

16 June 2022

Kia ora,

Communications with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Thank you for your request made under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act), received on 17 May 2022. You requested the following information:

1. Requests to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for advice relating to the lighting of the Michael Fowler Centre on 15 May 2022 in the colours of the Palestinian Flag to commemorate Nakba Day;
2. The response from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the above request(s); and/or
3. Any internal communications or discussion relating to the above advice and decision not to light the Michael Fowler Centre in the above manner.

Wellington City Council has granted your request for information.

The mayor's office was approached by the Chair of Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa (PSNA) requesting that the Council fly the Palestinian flag on 15 May. Wellington City Council has no flagpole therefore the request was politely declined. Councillors were then approached by PSNA directly to mark the day in another way and Councillor Tamatha Paul arranged the Michael Fowler Centre projection directly.

1. On Saturday 14 May, the Mayor contacted Deputy Chief of Protocol (Diplomatic Protocol Unit) at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This took place via phone conversation therefore we cannot provide the request for advice but can advise that the mayor explained the request for lighting the Michael Fowler Centre in the Palestine colours and asked MFAT for guidance.
2. As advised on 30 May, this part of your request has been transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
3. Following advice from MFAT, the Mayor relayed the advice via phone call to Wellington NZ, who manage the Michael Fowler Centre. A text response to the mayor is available below. The mayor also contacted the Chief Executive, Barbara McKerrow as well as Councillor Paul via phone call to convey the advice and decision not to proceed.

Please note, we may proactively release our response to your request with your personal information removed.

Thank you again for your request, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards

Claudia Holgate
Senior Advisor, Official Information

Saturday 5:05 PM

Andy, to confirm that, in accordance with your instruction after considering advice from MFAT, we have canceled the proposed lighting of the MFC in the colours of the Palestinian flag. Regards, John

Thank you John

Delivered



iMessage

