



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



*New Zealand Ministry of
Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dunedin Office*

2 March 2018

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Dear James Burke,

I refer to your email of 29 November 2017 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. *"A list of all reports, briefings and memoranda that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade have received since being sworn in.*
2. *A list of all meetings that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade have had with officials of the Government of the Russian Federation since being sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
3. *A list of meetings that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials have had with officials of the Government of the Russian Federation since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
4. *A list of meetings that Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials have had had with officials of the European Union since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
5. *A list of all meetings that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade have had with officials of the European Union since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in, broken down by subject matter and date, and copies of any documents created from those meetings.*
6. *Copies of any and all correspondence (internal and external), briefings, reports and memoranda (internal or delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and/or the Minister for Trade), of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding New Zealand-Russia economic and/or diplomatic relations since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in.*
7. *Copies of any and all correspondence (internal and external), briefings, reports and memoranda (delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and/or the Minister for Trade) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding a potential FTA with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union since the current New Zealand Government was sworn in.*

8. *Copies of any and all correspondence between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Trade and European Union officials regarding New Zealand-Russia economic/diplomatic relations and a potential FTA with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union.*
9. *Copies of any and all correspondence between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials and European Union officials regarding New Zealand-Russia economic/diplomatic relations and the potential FTA with the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union.*
10. *Copies of any and all correspondence (both internal and external), reports, memoranda and briefings (internal and those delivered to the Minister of Foreign Affairs) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding UNSC2334 since the new Government was sworn in."*

For ease of reference we have numbered each part of your request. I also refer to my letter of 13 December 2017 in which questions 1, 2, 5, and 8 were transferred to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade and Export Growth. The Ministry retained questions 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10.

In my letter of 13 December 2017, the Ministry provided an answer to question 9 and asked for clarification on questions 3, 4, and 6. We followed up with you on 10 January 2018.

In my letter of 18 January 2018, the Ministry provided an answer to questions 3 and 4, partially responded to question 6 and extended the time limit for responding to questions 6, 7 and 10 by 30 working days.

This letter responds to questions 6, 7 and 10.

Questions 6 and 7 - The Minister of Foreign Affairs met with the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, in the margins of APEC. A briefing Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials prepared ahead of APEC was released to you on 18 January 2018.

Attached is the final set of documents relevant to these parts of your request. Some portions of the documents are withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis;
- 9(2)(ba): to protect the supply of confidential information by a third party;
- 9(2)(b)(ii): to avoid prejudice to the commercial position of another party;

- 9(2)(d): to protect the economic interests of New Zealand;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

One document is withheld in full under sections 6(a) and 9(2)(j) of the OIA.

Question 10 - I once again, draw your attention to the recently released, "Briefings to Incoming Ministers" available at:

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/feature/briefings-incoming-ministers-foreign-affairs-security>.

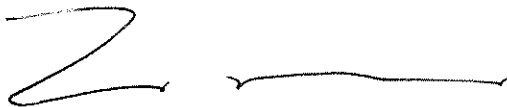
Attached are the documents relevant to this part of your request. Some portions of the documents are withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(b): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis; and
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would be sufficient to override the reasons for withholding it.

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 black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'W' followed by a horizontal line with a small upward curve at the end.

Wendy Adams
for Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade