

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

MP for Hauraki-Waikato

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Minister of Local Government

Associate Minister for Māori Development



15 June 2022

Mohammed Khan

fyi-request-19356-01b2be24@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Mohammed Khan

Thank you for your email of 16 May 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

A statement was made on the @NanaiaMahuta Twitter account- <https://twitter.com/NanaiaMahuta/status/1525969882495430656> - which deliberately obscured the known facts in regards the murder of Shireen Abu Akleh- that it was a deliberate killing by zionists of the 'Israel' 'Defense Forces' group, and that the assault on her funeral by 'Israeli' 'Police' was unprovoked. Only supporters of the genocide of the Palestinian people believe otherwise.

Produce all documents and communications which led to the production of this statement playing down the murder of Mrs. Abu Akleh and the attack against her funeral. Including- for example- communications with your masters in the US and 'Israel'.

The following information has been provided in summary form, in accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the OIA.

Aotearoa New Zealand was heartbroken by the killing of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in Jenin. Aotearoa New Zealand was also appalled by the violence that took place at her funeral. As mentioned in your request, I issued a Tweet to reiterate these sentiments. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) has also raised concerns directly with the Israeli Embassy over her killing, alongside allegations of disproportionate force used by Israeli security forces.

Aotearoa New Zealand has called for an independent and transparent investigation into the killing of Ms Abu Akleh, not least so the perpetrators can be held to account.

As per our balanced and principled approach to the Middle East Peace Process and our independent foreign policy, the wording of the Tweet was carefully considered in line with Aotearoa New Zealand's established policy settings. The wording of this Tweet went through a normal sign-out process, which includes review by senior Ministry officials and advice to my office. A small number of emails were sent during this drafting and sign-out process. Aotearoa New Zealand did not communicate with other countries in considering its response to the killing of Ms Abu Akleh.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. C. Mahuta', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

Minita Take Aorere / Minister of Foreign Affairs