



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Our Ref: Fol/Req/18/134

Date 18 June 2018

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:

'A copy of all minutes, notes, memos etc relating to a meeting Paul Hewson (Bono) had with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, Tánaiste Simon Coveney, Minister Paschal Donohoe, and Mr Martin Fraser at Government Buildings bewto discuss ODA and Ireland as a global leader in the development field.'

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 5 June 2018.

I am the responding officer in this case. In processing this request I have identified two records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to refuse both of the records at this time.

More than one exemption applies to these records. Exemptions under section 29 1(a) of the Freedom of Information Act (2014) relate to records containing matters relating to the deliberative process of a public body. Exemptions under section 30 1(c) relate to the disclosure of positions taken by Government or a public body.

In considering non-disclosure under Section 29 I have considered the right of the public to access information, to scrutinise the decision making processes and the contribution release would make to public debate. The arguments I have considered against release include whether premature release would contaminate the decision making process without any countervailing benefit to the public. On balance I have am satisfied that it would be contrary to the public interest to release the record at this time.

Under Section 30 I have considered the public interest in an open and accountable civil service. I have also considered whether granting access to the records would impair future sources of important information without any countervailing benefit to the public. I am satisfied that the mere granting of access to records will impair the ability of the Department to carry out its functions effectively and that the balance favours refusal rather than release.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Hunt". It is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

SARAH HUNT
Policy Unit,
Development Cooperation Division,
DFAT,
Riverstone House,
Henry St.,
Limerick.