



**New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations
Te Aka Aorere**

**Sixth Committee, 79th Session of the General Assembly – 86
*Cluster 4: WG on Protection of Persons in the Event of
Disasters - The affected State***

**New Zealand Statement delivered by
First Secretary, Zoe Russell**

8 October 2024

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



Thank you, Chair.

New Zealand appreciates the opportunity to participate in discussion on this cluster focusing on the affected state.

Draft article 10 sets out the role of the affected state. New Zealand welcomes the focus on the affected state to ensure protection of persons and provision of disaster relief assistance in its territory. We also welcome mention of the affected state having the primary role in relief assistance.

Turning to **draft article 11**, we support the idea that a state should seek assistance when a disaster manifestly exceeds its response capacity. This can allow for the provision of timely and effective disaster relief assistance in the event a state cannot provide the response itself. We consider there would be merit in further clarity around what a duty to seek such assistance would entail.

Draft article 13 states that the provision of external assistance requires the consent of the affected state, and that consent may not be withheld arbitrarily. We consider it important that article 13 strike an appropriate balance between protecting the sovereignty of the affected state while also ensuring appropriate mechanisms for international cooperation to protect persons in the event of a disaster. We consider there would be merit in better understanding the meaning of "arbitrarily" in draft article 13(2). We welcome draft article 13(3) that provides a degree of flexibility to affected states in determining how best to respond to offers of assistance.

Finally, we consider that draft article 13 or draft article 14 would be a good place to explicitly address the issue of unsolicited goods. New Zealand's experience in the Pacific has shown this is a common problem following disasters.

Thank you.