

Five Eyes on China cut to four as New Zealand puts trade first

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Bernard Lagan, Sydney | Catherine Philp, Diplomatic Correspondent
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Nanaia Mahuta said New Zealand and China had a “mature relationship”
KERRY MARSHALL/GETTY IMAGES

New Zealand has broken with Anglophone allies over using the “Five Eyes” intelligence-sharing network to confront China, reversing an agreement to expand the network’s remit.

Nanaia Mahuta, the foreign minister, declared that New Zealand was “uncomfortable” with pressuring China and wanted to pursue its own bilateral relationship.

The network, a Cold War-era partnership to share intelligence, took a new turn last year when it began issuing statements as a single entity, including condemning China’s human rights record.

Last May defence ministers from Britain, America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand endorsed an expanded role with a public commitment not only to meet shared security challenges but “to advance their shared values of democracy, freedom and respect for human rights”.

Mahuta, 50, said she had informed the

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