

26 November 2025

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Release

OIA 30542

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Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email of 14 October 2025, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"Under the Official Information Act I am requesting MFAT internal emails regarding the detention and treatment of New Zealand citizens on the ship 'Conscience', part of a flotilla that attempted to make its way to Gaza"

On 12 November 2025, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 10 working days because responding to your request necessitated the review of a large quantity of information (section 15A(1)(a) of the OIA refers).

Attached is the information in scope of your request. There were multiple out of scope emails contained in an email chain, so these have been removed for administrative ease. 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; and
- 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 in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

s9(2)(g)(ii)

From:
To:
Cc:

Subject: RE: Thousand Madleens Flotilla - ANK update 9 October [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]
Date: Saturday, 11 October 2025 7:50:42 am

[IN CONFIDENCE]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Thank you ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)} for this report, but also for the amazing work you and the team have been doing to support these New Zealanders over several weeks now. It has really made a difference.

We are told that there are more flotillas to come... but hopefully you will have some opportunity for a well-earned break now.

We will circle back next week on thanking all our consular partners for the help they have provided.

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Unit Manager

Te Ohu Atawhai | Consular Division
Manatū Aorere | New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

M ^{s9(2)(a)} **E** ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)}

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IN-CONFIDENCE

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Thousand Madleens Flotilla - ANK update 9 October [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

[IN CONFIDENCE]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Kia ora

- s9(2)(a) arrived in Istanbul with other flotilla crew just after 2pm this afternoon and with assistance from both the s6(a) and the s6(a) Consuls, we were able to pass over printed copies of his itinerary, tickets, and information on collecting funds.
- The s6(a) Consul gave s9(2)(a) the opportunity to s9(2)(a)

- He was also offered the chance to call and talk to the New Zealand Consul in Ankara, s9(2)(a), s9(2)(a)(i)
- While I have extended thanks here through informal means for the assistance provided by colleagues in providing consular and logistical support to New Zealanders, WLN may also wish to extend thanks to the embassies of s6(a) at some point. There should also be a shout out to s6(a), as they are the ones who reached out to me to let me know how to get our nationals on the buses to Jordan.

Noho ora mai

s9(2)(g)(ii)

IN-CONFIDENCE

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

Sent: Thursday, 9 October 2025 8:29 pm
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Thousand Madleens Flotilla - ANK update 9 October [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

Good evening

The ^{s6(a)} Consular team visited Ketziot today and were able to meet with ^{s9(2)(a)} They will send a report later but below are the points for this update:

- ^{s9(2)(a)} is ok but mentioned aggressive behaviour from the authorities once the group arrived at port and that they were handcuffed and blindfolded all the way from the port to Ketziot. He said that the conditions in the detention centre are bad especially the water, toilets and beds.

- ^{s9(2)(a)} is currently on the manifest for a Turkish charter flight to Istanbul tomorrow departing Israel at ^{s9(2)(a)}

We assume, but do not know for certain, that the flight will go to Istanbul airport on the European side, not Sabiha Gokcen airport on the Asian side.

- ^{s6(b)(i)} there may not be the level of support in booking accommodation and flights for ^{s9(2)(a)} and others when they reach Istanbul.

- ^{s9(2)(a)} I confirmed with the ^{s6(a)} that Israeli authorities ^{s6(a)} ^{s6(a)} will ask the Israel authorities about the return of personal items.

- I've contacted consular colleagues in Ankara to let them know about the flight and to check what support they will be offering their nationals on arrival in Istanbul.

- There is a hotel at Istanbul airport, [the Yotel](#) which ^{s9(2)(a)}

There are also three Western Union agents at the airport for transferring funds. There are other hotels nearby, but some form of payment for transport would be required to get to these places (or they could talk to the hotel about including an airport transfer in the cost of any booking). The issue will be maintaining contact with ^{s9(2)(a)} once in Istanbul if ^{s9(2)(a)}

- No update on ^{s9(2)(a)} from ^{s6(a)} If she signed the waiver, she will likely be on the flight tomorrow as well.

- I will see if a consular colleague in Istanbul will be able to look out for ^{s9(2)(a)} and be a point of contact when he gets there so that we can confirm his arrival and pass on any information from his family/friends on accommodation and onward flights.

Noho ora mai

s9(2)
(a)(ii)

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

Sent: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 8:24 pm
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Thousand Madleens Flotilla - ANK evening update 8 October [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

- As this flotilla seems to have been intercepted much earlier than the last one, the boats are only just arriving at the port now. Disembarkation has commenced and processing will likely go on through the night.
- The ^{s6(a)} confirmed they will provide consular support for any NZ nationals.
- While the MFA has indicated appointments will have to be approved before visits to Ketziot, ^{s6(a)} Many Embassies are saying that they will go to Ketziot in the morning ^{s6(a)} This is similar to what happened with the Sumud passengers.

Out of scope

s9(2)(g)(ii)

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

Sent: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 10:10 am
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Thousand Madleens Flotilla - ANK morning update 8 October [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

Thanks ^{s9(2)}_{(a)(ii)}. A quick update below so we're all up to date. I'll provide another update this evening, but don't expect there to be much to add until there have been visits.

- Israel authorities have confirmed the process will be the same as with the Sumud. The boats are currently en route to Ashdod port where the passengers will be processed and then transferred to Ketziot where consular visits will be facilitated, likely starting tomorrow (Thursday). Embassies are not permitted at the Port but with the Sumud, the lawyers were able to meet with flotilla members there so this may be the case again this time.
- I had already given the ^{s6(a)} a heads up about ^{s9(2)(a)}, through what we knew in the news article. I have clarified that there is only one NZer and requested their assistance again. This shouldn't be an issue.
- I've been in contact with the ^{s6(a)}. They have offered support as well. I will keep in touch with them to see if ^{s9(2)(a)} can move with ^{s9(2)(a)} if they have news of a deportation before we do.
- I have let Israel MFA know we are aware of one NZer on board the Conscience and that we have requested assistance again from the ^{s6(a)} in providing consular support when visiting Ketziot.

s9(2)
(a)(ii)

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

Sent: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 7:32 am
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Thousand Madleens Flotilla - WLN update 8 October [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

[IN CONFIDENCE]

IN-CONFIDENCE

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

Thanks for your message just now on the Thousand Madleens Flotilla interception. Just thought it would be easier to start a new email chain for this event. Here are developments at our end:

- I took a call from Chloe Swarbrick's office this morning, and another just now. ^{s9(2)(a)}
- The office also confirmed that the ^{s9(2)(a)}
- We have taken a call from ^{s9(2)(a)} ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)} has contacted her, and will call ^{s9(2)(a)} shortly.
- Grateful for any further information you can find out about the process from here for flotilla participants, particularly in light of ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)} email last night. Will the detainees be taken to Ketziot?
- Whether the ^{s6(a)} will be happy to provide consular assistance to ^{s9(2)(a)} if needed (assume they're happy to continue with the arrangement?)
- Media link on ^{s9(2)(a)} - <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/575176/two-new-zealanders-on-board-boat-in-new-flotilla-trying-to-reach-gaza>

All the best for today!

Best regards

^{s9(2)}
(g)(ii)

(she/her)

Lead Adviser (Policy)

Consular Division

M ^{s9(2)(a)}

E ^{s9(2)(g)(ii)}

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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.

IN-CONFIDENCE

Released under the Official Information Act

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Re: Update on 1000 Madleens to Gaza Flotilla 11 October 2025 [SEC=RESTRICTED]
Date: Saturday, 11 October 2025 7:33:34 am
Attachments: [image004.png](#)

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

Confirming receipt. Thanks for the update.

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

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

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Saturday, October 11, 2025 7:18 AM
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on 1000 Madleens to Gaza Flotilla 11 October 2025 [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL]
Kia ora tatou,

Providing an update on developments overnight on the 1000 Madleens Flotilla, and updated media lines.

Developments overnight

- The detained New Zealander was deported by air from Israel yesterday evening and arrived in Istanbul with other flotilla crew just after 2pm local time (midnight NZT) and with assistance from both s6(a) and the s6(a) we were able to s9(2)(a)
- The s6(a) gave him the opportunity to s9(2)(a)
- He was also offered the chance to call and talk to the New Zealand Consul in Ankara, s9(2)(a)

Updated media lines

- The New Zealander previous detained in Israel has been deported by air. He will be returning to New Zealand in coming days.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Consular officials have worked with consular partners to provide support to him.
- We will not be commenting further on individual cases for privacy reasons.
- 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.

If you have any questions or need any clarification, please let us know.
We will not be reporting further unless there are substantive developments.

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Unit Manager

Te Ohu Atawhai | Consular Division
Manatū Aorere | New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

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

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

Sent: Friday, 10 October 2025 9:05 am

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on 1000 Madleens to Gaza Flotilla 10 October 2025 [SEC=RESTRICTED]

Kia ora tatou,

Providing an update on developments overnight on the 1000 Madleens Flotilla, and updated media lines:

Developments overnight

- The s6(a) visited Ketzi'ot Prison today and were able to meet the New Zealander in detention there.
- He reported that he is OK, but mentioned aggressive behaviour from the authorities once the group arrived at port and that they were handcuffed and blindfolded all the way from the port to Ketzi'ot. He said that the conditions in the detention centre were bad especially the water, toilets and beds.
- s9(2)(a)
- s9(2)(a)
s6(b)(i)
- s9(2)(a) . Consular officials will ask the Israel authorities about the return of personal items.
- We do not have any information about the s9(2)(a)

Updated media lines

- We are aware that a New Zealander has been detained. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Consular officials are responding.
- Given we do not have an Embassy presence in Israel, a consular partner is providing in-person support. We expect to continue to provide support in the coming days, alongside engaging with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the situation.
- The safety of New Zealanders is paramount. We expect any New Zealanders to be treated in a manner consistent with international law and have communicated this directly to Israel several times.
- We will not be commenting further on individual cases for privacy reasons.
- 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.

If you have any questions or need any clarification, please let us know.

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

Ngā mihi

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Unit Manager

Te Ohu Atawhai | Consular Division
Manatū Aorere | New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

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

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

Sent: Thursday, 9 October 2025 10:37 am
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on 1000 Madleens to Gaza Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

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

Received with thanks. Really useful.

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



s9(2)(g)(ii)

Foreign Affairs | Office of Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister of Foreign Affairs | Minister for Racing | Minister for Rail

M: s9(2)(a)

[Restricted]

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

Sent: Thursday, 9 October 2025 10:34 am
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on 1000 Madleens to Gaza Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[SEEMAIL]

Kia ora tatou,

Providing an update on developments overnight on the 1000 Madleens Flotilla, and updated media lines:

Developments overnight

- Disembarkation of flotilla participants has commenced at Ashdod port in Israel, and processing will likely go on through the night. Embassies are not permitted at the port. Lawyers may be able to meet with flotilla members at the port, as they did with the Sumud flotilla, although this is not certain.
- We expect a similar process to the Sumud flotilla, that participants will be deported quickly. At this stage we don't know where to, but we will seek further information on deportation plans.
- The s6(a) has confirmed they will provide consular support for any NZ nationals who are part of the 1000 Madleens flotilla.
- ANK has also been in contact with the s6(a)

- ANK has informed the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs that we are aware of one NZer on board the Conscience, and that we have requested assistance again from the s6(a) Embassy in providing consular support when visiting Ket'ziot.
- While the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs has indicated appointments will have to be approved before visits to detainees at the Ketziot detention facility, s6(a) Many Embassies are saying that they will go to Ket'ziot in the morning (Thursday morning local time) s6(a)
This is similar to what happened with the Sumud passengers.
- The NZer in the flotilla s9(2)(a) s9(2)(a)

Updated media lines

- We are aware that a New Zealander has been detained. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Consular officials are responding. The New Zealand Embassy in Ankara has been in proactive contact today with Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the situation of the New Zealander.
- Given we do not have an Embassy presence in Israel, a consular partner will provide in person support, should that be needed. We expect to continue to provide support in the coming days, alongside engaging with the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the situation.
- The safety of New Zealanders is paramount. We expect any New Zealanders to be treated in a manner consistent with international law and have communicated this directly to Israel several times.
- We will not be commenting further on individual cases for privacy reasons.
- 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.

If you have any questions or need any clarification, please let us know.

Best regards

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

M s9(2)(a) E 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: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 5:49 pm

s9(2)(g)(ii)

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Update on 1000 Madleens to Gaza Flotilla [SEC=RESTRICTED]

[RESTRICTED]

Kia ora all,

We are receiving reports that the 2nd Gaza flotilla- the Thousand Madleens to Gaza Flotilla, has been intercepted by Israeli authorities.

The Embassy in Ankara is seeking further details.

We are aware of a New Zealander on board one of the vessels, along with his s9(2)(a) partner (resident in New Zealand). s9(2)(a)

We will let you know when we have further information.

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Consular Division

Sent with BlackBerry Work

www.blackberry.com

X-MFAT-MOBILE

Out of scope

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From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE: Conscience Flotilla [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]
Date: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 4:56:35 pm
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

[IN CONFIDENCE]

We need to advise Beehive and Media and MBIE as calls will start soon

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Details

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

X-MFAT-MOBILE

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Date: Wednesday, 08 Oct 2025 at 16:52
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: RE: Conscience Flotilla [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

[IN CONFIDENCE]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Thanks s9(2)(g)(ii) has just confirmed from ANK end.

s9(2)(g)(ii) – I'm happy to do a quick email update to s9(2)(g)(ii). Other than the call I had with the Green leader's office this morning, is there anything else we need to note for today?

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Lead Adviser (Policy)
Consular Division

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

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IN-CONFIDENCE

From: s9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 4:51 pm
s9(2)(g)(ii)

Subject: Conscience Flotilla [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

[IN CONFIDENCE]

IN-CONFIDENCE

As discussed, below info re NZC in new flotilla

Ngā mihi,

s9(2)(g)(ii)

Consular Adviser | South and Southeast Asia

Te Ohu Atawhai | Consular Division

Manatū Aorere | New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

s9(2)(a)

E s9(2)(g)(ii)

IN-CONFIDENCE

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

Sent: Wednesday, 8 October 2025 4:47 pm

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

Subject: Conscience Flotilla [SEC=IN CONFIDENCE]

[IN CONFIDENCE]

IN-CONFIDENCE

Vessel: Conscience

Caller:

s9(2)(a)

NZ based

Brother

s9(2)(a)

No location of boat, but following on [Thousand Madleens France](#)

Saw it on Social Media that s6(a)

s9(2)(a)

Consular Adviser | Americas

Te Ohu Atawhai | Consular Division

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manatū Aorere

M s9(2)(a)

E s9(2)(a)

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