

Edmund Dantes
Via FYI.org
fyi-request-12247-5043c3e6@requests.fyi.org.nz

6 March 2020

Dear Edmund Dantes

Thank you for your email of 16 February 2020, received by New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) on 17 February 2020, making a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act): You requested:

“Has NZTE, or any representatives of or people associated with NZTE, formed business relationships with transnational criminal organizations or persons over the past year, and have any meetings between representatives of NZTE or people associated with NZTE been held in New Zealand since Christmas?”

If any such meetings were held and I am sure they have been - did any concern the IT sector, and, in particular online payment systems? If so, who was present at those meetings, where were they held, when were they held, and what was discussed?”

NZTE, along with a number of government departments, have a long and lucrative history of forming relationships with transnational human traffickers and exploiters of migrant workers to the benefit of the New Zealand economy and various international mafia figures, corrupt diplomats, and officials in respect of the fishing industry, export education sector, and beyond. More generally, how does New Zealand stand to benefit from international money laundering for the Eastern European mafia and corrupt Asian officials, for instance, through nebulous IT front companies, and what other growth areas does NZTE see in the mid-term going forward?”

To the best of our knowledge, neither NZTE, nor any representatives of or people associated with NZTE¹, have formed business relationships with transnational criminal organisations or persons over the past year. Nor have any meetings been held with such organisations or people in New Zealand since Christmas. We are not aware of any of these things happening outside the specific timeframes in your request either.

NZTE certainly does not engage with or form relationships with criminal organisations.

You also asked how New Zealand stands to benefit from international money laundering for the Eastern European mafia and corrupt Asian officials, and other growth areas NZTE sees in the mid-term going forward.

NZTE does not engage in international money laundering or with organisations or people that it knows are involved in international money laundering. Money laundering is a criminal offence in New Zealand. NZTE does not see any benefit to New Zealand in engaging with money laundering or other illegal activities. NZTE does not monitor such areas in any way, including for growth opportunities, so is not able to answer this question in respect of such industries.

¹ We have defined ‘representatives of or people associated with NZTE’ to be employees, contractors or consultants representing or acting on behalf of NZTE.

For growth areas in legal industries that NZTE engages with, we are seeing strong growth by New Zealand exporting companies in the areas of technology, including agritech, fintech and Software as a Service (SaaS), and specialised manufacturing. Food and Beverage is a traditionally strong area for New Zealand and continues to be an important industry for New Zealand exports. For investment growth sectors, NZTE focusses on areas where New Zealand has a clear competitive advantage. The sectors we currently focus on are tourism, technology, food and beverage, wood processing, advanced transportation and renewable energy.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.govt.nz or freephone: 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Melissa Trochon
Director - Ministerial