

6 May 2026

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Personal details removed for proactive release

OIA 30841

Tēnā koe Personal details removed for proactive release

Thank you for your email of 23 March 2026, to the Office of the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, in which you requested information under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). On 30 March 2026, the following parts of your request were transferred from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) under section 14(b) of the OIA:

1. **Legal Assessments and ICJ Correspondence:** Any legal advice, briefing notes, or correspondence held by the Government regarding whether the initial military actions by the USA and Israel against Iran constitute a breach of international law. This includes records of any requests from domestic or overseas organisations for New Zealand to support a referral to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for investigation.
2. **Joint Statements and Diplomatic Requests:** Records of any formal requests or invitations from other nations or international organisations asking New Zealand to sign joint statements condemning the initial military strikes by the USA and Israel against Iran.
3. **Recognition of Sovereign Rights (Iran):** Official records, policy papers, or briefing notes detailing the Government's position on Iran's right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter in the context of this conflict.
4. **Position on Lebanon:** Documents detailing the Government's assessment of the legality of military operations in Lebanon, specifically regarding the displacement of civilians and the targeting of non-military infrastructure, and whether these are viewed as breaches of international humanitarian law.
5. **Recognition of Sovereign Rights (Lebanon):** The Government's official position regarding Lebanon's right to self-defence in response to current military incursions.

On 1 May 2026, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 3 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

Documents in scope of part one of your request for *legal advice, documents and briefings regarding whether the initial military actions by the USA and Israel against Iran constitute a breach of international law*, are withheld in full under section 9(2)(h) of the OIA, to maintain legal professional privilege. 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.

The remaining parts of your request, including your request for *records of any requests from domestic or overseas organisations for New Zealand to support a referral to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for investigation*, is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information you requested does not exist.


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/](http://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](mailto: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](http://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