
From:

s9(2)(a)

Sent:

Tuesday, 3 November 2020 2:16 pm

To:

GEELS, Deborah (DS MLG)

Cc:

s9(2)(a)

Subject:

ME resolutions - approval of voting positions

OUT OF SCOPE

Security Classification:

RESTRICTED

Hi Deborah

Please find in the link **below** the document seeking approval of New Zealand's voting positions for Middle East related resolutions to be considered in the 75th session of the UN General Assembly. MEA have been consulted on the paper and the proposed approach.

[http://o-wln-](http://o-wln-gdm/Functions/PoliticalRelations/GlobalRelations/UnitedNationsUN/Draft%20sub%20UNGA%2075%20ME%20votes.docx?web=1)

[gdm/Functions/PoliticalRelations/GlobalRelations/UnitedNationsUN/Draft%20sub%20UNGA%2075%20ME%20votes.docx?web=1](http://o-wln-gdm/Functions/PoliticalRelations/GlobalRelations/UnitedNationsUN/Draft%20sub%20UNGA%2075%20ME%20votes.docx?web=1)

OUT OF SCOPE

New Zealand has for the past ten years maintained a consistent approach to the package of Middle East related resolutions. We endeavour to take a balanced approach, with the primary objective of supporting a two-state solution, which we believe is best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

The texts this year are primarily technical rollovers, reflecting the operating context in New York, with constraints on in-person negotiations.

Voting on a number of the resolutions is due to commence on Wednesday 4 November EST.

Please let me know if you have any questions or require further background information.

Many thanks,

s9(2)(a)

Policy Officer

United Nations, Human Rights and Commonwealth Division
New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade | Manatū Aorere

s9(2)(a)

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United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

To seek your agreement on the recommended New Zealand positions on the Middle East resolutions to be considered in the 75th session of the UN General Assembly from November 2020.

Key points

- New Zealand has for many years endeavoured to take a balanced and even-handed approach to Middle East issues in the UN, with the primary objective of supporting a sustainable two-state solution, best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.
- New Zealand has maintained a generally consistent position on the package of annual Middle East-related resolutions, which are carefully negotiated between the EU and the Palestinians each year and worded to receive the broadest possible support from the UN membership.
- The content of the resolutions is largely the same each year, with minor updates to reflect new resolutions passed by the UN or related developments.
- In line with the general approach under COVID-19, the Palestine Mission to the UN has pursued a technical rollover of the texts. The exception to this is where the Mission has tried to reduce the overall number of resolutions by merging texts together. This effort began in 2019, and has been encouraged as a positive development and a response to arguments that there are too many resolutions focused on Israel. The substance of this year's resolutions is very similar to previous years. The resolutions usually pass with a majority of UN member states voting in support.
- Officials' assessment is that continuing with New Zealand's long-standing approach to the Middle East resolutions reflects the appropriate means to achieve our objective of a sustainable two-state solution, achievement through direct Israel-Palestine negotiations.
- Given Ministers have yet to be sworn in, officials propose to vote on those resolutions considered before 7 November in accordance with previous voting practice, which has remained consistent for ten years. A table of New Zealand's proposed voting positions is annexed to this submission.
- If amendments are proposed to the resolutions, including potentially by the US to condemn Hamas, New Zealand will vote in accordance with our general position on Middle East issues, and taking into account whether the amendments improve the text ^{s6(a)} New Zealand would likely vote in favour of amendments condemning Hamas. New Zealand will maintain its voting position whether or not amendments are successful.

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

- s6(a)

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Note New Zealand's balanced approach to Middle East issues in the UN, with the primary objective of supporting a sustainable two-state solution, best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. | Yes / No |
| 2 | Note that Ministers have yet to be sworn in to the new government following the 2020 parliamentary elections, and so approval of New Zealand voting positions for votes taking place before they are sworn in is at Deputy Secretary level. | Yes / No |
| 3 | Agree that New Zealand maintain its previous voting positions on those Middle East resolutions to be considered in the United Nations General Assembly before 7 November 2020 and vote in accordance with the positions set out in the table annexed to this submission. | Yes / No |
| 4 | Agree that New Zealand vote on amendments on these resolutions in line with our balanced approach to Middle East issues, taking into account whether amendments improve the resolution s6(a)
s6(a) | Yes / No |
| 5 | s6(a) | Yes / No |

Deborah Geels
Deputy Secretary
Multilateral and Legal Group

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

Report

1. Palestinian and Israeli issues have a high profile in the United Nations.
2. New Zealand's main objective has been to support a sustainable two-state solution which we believe is best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.
3. In responding to UN resolutions concerning the Middle East, our approach has been to assess both the substance and intent of the resolution, and assess whether it is consistent with our support for a balanced and even-handed resolution to the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).
4. We also consider the context of any UN resolutions, including the situation on the ground and the progress of any negotiations between the parties. Sometimes there are less desirable elements in the resolution texts, but ultimately our assessment is made on the substance of the resolution as a whole.
5. Our positions also take into account our relationships with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the positions of key like-minded countries^{s6(a)} and our wider interests^{s6(a)}
6. In considering the elements of any Middle East resolution texts, officials assess the texts in terms of the degree to which they are balanced and constructive. Specific elements we propose to continue to look for and encourage are:
 - a. support for a comprehensive and sustainable two-state solution, with secure and recognised borders for Israel and Palestine (based on 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps);
 - b. support for Israel's right to exist in peace and security;
 - c. support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; and
 - d. recognition that direct negotiations between the parties will eventually be the only way to achieve a sustainable agreement, and calling for a return to such negotiations.
7. Officials' assessment is that continuing with New Zealand's long-standing approach to the Middle East resolutions reflects the appropriate means to achieve our objective of a sustainable two-state solution, achieved through direct Israel-Palestine negotiations.

Opportunities and obstacles to achieving a two-state solution

8. Progress in the MEPP seems unlikely in the near term. Matters have been complicated in recent years by the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, its Embassy move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and its funding cut to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).^{s6(a)}
9. In light of Israel's proposed annexation of West Bank territory this year, alongside the majority of the international community, former Foreign Minister Peters issued

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a statement outlining New Zealand's firm opposition to annexation and calling on Israel to reconsider its plans.

10. In September 2020, Israel's annexation plans were "suspended" when it established full diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain, in a deal brokered by the US. In October, Sudan joined the UAE and Bahrain in taking steps to normalise relations with Israel. s6(a)
s6(a)

11. The normalisation deals have deeply angered Palestinians, who maintain that Israel-Arab ties must be conditioned on Israeli-Palestinian peace. The Palestinians have strongly condemned Israeli rhetoric on further annexation and have consistently called for Israel to abide by international law and international humanitarian law.
s6(a)

12. s6(a)

13. New Zealand's long-standing position is that both sides should engage in direct negotiations, with the aim of seeing Israel and a Palestinian state existing side-by-side, in peace and security. In these uncertain times it is more important than ever to uphold not only the two-state solution (enshrined in various UN resolutions), but to continue to encourage direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians in order to achieve it. Maintaining New Zealand's position for a two-state solution and dialogue is more important than ever, at a time where paths forward are becoming more unclear,
s6(a)

UN General Assembly

14. Each year at the UN General Assembly, the European Union and the Palestinian Delegation negotiate a set of Middle East-related resolutions. These cover issues from Palestinian refugees, to the Golan Heights in Syria and the status of the occupied territories. The resolutions are usually carefully negotiated and worded to receive the broadest possible support from the UN membership. The resolutions are non-binding and usually pass with a majority of UN member states voting in support.
15. The content of the resolutions is largely the same each year, with minor updates to reflect new resolutions passed by the UN or related developments. In a welcome development this year, two of the resolutions have been consolidated into one but the substance remains unchanged. New Zealand's position has generally been consistent on these resolutions over many years s6(a)

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s6(a)

16.

17. While not all the final texts of the resolutions have been tabled, officials understand that the Palestine Mission to the UN and the European Union have pursued technical rollovers of the texts with limited changes.

18. Officials propose that New Zealand maintain its voting positions on the package of resolutions this year. Specifically, it is officials' view that voting in accordance with previous policy for those resolutions considered before 7 November 2020 appropriately reflects the status of the government, as new Ministers have not yet been sworn in following the recent parliamentary election. A table containing New Zealand's proposed voting positions is annexed to this submission.

19. We have been advised that the US and Israel have not received, and do not expect to receive, any instructions to table new texts or propose amendments to existing texts, as they have done previously. Such amendments and texts have been used previously to condemn Hamas.

20. In the unlikely event that amendments are proposed in the room, New Zealand will be required to take a position with very little notice. New Zealand's position will be determined by our general position on Middle East issues, and taking into account whether the amendments improve the text s6(a)

s6(a)

Should there be a procedural vote on a Hamas resolution or related amendments as to whether the proposals require a simple or a 2/3 majority to pass, New Zealand will vote in support of a simple majority to give the proposals to condemn Hamas the greatest opportunity to pass.

21. New Zealand's voting position on resolutions as a whole will remain the same whether or not amendments are successful.

Resolutions

	Resolution	Status	Date of action	Voting position 2019	Proposed voting position 2020
	Second Committee				
1	Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, over their natural resources	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	TBC	Y	Y
2	Oil slick on Lebanese shores	Received, technical edits	TBC	Y	Y
	Third Committee				
3	Right of Palestinian people to self-determination	Received, technical edits	13 Nov onwards	Y Co-sponsor	Y Co-sponsor
	Fourth Committee				
4	Assistance to Palestine refugees	Received, technical edits, invitation to India to join Advisory Commission after meeting funding threshold	4 Nov onwards	Y	Y
5	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	Received, changes to incorporate elements from merged resolution	4 Nov onwards	Y	Y
6	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	Y	Y
7	Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	A	A
8	Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan	Received, changed title of agenda item	4 Nov onwards	Y	Y

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9	Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	Y	Y
10	The occupied Syrian Golan	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	Y	Y
	Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities	Merged with UNRWA draft so no longer exists	N/A	Y	N/A
	General Assembly				
11	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	May be merged	2 Dec	A	A
12	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat	May be merged	2 Dec	A	A
13	Special Information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Y	Y
14	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Y	Y
15	The Syrian Golan	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	A	A
16	Assistance to the Palestinian People	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor
17	Jerusalem	TBC	2 Dec	Y (2018)	Y



10 November 2020

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by 13 November 2020

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

BRIEFING Decision Submission

PURPOSE To seek your agreement on the recommended New Zealand positions on the Middle East resolutions to be considered in the 75th session of the UN General Assembly from November 2020.

Tukunga tūtohua – Recommended referrals

Prime Minister

For information by

13 November 2020

Taipitopito whakapā – Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
s9(2)(a)			

Mā te Tari Minita e whakakī – Minister's Office to complete

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Seen
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events	<input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes	

Comments

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

Pito matua – Key points

- Each year at the UN General Assembly, the European Union and the Palestinian Delegation negotiate a set of Middle East-related resolutions. These cover issues from Palestinian refugees, to the Golan Heights in Syria and the status of the occupied Palestinian territories. The resolutions are usually carefully negotiated and worded to receive the broadest possible support from the UN membership. The resolutions are non-binding and usually pass with a majority of UN member states voting in support.
- New Zealand has endeavoured to take a balanced and even-handed approach to Middle East issues in the UN, with the primary objective of supporting a sustainable two-state solution, best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. New Zealand has maintained a generally consistent position on the suite of resolutions for over 10 years.
- The resolutions will remain largely unchanged this year with the Palestinian Mission to the UN seeking a technical rollover for most of the texts. This approach is in line with the general approach being taken in the UN General Assembly with COVID-19 making negotiations more difficult this year. The exception to this is where the drafters have tried to reduce the overall number of resolutions by merging texts together. This effort began in 2019, and has been encouraged as a positive development and a response to arguments that there are too many resolutions focused on Israel/Palestine.
- Officials consider that continuing with New Zealand's long-standing approach to the Middle East resolutions reflects the appropriate means to pursue our objective of a sustainable two-state solution, achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.
- Voting on these resolutions commenced on 4 November 2020 in New York. While our full voting slate would normally be agreed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, reflecting the caretaker mode of government at the time, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry's Multilateral and Legal Group approved the voting positions for the first set of resolutions in accordance with previous voting practice.
- The remaining resolutions will be voted on from 13 November through to early December. We seek your approval of the recommendations as set out in this submission. A table of New Zealand's proposed voting positions is attached as an annex.
- If amendments are proposed to the resolutions, including potentially by the US to condemn Hamas, New Zealand will vote in accordance with our general position on Middle East issues, and taking into account whether the amendments improve the text s6(a)
New Zealand would likely vote in favour of amendments condemning Hamas

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aligned with existing practice. New Zealand will maintain its voting position whether or not amendments are successful.

- s6(a)
- Middle East issues (particularly those relating to Israel and Palestine) are sensitive. While New Zealand's policy positions on these issues are carefully balanced and long-standing, relevant decisions are referred to the Minister of Foreign Affairs or to Cabinet where appropriate. Officials will continue to provide briefing and seek guidance on relevant issues as they arise.

Deborah Geels
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

Tūtohu – Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Note New Zealand's balanced approach to Middle East issues in the UN, with the primary objective of supporting a sustainable two-state solution, best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. | Yes / No |
| 2 | Note that some Middle East related resolutions have already been voted on at this year's UN General Assembly on 4 November. New Zealand voted in accordance with previous voting positions, which have remained consistent for over 10 years. | Yes / No |
| 3 | Agree that New Zealand maintain its previous voting positions on the remaining Middle East resolutions to be considered in the UN General Assembly and vote in accordance with the positions set out in the table annexed to this submission. | Yes / No |
| 4 | Agree that New Zealand vote on amendments to resolutions in line with our balanced approach to Middle East issues, taking into account whether amendments improve the resolution
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">s6(a)</div> | Yes / No |
| 5 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">s6(a)</div> | Yes / No |
| 6 | Note that officials will provide further briefing on New Zealand's approach to Middle East related issues. | Yes / No |

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date: / /

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

Pūrongo – Report

1. Palestinian and Israeli issues have a high profile in the United Nations. New Zealand's main objective has been to support a sustainable two-state solution (enshrined in various UN resolutions), which we believe is best achieved through direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.
2. In responding to UN resolutions concerning the Middle East, our approach has been to consider both the substance and intent of the resolution, and assess whether it is consistent with our support for a balanced and even-handed resolution to the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).
3. We also consider the context of any UN resolutions, including the situation on the ground and the progress of any negotiations between the parties. Sometimes there are less desirable elements in the resolution texts, but ultimately New Zealand's assessment is made on the substance of the resolution as a whole.
4. Our positions also take into account our relationships with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the positions of key like-minded partners ^{s6(a)} and our wider interests, including our relationship with the US.
5. In considering the elements of any Middle East resolution texts, officials assess the texts in terms of the degree to which they are balanced and constructive. Specific elements we look for and encourage are:
 - support for a comprehensive and sustainable two-state solution, with secure and recognised borders for Israel and Palestine (based on 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps);
 - support for Israel's right to exist in peace and security;
 - support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; and
 - recognition that direct negotiations between the parties will eventually be the only way to achieve a sustainable agreement, and calling for a return to such negotiations.
6. Officials consider that continuing with New Zealand's long-standing approach to the Middle East resolutions reflects the appropriate means to achieve our objective of a sustainable two-state solution.

Opportunities and obstacles to achieving a two-state solution

7. Progress in the MEPP seems unlikely in the near term. Matters have been complicated in recent years by the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, its Embassy move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and its funding cut to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). ^{s6(a)}

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s6(a)

8. In May 2020, Israel announced plans to annex the West Bank territory. On 23 June former Foreign Minister Peters, alongside the majority of the international community, issued a statement outlining New Zealand's firm opposition to annexation and calling on Israel to reconsider its plans.
9. In September, Israel's annexation plans were "suspended" when it established full diplomatic relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain, in a deal brokered by the US. In October, Sudan joined the UAE and Bahrain in taking steps to normalise relations with Israel.
10. The normalisation deals have deeply angered Palestinians, who maintain that Israel-Arab ties must be conditioned on Israeli-Palestinian peace. The Palestinians have strongly condemned Israeli rhetoric on further annexation and have consistently called for Israel to abide by international law and international humanitarian law.
11. s6(a)
12. New Zealand's long-standing position is that both sides should engage in direct negotiations, with the aim of seeing Israel and a Palestinian state existing side-by-side, in peace and security. Maintaining New Zealand's position for a two-state solution and dialogue is more important than ever, at a time where paths forward are becoming more unclear, and when unilateral solutions are being developed outside of the consensus-based auspices of the UN.

UN General Assembly

13. Each year at the UN General Assembly, the European Union and the Palestinian Delegation negotiate a set of Middle East-related resolutions. These cover issues from Palestinian refugees, to the Golan Heights in Syria and the status of the occupied Palestinian territories. The resolutions are usually carefully negotiated and worded to receive the broadest possible support from the UN membership. The resolutions are non-binding and usually pass with a majority of UN member states voting in support.
14. The content of the resolutions is largely the same each year, with minor updates to reflect new resolutions passed by the UN or related developments. In a welcome

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development this year, two of the resolutions have been consolidated into one but the substance remains unchanged. New Zealand's position has generally been consistent on these resolutions over many years and our position

s6(a)

15. s6(a)
16. While not all the final texts of the resolutions have been tabled, officials understand that the Palestinian Mission to the UN and the European Union have pursued technical rollovers of the texts with limited changes.
17. Voting on resolutions commenced on 4 November 2020 in New York. Reflecting the caretaker mode of government at the time, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry's Multilateral and Legal Group approved the voting positions for resolutions and did so in accordance with previous voting practice.
18. Officials propose that New Zealand maintain its previous voting positions on the remaining resolutions to be considered. A table containing New Zealand's proposed voting positions is annexed to this submission.
19. We have been advised that the US and Israel have not received, and do not expect to receive, any instructions to table new texts or propose amendments to existing texts, as they have done previously. Such amendments and texts have been used previously to condemn Hamas.
20. In the unlikely event that amendments are proposed in the room, New Zealand will be required to take a position with very little notice. New Zealand's position will be determined by our general position on Middle East issues, and taking into account whether the amendments improve the text s6(a)
s6(a) Should there be a procedural vote on a Hamas resolution or related amendments as to whether the proposals require a simple or a 2/3 majority to pass, New Zealand will vote in support of a simple majority to give the proposals to condemn Hamas the greatest opportunity to pass.
21. New Zealand's voting position on resolutions as a whole will remain the same whether or not amendments are successful.

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

Annex: Resolutions

	Resolution	Date of action	Voting position 2019	Proposed voting position 2020
	Second Committee (Sustainable Development)			
1	Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, over their natural resources	Mid-November	Yes	Yes
2	Oil slick on Lebanese shores	Mid-November	Yes	Yes
	Third Committee (Human Rights)			
3	Right of Palestinian people to self-determination	13 Nov onwards	Yes Co-sponsor	Yes Co-sponsor
	United Nations General Assembly			
4	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	2 Dec	Abstain	Abstain
5	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat	2 Dec	Abstain	Abstain
6	Special Information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat	2 Dec	Yes	Yes
7	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine	2 Dec	Yes	Yes
8	The Syrian Golan	2 Dec	Abstain	Abstain
9	Assistance to the Palestinian People	2 Dec	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor
10	Jerusalem	2 Dec	Yes (2018)	Yes
	Fourth Committee (Special Political & Decolonisation)			Voting completed
11	Assistance to Palestine refugees	4 Nov	Yes	Voted in favour
12	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	4 Nov	Yes	Voted in favour
13	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues	4 Nov	Yes	Voted in favour
14	Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories	4 Nov	Abstain	Abstained

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

	Resolution	Date of action	Voting position 2019	Proposed voting position 2020
15	Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan	4 Nov	Yes	Voted in favour
16	Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem	4 Nov	Yes	Voted in favour
17	The occupied Syrian Golan	4 Nov	Yes	Voted in favour

From: UNHC
Sent: Friday, 13 November 2020 5:33 pm
To: UNHC; NEW YORK
Cc: ...MEA POSTS; ...MULTILATERAL POSTS; DS AAG; DS EMA; DS MLG; DS PDG; DST; DS TEG; MEA
Subject: RE: FORMAL MESSAGE: UNGA75 MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTIONS - VOTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR REMAINING RESOLUTIONS
Attachments: Middle East resolutions - second set of approvals.pdf

Security Classification:

RESTRICTED

[RESTRICTED]

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

We provide voting instructions for the remaining Middle East-related resolutions to be considered at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly from 13 November.

HOHENGĀ – ACTION

NYK: We confirm instructions for the remaining resolutions to be considered by General Assembly as contained in the **attached** approval document.

s6(a)

MUTU – ENDS

From: UNHC
Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 2:19 PM
To: NEW YORK ; UNHC
Cc: ...MEA POSTS ; ...MULTILATERAL POSTS ; DS AAG ; DS EMA ; DS MLG ; DS PDG ; DST ; DS TEG ; MEA
Subject: RE: FORMAL MESSAGE: UNGA75 MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTIONS - VOTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESOLUTIONS IN FOURTH COMMITTEE

RĀPOPOTO – SUMMARY

We provide voting instructions for the first set of Middle East-related resolutions to be considered at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, specifically those to be considered by General Assembly Fourth Committee on 4 November. Further instructions for the remaining resolutions will follow in due course.

HOHENGGA – ACTION

NYK: We confirm instructions for resolutions to be considered by General Assembly Fourth Committee as contained in the **attached** approval document.

s6(a)

To note, instructions for the remaining resolutions will follow in due course.

MUTU – ENDS

From: NEW YORK <NYK@mfat.govt.nz>

Sent: Monday, 2 November 2020 2:23 PM

To: MEA <DM-MEA@mfat.govt.nz>; UNHC <DM-UNHC@mfat.govt.nz>

Cc: ...MEA POSTS <MEAPOSTS@mfat.net.nz>; ...MULTILATERAL POSTS <MLGPOSTS@mfat.net.nz>; DS AAG <DM-DSAAG@mfat.govt.nz>; DS EMA <DM-DSEMA@mfat.govt.nz>; DS MLG <DM-DSMLG@mfat.govt.nz>; DS PDG <DSPDG@mfat.govt.nz>; DST <DST@mfat.govt.nz>; DS TEG <DM-DSTEG@mfat.govt.nz>

Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: UNGA75 MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTIONS - REQUEST FOR VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

[RESTRICTED]

Rāpopoto – Summary

The United Nations membership will consider the annual suite of Middle East-related resolutions, beginning with General Assembly Fourth Committee voting on 4 November, and bookended by General Assembly plenary voting scheduled for 2 December. While some of the draft resolutions are still to be finalised, indications are that most delegations will maintain voting positions from 2019. We propose to do the same.

Hohenga - Action

UNHC, MEA – grateful voting instructions on resolutions, including by 3 November for the draft resolutions considered by Fourth Committee.

Pūrongo - Report

1. s6(a) Middle East-related resolutions considered across the UN General Assembly's Second, Third, and Fourth Committees, and the General Assembly plenary. In-principle agreement on the approach and proposed textual changes to Committee drafts was agreed between the two delegations, while the plenary resolutions, which will be voted on later in the session (2 December), are still being discussed.

2. In line with the general approach under COVID-19, the Palestine Mission to the UN has pursued a technical rollover of the texts. The exception to this is where the Mission has tried to reduce the overall number of resolutions by merging texts together. This effort began in 2019, and has been encouraged as a positive development and a response to arguments that there are too many resolutions focused on Israel.

3. This year, the Fourth Committee will consider seven, rather than eight, Middle-East resolutions, after the merging of two resolutions: the UNRWA resolution and the text entitled 'Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities'. Palestine is also considering merging two plenary resolutions ('The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People' (CEIRPP) and 'Division for Palestinian Rights'), but is waiting to hear from the EU on whether this would secure more favourable voting positions from the bloc on the combined text. The majority of EU members abstain on the CEIRPP resolution, while on the Division for Palestinian Rights resolution 12 members shifted their abstentions to vote against in 2019 (New Zealand abstained on both).

4. Palestine is hopeful that the annual plenary resolution entitled 'Jerusalem' will be tabled for voting this year. In 2019 the text was not tabled after Jordan, the custodian of the holy sites, objected to edits to the resolution bilaterally agreed between Palestine and the EU. Palestine has said it is still discussing the text with Jordan.

5. The United States and Israel have advised they do not have not, nor expect to receive any instructions to table new texts or propose amendments to existing texts.

Likely voting positions

6. While the EU has bilaterally negotiated the texts with the objective to preserve its voting patterns and secure EU unity where possible, voting instructions of its 27 members are still under consideration in capital, and will likely only be confirmed the day before or the morning of the respective votes. s6(a)

s6(a)

Attached is spreadsheet of previous voting positions.

s6(a)

	Resolution	Status	Date of action	Voting position 2019
	Second Committee			
1	Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, over their natural resources	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected		Y
2	Oil slick on Lebanese shores	Received, technical edits		Y
	Third Committee			
3	Right of Palestinian people to self-determination	Received, technical edits	13 Nov onwards	Y Co-sponsor
	Fourth Committee			
4	Assistance to Palestine refugees	Received, technical edits, invitation to India to join Advisory Commission after meeting funding threshold	4 Nov onwards	Y
5	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	Received, changes to incorporate	4 Nov onwards	Y

		elements from merged resolution		
6	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	Y
7	Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	A
8	Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan	Received, changed title of agenda item	4 Nov onwards	Y
9	Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	Y
10	The occupied Syrian Golan	Received, technical edits	4 Nov onwards	Y
	Persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities	Merged with UNRWA draft so no longer exists	N/A	Y
	General Assembly			
11	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	May be merged	2 Dec	A
12	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat	May be merged	2 Dec	A
13	Special Information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Y
14	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Y
15	The Syrian Golan	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	A
16	Assistance to the Palestinian People	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor

MUTU

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From: NEW YORK
Sent: Tuesday, 17 November 2020 10:52 am
To: DCI; UNHC
Cc: DS PDG; DS MLG; FM.P/S MFA (Seemail); CEO; DCE; MEA; TND; DST;
...MULTILATERAL POSTS
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: UNGA75 SECOND COMMITTEE: VOTING INSTRUCTIONS
REQUIRED FOR 18 NOVEMBER
Attachments: 2C planned action on 18 November - message from the Chair rev.docx; UNGA 75
2C Voting matrix 18 November 2020.docx

Security Classification:
RESTRICTED

[RESTRICTED]

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3. We have provided voting recommendations and rationale here: UNGA 75 2C Voting matrix 18 November 2020.docx (also attached). Grateful confirmation of voting positions in the matrix by **OOB 18 November** (New York time). We note that voting instructions for the two Middle East resolutions were confirmed by UNHC by Formal Message on 12 November.

4. Additional votes could be called at short notice or in the room. s6(a)
s6(a)

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

Further to our original paper (**attached**), your agreement is now sought on New Zealand's approach to the remaining resolutions on Middle East-related issues to be considered in the 75th session of the UN General Assembly from 13 November 2020.

Key points

- Voting on Middle East-related resolutions commenced on 4 November 2020 in the UN General Assembly Fourth Committee in New York. While our full voting slate would normally be agreed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, reflecting the caretaker mode of government at the time, you approved the voting positions for the first set of resolutions in accordance with previous voting practice.
- It has been since decided that New Zealand's approach to the remaining Middle East-related resolutions is also to be approved at Deputy Secretary-level, in accordance with previous voting practice.
- The remaining resolutions will be voted on from 13 November through to early December.
- We seek your approval of the recommendations as set out in this paper. The original approval paper and a table of New Zealand's proposed voting positions are attached annexes to this paper.

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Note voting on Middle East-related resolutions commenced on 4 November 2020 in the UN General Assembly Fourth Committee in New York. | Yes / No |
| 2 | Note that as Ministers were yet to be sworn in to the new government following the 2020 parliamentary elections at the time of voting in the UN General Assembly Fourth Committee, approval of New Zealand voting positions for these votes was given at Deputy Secretary-level. | Yes / No |
| 3 | Agree that New Zealand maintain its previous voting positions on the remaining Middle East resolutions to be considered in the United Nations General Assembly from 13 November 2020 and vote in accordance with the positions set out in the table annexed to this submission. | Yes / No |

United Nations General Assembly: New Zealand's approach to votes on Middle East-related issues

- 4 **Agree** that New Zealand vote on amendments on these resolutions in line with our balanced approach to Middle East issues, taking into account whether amendments improve the resolution s6(a) **Yes / No**
s6(a)
- 5 s6(a) **Yes / No**

Deborah Geels
Deputy Secretary
Multilateral and Legal Group

Date:

Resolutions

	Resolution	Status	Date of action	Voting position 2019	Proposed voting position 2020
	Second Committee				
1	Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, over their natural resources	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	TBC	Y	Y
2	Oil slick on Lebanese shores	Received, technical edits	TBC	Y	Y
	Third Committee				
3	Right of Palestinian people to self-determination	Received, technical edits	13 Nov onwards	Y Co-sponsor	Y Co-sponsor
	General Assembly				
4	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People	May be merged	2 Dec	A	A
5	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat	May be merged	2 Dec	A	A
6	Special Information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Y	Y
7	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Y	Y
8	The Syrian Golan	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	A	A
9	Assistance to the Palestinian People	Waiting to receive, technical edits expected	2 Dec	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor	Adopted by consensus Co-sponsor
10	Jerusalem	TBC	2 Dec	Y (2018)	Y

From: NEW YORK
Sent: Tuesday, 15 September 2020 1:01 pm
To: UNHC
Cc: ALL DIVISIONS (FM); ALL POSTS (FM)
Subject: FORMAL MESSAGE: UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND COMMITTEES
PREVIEW

Security Classification:
RESTRICTED

[RESTRICTED]

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Fourth Committee

11. The Special Political and Decolonisation Committee is scheduled to sit from 1 October to 13 November. As the General Assembly's 'catch-all committee', it considers issues related to decolonisation, the Middle East (the majority of the resolutions on this topic come to Fourth Committee), peacekeeping and special political missions, mine action, peaceful uses of outer space, the effects of atomic radiation, public information, and the University for Peace. New Zealand's interest areas are **decolonisation**, where we maintain a constructive relationship as the "administering power" for Tokelau; the annual resolutions relating to the Middle East, including the **Middle East Peace Process**; and **outer space**, where we have growing commercial and political equities.

12. Many of the Fourth Committee's resolutions are pre-negotiated by specialised UN committees that report to it or, in the case of the Middle East resolutions, pre-negotiated among certain delegations. However, there is a risk that delegations will seek to re-negotiate contentious issues when they reach this Committee for adoption. In recent years, s6(a)

s6(a)

We will continue to remain alert to issues that may have a geopolitical angle.

Dynamics around the Middle East resolutions will continue to be difficult, s6(a)

s6(a)

and developments in the region

and on the ground.

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