



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Arabian Peninsula Department**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

23 April 2018

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0184-18**

Thank you for your email of 19 February 2018 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*for all FCO and British Qatar consulate communications in relation to The Football Association's visit to Qatar in February 2018 where they signed a memorandum of understanding with the Qatar FA and the 2022 World Cup organising committee. With a time frame of: one year to the date of the signing of the MOU (so.. 14th February 2018).*

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested. I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request. Please find this information attached in a digest.

Some information has been withheld using section 27 – international relations. Section 27(1)(c) is a qualified exemption and as such we have considered where the greater public interest lies. Disclosure could meet the public interest in transparency and accountability. However, the effective conduct of international relations depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between governments. If the UK does not maintain this trust and confidence, its ability to protect and promote UK interests through international relations will be hampered, which will not be in the public interest. The disclosure of information setting out the thoughts of an official on our relationship with various states could potentially damage the relationship between the UK and those states. The relationships are on-going and comments - even dating back some time - could be taken into account by those states. This could reduce the UK Government's ability to protect and promote UK interests which would not be in the public interest. For these reasons we consider that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

In addition, some of the information you have requested, is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states

that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle, which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, s.40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

Yours sincerely,

Arabian Peninsula Department



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.