.
- However, the safety of New Zealanders is paramount. We expect any New Zealanders in the flotilla to be treated in a manner consistent with international law and have communicated this directly to Israel several times.
- Given we do not have an embassy presence in Israel, a consular partner in Tel Aviv met with the New Zealanders detained and provided initial consular support on Friday (Israel time). We expect to continue to provide support in the coming days, alongside engaging with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on their situation. We will not be

commenting further on individuals' cases for privacy reasons.

- We acknowledge the high level of public interest in this situation. However, MFAT's consular division and call centre are experiencing extremely high email and call volumes regarding the flotilla, numbering in the thousands. This is impacting on MFAT's ability to provide emergency consular assistance to other New Zealanders in need. We ask the public to refrain from calling the consular emergency line unless it is regarding their own or a family member's emergency.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Best regards

s9(2)
(g)
(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(ii)

I sometimes work outside of core hours. Please don't feel obliged to reply to any email you get from me out of normal working hours.

RESTRICTED

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:27 pm

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[RESTRICTED]

RESTRICTED

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

We provide an update on the Global Sumud Flotilla below for your awareness. We are also including the latest media lines in this email, which the Media team sent you earlier today, so that you have everything in one place.

Latest developments

- Israel has now intercepted all except one of the vessels participating in the Global Sumud Flotilla. The three New Zealanders were on board intercepted vessels (according to social media).
- The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been providing regular updates via WhatsApp to countries with nationals participating in the flotilla, including New Zealand. All participants are being taken to Ashdod Port, then transferred to Ketsiot Prison. They have assured us medical teams will be available during disembarkation, at the port, and at the prison.
- The Israeli MOFA anticipates that most participants will be at Ketsiot Prison by Friday morning local time (overnight tonight NZT).
- Consular representatives will be permitted to visit from 8.30am onwards Friday local time. There will be another opportunity on Sunday local time.
- s6(a) intends to visit the New Zealanders on our behalf on Friday local time.
- We do not yet have any further information on the welfare of the three New Zealanders or know when they will be deported. It is currently Yom Kippur – a major holiday in Israel – so it may not be immediate. Other countries in the same position waiting for further information from Israel.
- HOM ANK reiterated to Israel on Thursday local time that the safety and welfare of New Zealanders is paramount, and

that we expect the New Zealanders participating in the flotilla to be treated in a manner consistent with international law.

- The Ministry continues to receive a high volume of public correspondence regarding the flotilla. We have received over 30,000 emails (at least 17,000 of which have been automated), and a significantly increased volume of calls to the consular emergency line.
- s6(b)(i) We will be in touch with further information if this eventuates.

Latest media lines

- MFAT is aware that all vessels in the flotilla have now been intercepted by the Israeli Navy. Israel has advised that all passengers are safe and are being transferred to processing facilities.
- New Zealand has a long-standing 'do not travel' advisory in place for Gaza. The advisory explicitly warns New Zealanders against any attempt to enter Gaza by sea in breach of Israeli Navy restrictions, including participation in flotillas to deliver aid.
- However, the safety of New Zealanders is paramount. We expect any New Zealanders in the flotilla to be treated in a manner consistent with international law and have communicated this directly to Israel several times.
- The New Zealand Embassy in Ankara has been in proactive contact again today with Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on our expectations regarding the provision of consular services to New Zealanders onboard the flotilla, should this be requested by any of the participants. Given we do not have an embassy presence in Israel, a consular partner in Tel Aviv will provide in-person support should that be needed. The New Zealand Embassy is also seeking an opportunity to speak with the three individuals. We will not be commenting further on individuals' cases for privacy reasons.
- We acknowledge the high level of public interest in this situation. However, MFAT's consular division and call centre are experiencing extremely high email and call volumes regarding the flotilla. This is impacting on MFAT's ability to provide emergency consular assistance to other New Zealanders in need. We ask the public to refrain from calling the consular emergency line unless it is regarding their own or a family member's emergency.

Ngā mihi,

s9(2)
(g)(ii)

Policy Officer

Middle East and Africa Division
New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manatū Aorere

Ms9(2)(a) Es9(2)(g)(ii)

195 Lambton Quay, Private Bag 18901, Wellington 5045, New Zealand
www.mfat.govt.nz | www.safetravel.govt.nz



RESTRICTED

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 3:38 pm

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

H; s9(2)(g)(ii)

Out of scope
agreed lines.

The flotilla did, with the PM sticking closely to the

Cheers,

s9(2)(g)(ii)
s9(2)(a)

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 3:35 PM

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL] [RESTRICTED]

RESTRICTED

s9(2)(g)(ii)
Kia ora

Adding MEDIA to the distro. They would like to know if there is a transcript from the PM's media stand-up today on all the MFAT issues, including the flotilla and Out of scope

There was no livestream of the standup so would be good to know what PM said.

Thank you,

s9(2)
(g)(ii)

Policy Officer

Middle East and Africa Division

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manatū Aorere

M s9(2)(a) E s9(2)(g)(ii)



RESTRICTED

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 10:28 am

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla

Good morning s9(2)(g)(ii)

We provide an update on the flotilla below. ANKs most recent FM (attached) provides further background.

Latest developments

- The Israeli Navy has begun intercepting the Global Sumud Flotilla. Media reports suggest at least 20 Israeli naval ships have been deployed. As at 10.20am, the Global Sumud Flotilla has confirmed via its website that six out of its 44 vessels have been intercepted.
- We have unverified information that **one of the New Zealanders participating in the flotilla was on board an intercepted ship (the *Sirius*)**. s6(b)(i)
- We assume this person has been detained and will be taken to Ashdod port before eventually being deported. While we cannot know with absolute certainty what the process will be, ANKs FM provides more detail about what we can expect (based on media reporting).
- HOM ANK has undertaken to follow up with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs first thing tomorrow morning local time (its currently the middle of the night in Israel/Trkiye).
- We do not know yet whether the ships with the other two New Zealanders on board have been intercepted yet. Our assessment remains that they are likely to be intercepted shortly, although we cannot rule out other possibilities, s9(2)(g)(i)

Media lines (these can be used for the PMs media stand-up at 11am)

- We are aware that the Israeli Navy has begun to intercept the Global Sumud Flotilla.
- New Zealand has a long-standing do not travel advisory in place for Gaza. The advisory explicitly warns New Zealanders against any attempt to enter Gaza by sea in breach of Israeli navy restrictions, including participation in flotillas to deliver aid.
- The safety of New Zealanders is paramount. We expect any New Zealanders in the flotilla to be treated in a manner consistent with international law and have communicated this directly to Israel several times.
- The New Zealand Embassy in Ankara has been in proactive contact with Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the provision of consular services to New Zealanders onboard the flotilla, and our expectations in that regard, should that be requested by any of the participants.
- Practical consular advice has also been shared with groups that are in touch with New Zealanders onboard the flotilla. Details of MFAT's consular services is available on the [SafeTravel](#) website.
- We will not be commenting on individuals cases for privacy reasons.

Ng::ihi,

s9(2)(g)(ii)

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Policy Officer

Middle East and Africa Division

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manat Aorere

Ms9(2)(a)

Es9(2)(g)(ii)

195 Lambton Quay, Private Bag 18901, Wellington 5045, New Zealand

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From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Wednesday, 1 October 2025 1:04 pm

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla

Kia ora ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)},

I understand you are looking to brief PMO on the Global Sumud Flotilla at 2pm today. We provide a short update below.

Latest developments

- The flotilla is currently 10 nautical miles from the danger zone (150 nautical miles off the coast of Gaza) where previous flotillas have been intercepted by the Israeli Navy. Three New Zealanders remain on board.
- We anticipate that the flotilla will be intercepted in the coming hours. The participants, including the three New Zealanders, are likely to be taken to shore by the Israeli Navy and deported.
- While past precedent would suggest peaceful interception is the most likely scenario, we cannot exclude other possibilities, including:
 - The use of force by the Israeli Navy, particularly if they perceive the flotilla participants to violently resist interception.
 - The designation of participants as terrorists by Israeli, resulting in harsher detention conditions if they refuse immediate deportation.
 - The large number of ships in the flotilla (44) overwhelming the Israeli Navy and making it to Gaza. It would take about two days to get to Gaza from their current location.
- The Ministry has consular contingency plans in place should the New Zealanders onboard require assistance. The ^{s6(a)} s6(a) has also offered to provide assistance to our nationals as needed.
- HOM ANK reiterated to Israel yesterday that the safety of New Zealanders is paramount and we expect Israel to fully comply with international law.

We will continue to monitor the situation ^{s6(a)} and will update you on significant developments, including the interception of the flotilla.

Ngāihi,

s9(2)
(g)(ii)

Policy Officer

Middle East and Africa Division

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manat Aorere

Ms9(2)(a) Es9(2)(g)(ii)

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From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Friday, 26 September 2025 4:35 pm

To: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Update on Global Sumud Flotilla

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

MEA/CON provide a short update on latest developments on the Global Sumud Flotilla below for your awareness. The existing media lines remain fit for purpose.

Media lines

- We are aware of reports that drones have attacked some boats participating in the Global Sumud Flotilla.
- New Zealand has a long-standing do not travel advisory in place for Gaza. The advisory explicitly warns New Zealanders against any attempt to enter Gaza by sea in breach of Israeli navy restrictions, including participation in flotillas to deliver aid.
- MFAT is continuing to monitor the situation closely.
- The safety of New Zealanders is paramount. We expect any New Zealanders in the flotilla to be treated in a manner consistent with international law and have communicated this directly to Israel, both before and since the reported drone attacks.
- Consular support is available to any New Zealanders on board if they request assistance. Practical consular advice has also been shared this week with groups that are in touch with New Zealanders onboard the flotilla. Details of MFAT's consular services is available on [SafeTravel](http://SafeTravel.govt.nz).

Latest developments

- Most of the 52 ships in the Global Sumud Flotilla are currently in Greek territorial waters near Crete. At this stage, the flotilla is due to arrive in the conflict zone around Tuesday 30 September, and Gaza around Thursday 2 October. The flotilla can be tracked [here](#).

- Consular Division is working closely with the Embassy in Ankara on consular contingency planning, should New Zealanders onboard the flotilla require assistance next week (noting there will be limits to the assistance we can provide). As part of this, the Embassy is in close contact with consular partners in the region, **s6(a)**
- Approximately 10 ships were targeted on 23 September by drones, explosives, chemical agents, and communications jamming. Although no serious injuries occurred, all three New Zealanders were reportedly on affected ships, and **s9(2)(a)**

The UN has called for an investigation into the attacks.

- Spain and Italy have deployed navy ships in case a rescue operation is needed, though their ability to provide assistance in restricted waters off Israel or Gaza is likely to be extremely limited.
- The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a press conference yesterday (ANKs FM refers). The DG described the flotilla as organised by Hamas; dismissed its humanitarian objectives; reiterated that Israel will not allow any vessel to enter any active, dangerous combat zone or to breach a lawful naval blockade; and offered to deliver aid to Gaza on the flotilla's behalf. Separately, the Italian Government has also offered to deliver the aid on the flotilla's behalf, which the Italian participants have rejected.
- The Ministry continues to be contacted about the flotilla, following a social media post by one of the New Zealanders encouraging people to contact MFAT.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Ngā mihi,

s9(2)
(g)(ii)

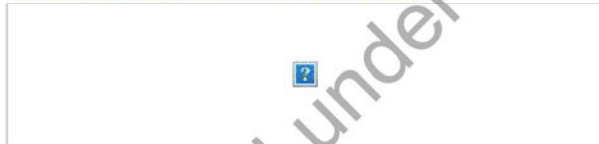
Policy Officer

Middle East and Africa Division

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manat Aorere

Ms9(2)(a) **Es9(2)(g)(ii)**

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From: **s9(2)(g)(ii)**

Sent: Wednesday, 17 September 2025 4:20 pm

To: **s9(2)(g)(ii)**

Subject: **s6(b)(i)**

[SEC=RESTRICTED]

[RESTRICTED]

RESTRICTED

Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

Further to s9(2)(g)(ii) message below, we just wanted to let you know that CON intends to send the following information to Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa Co-Chairs, for them to pass on to their contacts who are participating in the flotilla:

- New Zealand has a long-standing do not travel advisory in place for Gaza. The advisory explicitly warns New Zealanders against any attempt to enter Gaza by sea in breach of Israeli navy restrictions, including participation in flotillas to deliver aid.
- Israel has intercepted all Gaza-bound flotillas since 2010. The Israeli Navy conducts routine patrols of these waters and has made clear that it will prevent any vessel from breaching restrictions. Previous attempts to breach the blockade have resulted in deaths, injuries, and the deportation of foreign nationals.
- While we would always provide consular support to New Zealanders arrested and charged with criminal offending overseas, the Government cannot advocate for special treatment, or the release of New Zealanders imprisoned overseas. Individuals will be subject to Israel's law enforcement and legal systems.
- If you are detained, you are entitled to request consular assistance from the accredited New Zealand Embassy (which is based in Ankara, Turkey. New Zealand does not have an Embassy in Israel). The contact details for the Embassy are: phone number +90 312 446 3333, and email address newzealandembassyankara@gmail.com
- You may also wish to note that the New Zealand Embassy has made it clear to Israel's Department of Foreign Affairs that it expects, if any New Zealanders are detained, that the Embassy would be notified without delay and early consular access be given.
- New Zealand has also been clear to Israel that it expects New Zealanders in the flotilla to be treated in a manner consistent with international law.
- Should flotilla participants be intercepted and offered the choice of detention or deportation, we would urge individuals to choose the option of deportation, which is likely to have less serious consequences for the individual.
- However, New Zealanders should be aware that deportation and certainly criminal charges or a conviction are likely to impact their future ability to travel internationally.
- Additionally, if New Zealanders are detained on national security grounds anywhere, this can complicate and delay our ability to provide consular assistance. Sometimes we're not made aware of New Zealanders detained for national security reasons for some time.
- We advise individuals to consider these serious risks before travelling.
- If New Zealanders require urgent consular assistance they should call the following numbers: 0800 30 10 30 (in New Zealand) or +64 99 20 20 20 (offshore).
- We urge all New Zealanders overseas to register with SafeTravel. If an emergency event impacts the region they are in, SafeTravel is the tool we use to communicate with New Zealanders on the ground.
- Our travel advice can be found here for [Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories](#).

Ideally we would like to send this message out today, but otherwise early tomorrow. Please let us know whether you have any concerns or questions.

Best regards

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

s9(2)(a) s9(2)(g)(ii)

I sometimes work outside of core hours. Please don't feel obliged to reply to any email you get from me out of normal working hours.

RESTRICTED

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)

Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 6:06 PM

To: ...s9(2)(g)(ii)

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: s6(b)(i)

[SEC=RESTRICTED]

[RESTRICTED]

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Kia ora s9(2)(g)(ii)

s6(b)(i)

s6(a) With sincere apologies for the tight turnaround, **could you please let us know if the Minister agrees with this recommendation?**

s6(a), s9(2)(g)(i)

For context, New Zealand has a long-standing do not travel advisory in place for Gaza. This states that the New Zealand Government has an extremely limited ability to provide assistance to New Zealand nationals in Gaza, and explicitly warns, We strongly advise against any attempt to enter Gaza by sea in breach of Israeli navy restrictions or participating in any attempt to break the naval blockade, including participation in flotillas to deliver aid. The Israeli Navy conducts routine patrols of these waters and has made clear that it will prevent any vessel from breaching restrictions. Previous attempts to breach the blockade have resulted in deaths, injuries and the deportation of foreign nationals.

As we did with the March to Gaza earlier this year, we will seek to share consular advice with the Palestinian Solidarity Network in New Zealand to pass on to their contacts participating in the flotilla.

Background

- The Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) is an international initiative that aims to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza. It consists of 200+ participants from 40+ countries on 35+ ships, including Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. We are aware of three New Zealand nationals on board.
- The flotilla departed Tunisia on Saturday, with the journey to Gaza expected to take approximately 7-8 days. The flotilla was hit by two drone strikes while docked in Tunisia last week. Tunisia's Interior Ministry characterised one of these as a premeditated attack and is investigating.
- Israel has intercepted all Gaza-bound flotillas since 2010. **s6(b)(i)**

- There is always the possibility that the situation could become violent. In 2010, Israel **s6(a)** intercepted the Mavi Marmara in international waters, killing 10 participants.
- There have been calls within Israel, including from Minister Ben-Gvir, to declare the participants terrorists. If this happens, their treatment in Israel could be different.
- MFAT is monitoring the situation closely. CON, MEA, ANK and CAI are ready to provide consular support (as they are

able to, noting our ability to assist may be limited) if needed.

- We anticipate receiving a high volume of public correspondence regarding the flotilla following a [social media post](#) encouraging people to contact MFAT. We are preparing a template response and will share this with ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)} in case the Office receives similar inquiries.

Please call me on s9(2)(a) if you have any questions.

Ngāihi,

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Policy Officer

Middle East and Africa Division

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manat Aorere

Ms9(2)(a) Es9(2)(g)(ii)

195 Lambton Quay, Private Bag 18901, Wellington 5045, New Zealand

www.mfat.govt.nz | www.safetravel.govt.nz



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From: [ANKARA](#)
To: [MEA](#); [CON](#)
Cc: [DS EMA](#); [DS MLG](#); [CEO](#); [DCE](#); s6(a) [FM,P/S MFA \(Seemail\)](#); s6(a)
[CAIRO](#); [ANKARA](#); [ROME](#); [MADRID](#); [LUX](#); [...MEA POSTS](#); [...EUROPEAN POSTS](#); [NEW YORK](#); [WASHINGTON](#);
[LONDON](#); [OTTAWA](#); [CANBERRA](#); [LGL](#); [CAIRO](#); [ANKARA](#); s6(a)
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: ISRAEL: GLOBAL SUMUD FLOTILLA APPROACHES GAZA; ISRAEL READIES
[SEC=RESTRICTED]
Date: Wednesday, 1 October 2025 11:21:16 pm
Importance: High

[RESTRICTED]
[RESTRICTED]

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Rāpopoto – Summary

- The Global Sumud Flotilla, made up of over forty vessels and about five hundred activists, is sailing toward Gaza with the aim of breaking Israel's blockade and delivering humanitarian aid.
- Italy and Spain escorted parts of the journey, but Italy has withdrawn protection as the convoy nears Gaza, while Turkey has provided drone surveillance.
- The flotilla, now approximately 200km from Gaza, has reported drone strikes, communication disruptions, and unlit vessels approaching, and organizers **expect an Israeli interception within the next 24–48 hours**.
- Israel has declared it will prevent any breach and is preparing warships and commandos for boarding operations.
- With three New Zealanders participating in the flotilla, ANK remains in **active communication** with the Israeli Foreign Ministry and has expressed to the Israelis that the safety and welfare of New Zealanders is of paramount importance.
- We have advised it is New Zealand's clear expectation that the New Zealanders involved will be unharmed and treated within protections of international law.
- Post continues to stress restraint, legality and proportionality to the Israelis should Israel elect to interdict the flotilla.

Hohenga – Action

CON / MEA: For information.

Pūrongo – Report

Various ANK/ CON/ MEA emails refer.

An international flotilla of more than 40 civilian boats and roughly 500 participants — activists, lawmakers, lawyers and high-profile campaigners including Greta Thunberg - is currently sailing toward Gaza aiming to breach Israel's naval blockade and deliver aid. There are also three New Zealanders on board.

naval escorts for stretches of the voyage, providing monitoring and rescue capacity. However, Italy has already announced that it will withdraw its naval protection once the flotilla approaches within 150 nautical miles of Gaza, citing the growing likelihood of a confrontation with Israel.

3 Türkiye has also played a visible role, deploying military drones to monitor the convoy and thereby enhancing international visibility of the flotilla. Despite Israeli proposals to offload the aid in Cyprus as a compromise solution, flotilla organisers have rejected any deviation from their goal of reaching Gaza directly.

4 In the past few days, the flotilla has reported increasingly hostile activity. Activists have claimed on social media channels that unidentified, unlit vessels have approached dangerously close to their route, and that communications have been disrupted (often through jamming communications with Abba songs). They also report earlier drone strikes in Tunisia that damaged boats, although no injuries were reported.

5 After temporarily stopping in Greek waters to repair damage, the convoy resumed its course toward Gaza, and it is now nearing waters where Israel has previously intercepted similar efforts. Organisers themselves anticipate that escalation could be imminent. Through media channels this is suggested for within the next twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

6 Israeli news source i24News expects the flotilla to reach Gaza today or tomorrow (1-2 October) and have suggested that it could reach in time for the Jewish festival of Yom Kippur. The flotilla can be tracked via here: <https://globalsumudflotilla.org/tracker/>

Position of Israel

7 Israel asserts that their naval blockade of Gaza is legal under the framework of its conflict with Hamas and that no breach of the territorial waters or blockade will be tolerated.

8 The Israeli Defence Force has reportedly prepared a complex interception plan that includes warships, aerial surveillance, and naval commando boarding operations. Officials are said to be weighing the balance between enforcing the blockade and minimizing casualties. Some media have reported that should resistance be too strong, Israel could elect to disable or sink vessels at sea.

9 s9(2)(g)(i)

Israeli outlets Kan and N12 have reported today (1 October) extensive preparations for naval interdiction. The Israeli navy and Shayetet 13 commandos are reported planned to intercept the flotilla at sea, ordering ships back and seizing them if they refuse. Hebrew reports say some ships will be confiscated and others deliberately sunk.

10 Media also report that hundreds of detained activists will be transferred to Ashdod port and then on to Ketziot prison under police and Ben Gir prison service control. Those “complying will be deported after the holiday fast ends (starting Thursday night); those resisting will face a special Ministry of the Interior tribunal set up inside the prison rather than a civilian court.

11 Six hundred police officers are being reportedly deployed; Israeli hospitals in Ashdod,

Ashkelon, Rehovot and Be'er Yaakov have been placed on alert.

12 With the flotilla approximately 200km from Gaza, s9(2)(g)(i)

13 With three New Zealanders on board, Post remains in active contact with the Israeli Foreign Ministry. We continue to stress restraint, legality and proportionality should Israel elect to interdict the flotilla.

14 We have also stressed with Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials our strong expectation that any actions by the Israeli government or its agents must comply with international law. We have advised on several occasions that it is our expectation that the safety and well-being of the New Zealanders will be protected, and that if Israel decides to interdict the flotilla that the New Zealand citizens will be appropriately processed in accordance with Israeli law.

15 The Israeli Foreign Ministry has established a WhatsApp group which both ANK HOM and ANK Consul are members of should there be developments and to ensure clear communications between governments. Post will continue to actively monitor developments and report accordingly.

Mutu / Ends

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