

17 December 2025

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OIA 30482

s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 8 October 2025, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request:

- 1. All communications or briefing material since 1 January 2024 relating to coordination between New Zealand and Australia on positions at the United Nations Human Rights Council.*
- 2. Any documents referring to New Zealand citizens detained in Australia's immigration or offshore detention facilities, including consular interventions or diplomatic communications."*

On 17 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. In that phone call, you agreed to refine the scope of part two of your request to be for:

"Any documents since 1 January 2024 discussing the situation of New Zealand citizens detained in Australia's immigration or offshore detention facilities, including consular or diplomatic communications, but excluding individual consular case files relating to specific New Zealanders."

On 17 November 2025, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 22 working days because responding to your request necessitated the review of a large quantity of information, and due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(a) and (b) of the OIA refers).

On 5 December 2025, the Ministry contacted you again to discuss the scope of part one of your request because as it was originally framed it captured a significant volume of information. In that phone call you agreed that a narrative response was sufficient.

Response to your request

As noted above, a narrative response is being provided to you in response to part one of your request (section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers):

New Zealand engages in the Human Rights Council as an observer (New Zealand is not a member of the Council itself and so does not have an ability to vote on Council resolutions). New Zealand delivers national statements, joins statements with other countries, participates in the negotiation of resolutions and co-sponsors resolutions.

Canada/ Australia /New Zealand (CANZ) joint statements

New Zealand and Australia, together with Canada, regularly deliver joint statements at the Council. This is done to share the work of preparing and delivering statements across the busy Council agenda, on issues where we share similar perspectives. Coordination takes place to agree the topics to cover and finalise the content of these statements. Coordination on these statements makes up a significant portion of the communication which takes place between Australia and New Zealand during the Human Rights Council regular sessions.

For the period covering this request, the following 'CANZ' statements were delivered:

HRC60

- Reports of the High Commissioner and the Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar on Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar: led by Canada;
- Annual discussion on the integration of a gender perspective throughout the work of the HRC: led by New Zealand;
- Interactive Dialogue with Secretary-General report on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms: led by Australia.

HRC59

- Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's report and oral update of the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar: led by Australia;
- Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls: led by New Zealand;
- Gender-based violence against women and girls in conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian settings: led by Canada.

HRC 58

- Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar: led by Australia;
- Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on rights of person with disabilities: led by New Zealand.

HRC57

- Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the Sudan: led by New Zealand.

HRC56

- Oral update by the Fact Finding Mission for Sudan: led by New Zealand;
- Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan: led by Australia;
- Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar: led by Australia;

- Geneva celebration of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy: led by New Zealand;
- Gender equality: escalating backlashes and the urgency to reaffirm substantive equality and the human rights of women and girls: led by New Zealand.

HRC55

- Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders: led by Australia;
- Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's report on the Sudan: led by New Zealand;
- Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: led by Canada;
- Interactive Dialogue with the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran: led by Canada;
- Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar: led by Australia.

Other joint statements

New Zealand also joins statements prepared and delivered by other countries. The country which is leading the statement will usually ask several countries to join these statements, including New Zealand and Australia. Australian and New Zealand officials will routinely check each other's plans for joining these statements in Geneva. This also happens between officials in our respective capitals.

The New Zealand Permanent Mission in Geneva uploads New Zealand national statements to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade website. Statements are usually published as a post on X following the delivery of New Zealand national statements or CANZ statements, and we retweet significant group statements which we have joined. You can find these here: <https://x.com/NZUNGVA>, or at [Media and resources | New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#), or at the Human Rights Council website for the meeting in question.

Resolutions

New Zealand works closely with likeminded countries during the negotiation of Council resolutions, including Australia. This includes discussion of approaches to negotiations with others and consultation on co-sponsorship intentions. This coordination happens routinely between officials in Geneva and also between our respective capitals. The details of who has led or co-sponsored Human Rights Council resolutions is available at the Human Rights Council website for the meeting in question.

A summary of the information in scope of part two of your request is provided below (section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers). Some information is withheld under section 6(a) of the OIA, to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government.

Australia and New Zealand share a strong, trust-based relationship. As a sovereign state, Australia is entitled to set its own rules, including immigration and border policies.

Regarding Australia's deportation policies and its impacts on the situation of New Zealand citizens detained in Australia's immigration facilities, New Zealand continues to monitor how Australia's deportation policy, including the recent Ministerial Direction 110, is implemented and any potential impacts on New Zealanders. Our position is that New Zealand expects the Australian Government to live up to its commitment to take a 'common sense' approach to deportations. This means we do not want to see New Zealand citizens with little or no connection to New Zealand, whose formative experiences were nearly all in Australia, detained in immigration or offshore detention facilities and subject to deportation. We continue to have dialogue with Australia and have repeatedly raised this issue and the rights and interests of New Zealanders with the Australian government. The trans-Tasman travel Arrangement remains a critical enabler of the bilateral relationship - one that enables trade, people-to-people, and cultural connections to flourish. The Ministry is not aware of any New Zealanders in Australian offshore detention.

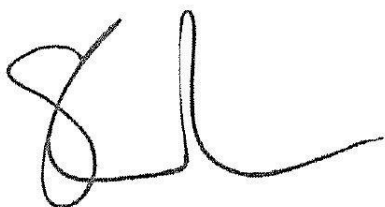
With regards to the situation of specific New Zealand citizens detained in Australia's immigration or offshore detention facilities, the Ministry provides consular services to New Zealand citizens outside of New Zealand, even if they are not normally resident in New Zealand. This includes New Zealand citizens who may be detained in Australian immigration or offshore detention facilities. However, in accordance with section 9(2)(a) of the OIA, we do not comment on individual consular cases to protect the privacy of natural persons.

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, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line and a small loop at the end.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade