



29 May 2025

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

12 June 2025

## Humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank

BRIEFING Decision Submission

PURPOSE To seek your approval for further humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank.

## Recommended referrals

Prime Minister	For information by	27 June 2025
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs	For information by	27 June 2025

## Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
s9(2)(g)		Partnerships, Humanitarian and Multilateral	s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(g)(ii)		Global Development and Scholarships	s9(2)(a)
s9(2)(g)(ii)		Middle East and Africa	s9(2)(a)

## Minister's Office to complete

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Referred
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events	<input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes	

**Comments**

## Humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank

### Key points

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- Gaza's entire population of 2.1 million people is in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. One in five people are assessed to be facing starvation.
  - As set out in the accompanying Israel/Palestine policy settings submission, we recommend further humanitarian support coupled with complementary stabilisation contributions. These contributions would be a practical demonstration of New Zealand's support for the international response, principled humanitarian action, and international law. It would also support agencies to scale up when conditions allow and respond to sustained New Zealand public interest in the response.
  - We recommend the following complementary humanitarian and stabilisation support:
    - **NZ\$2 million to the World Food Programme (WFP)** for emergency food assistance, including infant formula, flour, and nutritional supplements.
    - **NZ\$2 million to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** for sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, medical and psychosocial assistance for children and families.
    - **NZ\$1 million a year over three years (total NZ\$3 million) to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** to support mine safety coordination, ordnance removal and community education.
    - **NZ\$750,000 to the Office of the Quartet (OQ)** which works to increase economic and institutional capability towards Palestinian statehood.
  - Risks associated with the response, including potential for aid diversion, and extreme health and safety risks, remain significant. Recommended partners have systems in place to mitigate risks to the extent possible.
  - There is uncertainty about the operationalisation of Israel's new proposed modality for aid delivery in Gaza. s6(a)
- For the time being, the United Nations is working under an assurance from Israel that aid delivery can occur through existing and proven mechanisms. Nevertheless, risks remain that Israel may impose a further humanitarian blockade or forge ahead with implementation of its new modality, either of which may further constrain delivery or result in a pause of agency operations.
- s6(a)
  - Funding would come from within existing baselines, drawn from the non-departmental International Development Cooperation Appropriation within Vote Foreign Affairs. These proposed contributions do not have people resource implications.
  - Officials will continue to monitor the situation and look for opportunities for New Zealand to support the response.

s9(2)(g)(ii)

for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

## Humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank Recommendations

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It is recommended that you:

- 1 **Approve** a NZ\$2 million contribution to the World Food Programme's appeal for Gaza and the West Bank; **Yes / No**
- 2 **Approve** a NZ\$2 million contribution to the United Nations Children's Fund appeal for Gaza and the West Bank; **Yes / No**
- 3 **Approve** a NZ\$3 million contribution over three years to the United Nations Mine Action Service to support stabilisation; **Yes / No**
- 4 **Approve** a NZ\$750,000 contribution to the Office of the Quartet to strengthen the Palestinian Authority's capability; **Yes / No**
- 5 **Note** resourcing implications as set out in this submission; and **Yes / No**
- 6 **Refer** a copy of this submission to Prime Minister, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon and Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Todd McClay. **Yes / No**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date:        /        /

## Humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank Report

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1. An estimated 80% of Gaza is subject to displacement orders or located in Israeli-militarized zones. The health system has collapsed, formal education ceased in late 2023 and 1.9 million people are or have been displaced by the conflict. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) estimates that 5 to 10 percent of weapons fired into Gaza have failed to detonate, leaving behind deadly hazards.
2. After an 11-week blockade, a partial and temporary resumption of aid delivery into Gaza commenced on 19 March 2025. However, Israeli restrictions s6(a) means delivery is a drop in the ocean of what is required. Distribution of aid within Gaza remains complex and dangerous, including due to weapon contamination and looting from a desperate population.
3. Alongside Gaza, the humanitarian situation in the West Bank remains dire, with increasing restrictions on movement, settler violence, and limited access to essential services such as healthcare and clean water. Proposed support would also include West Bank programming.
4. Despite the constrained nature of the response, there remains a steadfast commitment from agencies to deliver and they continue to do so in meaningful ways. There is extreme humanitarian need and agencies are appealing for funding to support ongoing delivery.

### Further New Zealand support

5. Humanitarian support has been a key pillar of New Zealand's response to the conflict since October 2023 and our last contribution (a sixth tranche of support) was in December 2024. This brought our total support for the humanitarian response to NZ\$29.5 million.
6. We recommend further humanitarian support coupled with complementary stabilisation contributions. This would be a practical demonstration of New Zealand's support for the international response, principled humanitarian action, and international law. It would also support agencies to scale up when conditions allow and would respond to sustained high New Zealand public interest in the response.

### Humanitarian support

7. Given the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Gaza is highly constrained at this time, the Ministry is recommending a modest contribution (relative to needs) of NZ\$4 million. Officials will continue to monitor the response and revert with options for further contributions when constraints on humanitarian organisations have eased.
8. We recommend the following contributions to address extreme humanitarian needs:
  - 8.1. **NZ\$2 million to the World Food Programme (WFP)** to support its provision of infant formula, nutrition supplements, bakery operations and medicine. The WFP plans to resume hot meal distribution shortly but has been prohibited from resuming distribution of critical food parcels. This would bring New Zealand's total support for WFP operations in Gaza and the West Bank since October 2023 to \$16.5 million.
  - 8.2. **NZ\$2 million to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** to support its provision of clean water, psychosocial support, nutritional supplements, emergency education, family reunification services and cash transfers. This would bring New Zealand's total support for UNICEF operations in Gaza and the West Bank since October 2023 to \$10 million.

## Humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank

### Stabilisation support

9. s9(2)(f)(iv)

Stabilisation activities are expected to be delivered in both the West Bank and Gaza and are well-positioned to transition to early recovery and reconstruction efforts when the context allows.

10. We recommend the following contributions for the protection of basic services, stabilisation support, and recovery:
11. **NZ\$1 million a year over three years (total NZ\$3 million) to UNMAS' operations in the West Bank and Gaza.** UNMAS delivers mine safety coordination, ordnance removal and community education. Their work is essential for civilian protection, humanitarian access, and early recovery. UNMAS maintains a programme of work in West Bank focused on protection of livelihoods, which increase resilience and reduce humanitarian burden. It is one of the few aid agencies that has continued its operations in Gaza despite a highly restrictive context, enabled by their on-ground presence and low reliance on the flow of equipment into the territory. Their operations are essential for any future recovery efforts in Gaza.
12. Support for UNMAS is aligned with New Zealand's longstanding support for mine action globally, and our commitment to humanitarian disarmament norms and treaties. New Zealand has supported UNMAS to deliver mine education and clearance in the West Bank and Gaza since 2020, strengthening community education around unexploded ordnance and protecting livelihoods by making arable land safe. They have a proven track record of strong delivery, neutrality, and open communications with the Ministry. This would bring New Zealand's total contribution to their operations in the West Bank and Gaza to NZ\$3.74 million since October 2023.
13. **NZ\$750,000 to the Office of the Quartet (OQ).** The OQ works to increase Palestinian economic and institutional capability, as a support towards Palestinian statehood. The OQ operates in three areas across the West Bank and Gaza: commerce, institution building, and infrastructure. New Zealand has contributed periodic funding to the OQ (and its predecessor, the Office of the Quartet Representative) since 2011.
14. A modest contribution to the OQ would help to strengthen the Palestinian Authority's capability, which is essential for the viability of a future Palestinian state. The OQ's institution-building work focuses on uplifting the capability of officials in governance, fiscal sustainability, and justice. Its commerce work supports economic growth by expanding private sector production and access to markets. Having both an effective government and a solid economy will be key to a future Palestinian state. The OQ has a flexible 18-month strategy that allows it to adapt to events on the ground and its capability-building work in the West Bank is ongoing notwithstanding the conflict in Gaza.

15. s6(a)

## Humanitarian and stabilisation support for Gaza and the West Bank

16. The OQ is funded through contributions from both national governments and multilateral bodies. Recent donors have included Canada, the European Commission, Japan, the Netherlands, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

### Resourcing

17. Funding would come from within existing baselines, drawn from the non-departmental International Development Cooperation Appropriation within Vote Foreign Affairs. These proposed contributions do not have people resource implications.
18. These financial contributions could be considered under internal Ministry delegations but we are seeking your approval due to the sensitivity of the crisis and the constrained operating environment for humanitarian workers.

### Next steps

19. If approved, the Ministry would work with your Office on announcement opportunities, s6(a)  
New Zealand's participation at the two-state solution conference in New York on 17-20 June would also provide an opportunity to publicly communicate this new support.
20. Advice on the future of New Zealand's partnership with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East will be provided later in 2025.
21. The Ministry will continue to closely monitor the humanitarian crisis and consider how New Zealand can best support the response in future.