

16 April 2026

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Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email of 19 March 2026, in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"I recently attended a 'Cullen Breakfast,' at which the Chinese Ambassador spoke, and he mentioned that NZ publishes the UN Handbook, and that, in some ways, this could have an indirect impact on how the UN functions as a whole. Upon research, it appears that NZ has chosen to, perhaps delegate, part of this right to Australia. I am wanting to know the internal reasoning for this decision, as well as any considerations in terms of loss of influence over this important aspect of the UN. I also am curious to know why the NZ government now comes last after Australia during any reference in the handbook."

Response to your request

The United Nations Handbook (the Handbook) is an annual, comprehensive reference guide produced by New Zealand since 1961. The Handbook is an ongoing demonstration of New Zealand's commitment to multilateralism, and longstanding support for the United Nations. New Zealand continues to maintain its responsibility for the overarching management and production of the Handbook.

New Zealand and Australia are working together to deliver the Handbook across a certain number of editions. Australia and New Zealand's collaboration on the Handbook underlines our shared commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations and reflects our close cooperation in support of multilateralism. Australia will contribute to the production and distribution of the Handbook during this arrangement.

Country names are listed in alphabetical order, in line with standard publishing conventions.

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 flourish.

Sarah Corbett
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade