

28 June 2022

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OIA 28101

Tēnā koe Andrew Li

I refer to your request transferred from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on 27 May 2022 for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

I am seeking all communications between the office of the Prime Minister, with MFAT and Nanaia Mahuta, relating to the ongoing zionist attacks against the legitimate population of Palestine, and relating to how statements by the Ardern government in regards the zionist entity and its continuing attacks on the native Palestinian population should be handled.

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

Aotearoa New Zealand has a strong history of protecting and promoting the rights of the Palestinian people, and has been vocal about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Officials provide advice to Ministers on events in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and appropriate responses to those events. We are selective in making public statements, but these complement representations made in private, following judgments made about the most productive course of action. The New Zealand Government has previously condemned escalation in tensions as appropriate in the United Nations (UN) Security Council, the UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council.

International law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, informs Aotearoa New Zealand's foreign policy and multilateral engagements, including with Israel and on issues related to Israel. New Zealand expects all states, including Israel, to comply with their obligations under international law.

Aotearoa New Zealand is closely following events unfolding in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and has been concerned at the recent increase in tensions in the region, including the violence in and around Al Aqsa Mosque.

Aotearoa New Zealand will continue to pursue a principled approach to the Middle East Peace Process, including support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is the best path for a durable and lasting peace in the region.

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

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, nā



Julie-Anne Lee
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade