

22 January 2026

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Proactive Release

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Tēnā koe Proactive Release

Thank you for your email of 20 November 2025, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"Under the Official Information Act 1982, I request the following information relating to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's advice to the Minister of Foreign Affairs concerning New Zealand's vote at the United Nations on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA):

1. All advice to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Rt Hon Winston Peters) provided between 1 January 2024 and the date of this request relating to New Zealand's position, vote, or engagement on the renewal, extension, or continuation of UNRWA's mandate.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Briefings
- Aide-mémoires
- Talking points
- Recommendations
- Internal assessments
- Risk analyses
- Email correspondence
- Any updates or supplementary notes

2. All MFAT assessments or intelligence summaries relied upon in forming advice to the Minister regarding:

- UNRWA's documented organisational links to Hamas or other designated terrorist entities
- The employment of individuals affiliated with Hamas, PIJ, or other extremist organisations
- Misuse or diversion of humanitarian aid by Hamas through UNRWA infrastructure
- UNRWA's role in the dissemination of extremist or antisemitic content in its educational materials or school curricula
- UNRWA staff participation in, facilitation of, or support for the 7 October 2023 Hamas attacks

3. A list of all external sources consulted including:

- UN internal oversight reports

- *Assessments by allied governments (e.g., U.S., Canada, Australia, EU members)*
- *Reports by NGOs, investigative journalists, or UN Watch / IMPACT-se*
- *Classified or declassified partner briefings relevant to UNRWA's integrity, neutrality, or security risk profile*

4. Any MFAT analysis

regarding the implications of New Zealand supporting the mandate renewal despite:

- *Publicly reported evidence of UNRWA personnel's involvement in terrorism*
- *Repeated findings that UNRWA schools have promoted hatred, martyrdom, and incitement to violence*
- *Evidence of operational collaboration between UNRWA staff and Hamas*
- *International donor suspension of funds to UNRWA following the 7 October attacks*

5. All records of communications

between MFAT officials and:

- *UNRWA representatives*
- *Officials from allied governments*
- *New Zealand's Permanent Mission to the United Nations*
- *Non-government organisations advocating for or against mandate renewal relating to New Zealand's vote.*

6. The final decision-making document

summarising MFAT's recommended voting position and the rationale provided to Minister Peters.

Form of release

I request these materials in electronic form. If any information is withheld, please specify the grounds under the Official Information Act, including the specific section(s) relied upon for each redaction.

Public interest

Given the gravity of the allegations surrounding UNRWA's involvement in terrorism, the use of donor-funded institutions to indoctrinate children, and the implications for New Zealand's foreign policy credibility and aid integrity, there is a significant public interest in releasing this information.

I request these materials in electronic form. If any information is withheld, please specify the grounds under the Official Information Act, including the specific section(s) relied upon for each redaction."

Background

On 25 November 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) contacted you to discuss the scope of parts one and five of your request because as they are currently framed, they capture a significant volume of information. To date, we have not received a response from you.

On 18 December 2025, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 10 working days due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA refers).

Response to your request

Further to the above, parts one and five of your request are refused under section 18(f) of the OIA because the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Regarding parts two and three of your request, under section 16(1)(e) of the OIA, we are providing you with the below summary of the information in scope. Please note, some information is not included in the summary because it 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;
- 6(b)(ii): to protect the passing of information from an international organisation on a confidential basis;

Summary of information:

New Zealand takes the January 2024 allegations that certain UNRWA employees participated in the 7 October 2023 Hamas terror attacks on Israel very seriously. The Ministry has continued to follow credible allegations of misconduct, engaged closely with UNRWA and other donors, reinforced our expectations of the organisation and obtained assurances allegations are being investigated appropriately when these situations have arisen.

The Ministry's assessment is that UNRWA remains a credible organisation that is committed to actions that maintain adherence to United Nations principles and values, and to address credible allegations made against it. This includes UNRWA's response to the Colonna Review Report Recommendations. The Ministry continues to encourage Israel to provide detailed evidence to the United Nations to back up allegations against UNRWA.

Parts four and six of your request are refused under section 18(d) of the OIA because the information will soon be publicly available. The submission titled, "New Zealand's approach to Middle East-related resolutions in the 80th session of United Nations General Assembly" will be proactively released on the Ministry's website shortly:

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources>.

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 Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade