



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



New Zealand Ministry of
Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Ref no. OIA 26656

Dear Alan Yu

I refer to your email of 7 August 2019 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"As I know, New Zealand's government adheres strictly to the One-China principle. However, after the Hong Kong issue happened on 29th/July/ 2019, the Vice-Chancellor of University of Auckland sent an email to every student and he said ' It is my expectation that all members of our community will respect our commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech.' Of course, I agree with that everyone in this world have freedom of speech, but when students in the campus said something like ' Hong Kong is not a part of China', they are trying to be against the NZ government, the law. In my opinion, freedom of speech doesn't mean no boundary. Till then, the UoA seems to be neutral. But this week (say from 5th/Aug./2019), the University provided a room on student centre level 2 to those pro-Hongkong students, let them show off their speech which against to the NZ government. This brings out that the University to be more like pro-Hong Kong side. I stand on the side with NZ's government as a student. As I know, NZ had the establishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. If those pro-Hong Kong students were right, Hong Kong as a 'independent country', why didn't HK establish diplomatic relation with New Zealand government as well.

I do not know what the UoA's top management is thinking and I do not want to guess.

All I want to know is: What's the reaction of government? Is the University of Auckland doing the right thing as a top one education institution in NZ? Is the one-China principle supported by the government not applicable when people bring out freedom of speech? Does academic freedom and freedom of speech have boundaries? If do have, what are the boundaries?..."

New Zealand remains committed to its one-China policy, as recently reiterated by the Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern during her trip to China in April this year. With regard to the incident of 29 July raised in your letter, the Government has made clear the

importance it places on democratic values, including freedom of speech and particularly in academic environments such as university campuses.

Under the OIA, there is no obligation on an agency to form an opinion in response to a request. Furthermore, your enquiries do not request "official information" for the purposes of the OIA, but would require us to create new information in response.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details redacted) may be published on the Ministry's website.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek a review of this response by the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'W' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Wendy Adams
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade