

23 July 2020

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Dear David Cumin

I refer to your email of 25 June 2020 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"The Israel Institute of New Zealand has shown that at least \$1m of taxpayer money has been paid to UNRWA and that some of those funds have been used to teach children hatred and incite violence (<http://bit.ly/3cHkVSY>).

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has reported the curriculum used in UNRWA schools "perpetuate[s] prejudices and hatred", "fuels hatred" and "may incite violence" (<https://bit.ly/2BD3ANe>).

The European Parliament recently passed resolutions condemning the Palestinian Authority for continuing to teach hate from the same school text books (<https://bit.ly/2Yu4FzI>) and Norway has withheld payment to the PA over the material (<https://bit.ly/2Yrq5NS>).

Please could you provide any documentation you hold that suggests New Zealand tax money might have funded any other forms of incitement or hatred over the past 5 years."

The Palestinian Authority – not UNRWA – is responsible for the final curriculum and production of textbooks. However, we understand there is an independent review of textbooks currently underway, and we are supportive of this.

New Zealand is committed to addressing all forms of violence and extremism, including hate speech. We regularly engage with our partners to ensure that our humanitarian and development support is not used for these purposes. The New Zealand Government does not fund incitement or hatred. Accordingly, your request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

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

Yours sincerely



Julie-Anne Lee
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade