



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Our Ref: Fol/Req/17/189

6 October 2016

Dear Requester,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

The costs to the Department of sending officials to Egypt to visit, negotiate the release, or lobby on behalf of Ibrahim Halawa since 2013 to the present date. This would include any travel, accommodation, or other costs to the Department of sending officials, assistants, or any other persons for these purposes, with a breakdown of costs on each trip provided if possible.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 28 September 2017.

I am the deciding officer in this case. I have identified no records that fall within the scope of your request and so am refusing your request under section 15(1)(a) of the Act - *the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken.*

Officials from this Department have paid visits to Egypt in the period in question, either in their own right or accompanying Ministers. These visits were generally linked to a variety of purposes and may have included elements related to the consular case in question, but no records exist which would provide information that would make it possible to attribute any particular element of the costs of such travel or activity to any individual consular case.

The State has a permanent Embassy in Cairo normally staffed by three posted diplomatic officers and a number of locally-recruited staff. Consular work is an integral part of the work of all of our bilateral missions overseas, including the Embassy in Cairo. Officials from the Embassy of Ireland in Cairo have carried out an extensive number of consular visits and held regular meetings with Egyptian Authorities over the past four years in relation to the case of Ibrahim Halawa. However, again, no records can be identified that would make it possible to break down the costs of running the mission in Cairo on the basis of individual activity areas or individual cases.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfa.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely,



Edward Canavan
Consular Assistance Manager