

HON Judith Collins KC, MINISTER OF DEFENCE

NZDF Liaison Officer to the Civilian Military Coordination Centre

February 2026

This pack contains Ministerial briefings advising the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence on the Civil-Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) and the Stabilization Force for Gaza. It also sought approval for the initial deployment, and subsequent extension, of a New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer to the CMCC.

The pack comprises the following document:

- Ministerial Briefing *Briefing: the Civilian Military Coordination Centre and the International Stabilisation Force for Gaza*, 22 October 2025; and
- Ministerial Briefing *Briefing: New Zealand Defence Force Liaison Officer at the Civil-Military Coordination Centre – Next Steps*; 28 November 2025.

This pack has been released on the Ministry of Defence website, available at:

<https://www.defence.govt.nz/publications/nzdf-liaison-officer-to-the-civilian-military-coordination-centre/>.

It has been necessary to withhold certain information in accordance with the following provisions of the Official Information Act 1982. Where information is withheld, the relevant sections of the Act are indicated in the body of the document

Information is withheld where making it available would be likely to prejudice:

- the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand [section 6(a)]
- the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government [section 6(b)(i)]
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Further information is withheld to:

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- maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty [section 9(2)(g)(i)]
- maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials [section 9(2)(f)(iv)]
- maintain legal privilege [section 9(2)(h)]

NZDF ref: 2025-291

MoD ref: 146 2025

Minister of Foreign Affairs	For approval by	22 October 2025
Minister of Defence	For approval by	22 October 2025

Briefing: [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)

[REDACTED] the

Civilian Military Coordination Centre and the International Stabilisation Force for Gaza

PURPOSE To update Ministers on [REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i) the Civilian Military Coordination Centre and the International Stabilization Force for Gaza, and to recommend an initial scoping visit by one New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer.

Recommended referrals

Prime Minister	For information by	24 October 2025
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Agency contact

NAME	POSITION, ORGANISATION	PHONE
[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)	[REDACTED] s9(2)(q)(i)	[REDACTED] s9(2)(a)
[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)	[REDACTED] s9(2)(q)(i)	[REDACTED] s9(2)(a)
[REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)	[REDACTED] s9(2)(q)(i)	[REDACTED] s9(2)(a)

Agency consultation

The following agencies were involved: New Zealand Defence Force; Ministry of Defence; and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Key points

- The United States (US) military has commenced preparations for a Civilian Military Coordination Centre (CMCC), and an International Stabilisation Force (ISF) for Gaza, as two mechanisms to deliver on President Trump's *20 Point Peace Plan*. s6(a), s6(b)(i)

- s6(b)(i)
- s6(a), s6(b)(i) the objective of the ISF as the provision of security inside Gaza, to set conditions for successful stabilisation efforts and enable a transition to trained local security forces. Indonesia has indicated publicly it would contribute 20,000 troops under a UN mandate, and media reports indicate Egypt may lead the ISF, although it has not commented publicly.

- s9(2)(h) s6(b)(i)
- This Ministerial Briefing recommends that you approve the deployment of one New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer to the CMCC in an information gathering capacity for up to six weeks. s9(2)(g)(i)
- Deploying a liaison officer to the CMCC would assist New Zealand in building a greater understanding of the rapidly evolving situation between Israel and Hamas following the *20 Point Peace Plan*. The information gathered would enable New Zealand to better assess options s6(a) in future, with any future contributions subject to Ministerial direction. s6(a)

- s6(a) It provides a modest engagement touchpoint through which to shape options s6(a)

- s6(a) s6(a) The role and mission of both mechanisms is evolving and not yet well understood. s6(a)

- s6(a)

- [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED] Despite the ceasefire, Israel has struck targets in Gaza, in response to attacks Israel attributed to Hamas.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] **Noted**
[REDACTED] two mechanisms in support of *The 20 Point Peace Plan*, the Civilian Military Coordination Centre and the International Stabilisation Force for Gaza and
2. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] **Noted**
[REDACTED]
3. **Approve** the New Zealand Defence Force sending one liaison officer to the Civilian Military Coordination Centre in Israel, to develop support options for government to consider for up to six weeks. **Yes / No**
4. **Note** the liaison officer may visit other parts of the Middle East region, [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] excluding Gaza. **Noted**
5. [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED] **Yes / No**
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
6. **Note** the proposed deployment would be funded from NZDF baselines. **Noted**
7. **Note** the proposed deployment would be subject to New Zealand receiving consent from the Israeli Government to send one New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer into Israeli territory. **Noted**

RT HON WINSTON PETERS
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date

HON JUDITH COLLINS KC
Minister of Defence

Date:

Report

Implementing The 20 Point Peace Plan

1. On 29 September 2025, the United States (US) President Donald Trump released *The 20 Point Peace Plan* to end the war in Gaza. On 7 October 2025 Hamas issued acceptance of “elements” of the proposed plan, including release of all hostages and handing Gaza governance to Palestinian technocrats. Implementation of the 20 Point Peace Plan has commenced, including the release of hostages. ‘Guarantors’ of the Gaza ceasefire (Egypt, Qatar and Türkiye and the US) have signed *The Trump Agreement for Enduring Peace and Prosperity*. However, the situation remains unstable, including reports of both Hamas and Israel committing ceasefire violations.
2. The US is rapidly working to develop the mechanisms to implement *The 20 Point Peace Plan*. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has been part of multinational discussions led by US Central Command and including [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] regarding military options to support the peace plan. The US has proposed the establishment of two supporting mechanisms, the Civilian Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) and the International Stabilisation Force for Gaza (ISF). [REDACTED]

s6(a), s6(b)(i)

Background: The Civilian Military Coordination Centre

3. The US has established the CMCC, and it commenced operations on 17 October 2025. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) [REDACTED] while it is not yet fully operational, there are 200 US military personnel supporting it. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) [REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]

Background: The International Stabilisation Force for Gaza

5. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) [REDACTED] the objective of the ISF as the provision of security in Gaza, to set conditions for successful stabilisation efforts and enable a transition to trained local security forces. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) [REDACTED] the ISF will conduct security patrols, protect civilians and local infrastructure and provide border security. [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED]

s6(b)(i)

The relationship between the ISF and the CMCC requires further clarification.

s6(a)

6. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] s6(a), s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]

Information Gaps

9. A number of uncertainties regarding both the CMCC and ISF concepts remain, [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
10. Further, the situation on the ground in Gaza remains fluid, and it remains unclear whether the conditions on the ground will be conducive to the deployment of international forces or humanitarian efforts for some time yet.

Partner Responses

11. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
12. [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The United Kingdom has already sent [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) planners [REDACTED] s6(b)(i) to the CMCC.
[REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED] Indonesia has publicly announced its intention to provide 20,000 troops in support of the ISF, [REDACTED] s6(b)(i)
[REDACTED]

Proposed Deployment of an NZDF Liaison Officer

13. Officials propose sending one NZDF liaison officer to gather information to support the shaping of options [REDACTED] s6(a) for an initial period of up to six weeks, [REDACTED] s9(2)(g)(i)
[REDACTED]

s9(2)(g)(i)

14. The liaison officer would be based in Israel at the CMCC, although may also visit other parts of the Middle East region, excluding Gaza. s6(a)

The liaison officer would be deployed for the purpose of understanding how the CMCC and ISF will operate and how partners will engage in supporting these efforts. Over the course of the deployment of the liaison officer, if it emerges that there would be benefit in the liaison officer visiting Gaza, officials would provide updated advice to Ministers.

15. The deployment of a liaison officer would facilitate information flows between New Zealand and the CMCC, improve New Zealand's understanding of the operating environment and the two mechanisms, support s6(a) and permit New Zealand oversight of how the CMCC and ISF develop over time. s6(a)

16. s6(b)(i), New Zealand has not yet received consent from Israel for military personnel to enter its territory. Should Ministers approve the deployment of a liaison officer to the CMCC, the NZDF will engage with Israel and the US to ensure that an appropriate legal basis is in place for the liaison officer's presence in Israel.

Risks

17. s6(a)

18. s6(a)

19. s6(a)

Legal Considerations

s9(2)(h)

Financial Considerations

26. The proposed deployment of a liaison officer would be funded through NZDF baselines; Vote Defence Force: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA.

Next steps

27. If Ministers approve the deployment of an NZDF liaison officer to the CMCC in Israel, a liaison officer will depart to the region within the coming two weeks.
28. Following the liaison officer deployment and report back, officials will provide Ministers with further information on the development of the CMCC and ISF [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for Ministerial consideration.

Any responses to media inquiries received by the NZDF will make clear that New Zealand engagement in either initiative is merely in an information gathering capacity at this stage



TE OPE KĀTUA O AOTEAROA
DEFENCE FORCE



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE



**MANATŪ KAUPAPA
WAONGA**
NEW ZEALAND
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

NZDF ref: 2025-320

MoD ref: 169-2025

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For approval by

28 November 2025

Minister of Defence

For approval by

28 November 2025

Briefing: New Zealand Defence Force Liaison Officer at the Civil–Military coordination Centre – Next Steps

PURPOSE To update Ministers on the information gathered by the New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer deployed to the Civil-Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) in Israel and to seek approval for an eight-week extension of the liaison officer deployment, to continue to support New Zealand's understanding as the context evolves

Recommended referrals

Prime Minister

For information by

3 December 2025

Agency contact

NAME	POSITION, ORGANISATION	PHONE
	s9(2)(g)(i)	s9(2)(a)

Agency consultation

The following agencies were involved: the Ministry of Defence, the New Zealand Defence Force, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Key points

- This Ministerial Briefing recommends that the deployment of a New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) liaison officer to the US-led Civil Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) in Israel be extended beyond the initial period of six weeks as approved by Ministers on 21 October, for a further eight-week period until 2 February 2026.
- The NZDF liaison officer deployed to Israel on 27 October and has improved New Zealand's understanding of the situation on the ground s6(a)
The structure, role, and makeup of the CMCC, the Board of Peace, and the International Stabilisation Force continue to evolve.
- The still evolving situation means that there will not be sufficient information available within the six-week period of the initial liaison officer deployment to develop well-informed options for Ministers' consideration s6(a)
- Extending the deployment until 2 February 2026 will enable New Zealand to continue to build an understanding of the emerging peace and security architecture in Gaza. The extension will provide scope for more robust assessment s6(a)
efforts to support peace and security in Gaza as the situation develops.
- Extending the liaison officer deployment, while maintaining a clear timeframe for the deployment, balances the need to ensure robust advice to Ministers on potential options in support of Gaza peace efforts with the recognition that the situation on the ground is constantly evolving. More sustained engagement may be required to build a broader understanding of developments, and any risks associated with those deployments.
- s6(a), s6(b)(i)
s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)
These risks can be mitigated by continued clear communication that New Zealand's engagement through a liaison officer does not pre-suppose a more substantive future contribution to these efforts and is intended to strengthen New Zealand's understanding of these mechanisms.
- Should Ministers approve the extension of the liaison officer deployment, officials will prepare an updated press release for Ministerial consideration and the NZDF will continue to conduct rotations of liaison officers in this role until 2 February 2026.

s9(2)(g)(i)

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** that on 21 October, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Defence approved the deployment of a New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer to the Civil-Military Coordination Centre in Israel, for an initial period of 6 weeks until 8 December. **Noted**
2. **Note** that international efforts to support the ceasefire in Gaza continue to evolve, and that the initial six-week deployment will not be sufficient to develop options [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] for government consideration. **Noted**
3. **Agree** to extend the deployment of a New Zealand Defence Force liaison officer to the Civil-Military Coordination Centre in Israel beyond 8 December, for a further eight-week period, until 2 February 2026. **Yes / No**
4. **Note** the liaison officer may visit other parts of the Middle East region, [REDACTED] s6(a) [REDACTED] excluding Gaza. **Noted**

RT HON WINSTON PETERS
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date

HON JUDITH COLLINS KC
Minister of Defence

Date:

Report

New Zealand Defence Force Liaison Officer at the CMCC: initial findings

- 1. A New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) liaison officer has been deployed to the US-led Civil-Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) since 27 October. The initial six-week deployment will conclude on 8 December.¹
- 2. [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]
- 3. [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]
- 4. The CMCC is taking practical steps to support humanitarian efforts into Gaza, including through engaging directly with non-government organisations [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]
- 5. [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]

Contributing and observing nations

Liaison officer deployments

- 6. Alongside New Zealand, a number of other countries have also deployed military and in some cases civilian liaison officers to better understand the developing construct, [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]

Substantive contributions

- 7. Substantive roles in the CMCC are currently occupied in large part by US military representatives (approximately 200 personnel, [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)] [Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]
- 8. In addition, other countries have deployed small numbers of military personnel to the staff of the CMCC. Details of these contributions are set out below.

Country	Number of personnel	Role
[Redacted: s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)]		

¹ Ministerial Briefing 21 October: Reference: NZDF 2025-291/MOD 146 2025

s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

Residual information gaps

s6(a), s6(b)(i)

s6(a)

Meanwhile, the political context is also developing rapidly

13. On 17 November the UN Security Council adopted resolution 2803, endorsing President Trump's 20-point plan, and authorising the establishment of a Board of Peace and the ISF.

s6(a), s6(b)(i), s6(b)(ii)

s6(a)

the Board of Peace is mandated to be a transitional

governance administration for Gaza, working towards Palestinian governance while the ISF maintains peace and trains a Palestinian security force.

14. The exact relationships between the CMCC, the Board of Peace, and the ISF are expected to be developed in the coming months.

Proposal to extend the deployment of a liaison officer to the CMCC

15. Officials recommend that the deployment of a liaison officer for six weeks, until 8 December 2025, be extended for eight weeks until 2 February 2026.

16. Extending the existing liaison officer deployment until 2 February 2026 would enable New Zealand to continue to build an understanding of the nascent architecture supporting peace and security in Gaza, as that architecture continues to evolve along with the political environment.

17. Officials assess that this extended time period for information gathering [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] as Security Council resolution 2803 begins to be implemented

18. The liaison officer would continue to build an understanding of developments at the CMCC and ISF, and support the development of potential future options [REDACTED] s6(a)
[REDACTED] for government consideration.

19. The liaison officer is based in Israel at the CMCC, although may also visit other parts of the Middle East region, excluding Gaza. [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

s6(a)

Risks

s6(a)

[REDACTED]

22. New Zealand's involvement could become complex over time, including if the ceasefire breaks down [REDACTED] s6(a)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As noted above, the liaison officer will not visit Gaza, unless it emerges

there would be benefit from doing so, at which time officials would provide updated advice to Ministers.

s6(a)

s6(a)

Financial Implications

24. The extension of the liaison officer deployment would be funded through NZDF baselines;
Vote Defence Force: Operations Contributing to New Zealand's Security, Stability and Interests MCA.

Legal Considerations

s9(2)(h)

s6(a)

Next Steps

30. Should Ministers approve the extension of the liaison officer deployment to the CMCC until 2 February 2026, officials will provide an updated press release for Ministerial consideration on the deployment.
31. Officials will continue to update Ministers over the course of the liaison officer deployment on developments relevant to the CMCC and the ISF. s9(2)(f)(iv)