

**Note: this is the government's response to the 'Open Letter on Military Deployment to Iraq' at [www.converge.org.nz/pma/iraq2015.htm](http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/iraq2015.htm) The letter from Tim Macindoe was received as an email, with this header, and pasted into this document for uploading.**



16 February 2015

Dear Edwina Hughes and members of Peace Movement Aotearoa,

On behalf of National Party MPs to whom you sent your email/letter of 11 February regarding the security situation in Iraq and Syria, I acknowledge receipt and apologise for my delay in replying.

ISIL represents a clear threat to regional and international security. The New Zealand Government is encouraged by the international community's efforts to work together to address this threat. Given the scale of humanitarian need in the region, New Zealand has contributed \$14.5m in humanitarian aid since the start of the Syria crisis in 2011. New Zealand will be looking at further options for assistance to meet the needs of Syrians and Iraqis fleeing the conflict.

Ultimately, stability in Iraq will be based on achieving an inclusive and functioning political and security environment. New Zealand is carefully assessing how we can play a part in supporting this process. This includes investigating a possible mission to build partner capacity to help the Iraqi forces maintain peace and security.

Further information is being sought on this option, and the government has not yet taken a decision on this matter. However, should New Zealand military personnel be deployed in Iraq, it would be in a non-combat role limited to training local forces in order to counter ISIL.

Your views have been noted and I thank you for writing to us to outline your concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Macindoe

Senior Government Whip