



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**South America Department**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

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

30 March 2016

Dear Sir,

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0254-16**

Thank you for your email of 29 February 2016 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

***On 16 September 2014, the WGAD in Geneva sent the British representative in UN in Geneva a letter requesting a UK response regarding potential arbitrary detention of Mr Assange. The representative in Geneva forwarded the letter to an unknown party in UK, likely the Foreign Office. An unknown party in the UK, likely the Foreign Office, sent a response to this request on 13 November 2014 to UNWGA. My request, based on the freedom of information act, is to receive copies of these letters (documents) and any letters, documents etc regarding this matter.***

We have now completed the search for the information which you requested and can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

We are sending you the following documents:

- a. **WGAD letter to the UK: 16 September, 2014**
- b. **UK Permanent Representative (Perm Rep) to the United Nations in Geneva letter to the WGAD: 13 November, 2014**
- c. **UK Perm Rep to the United Nations in Geneva letter to the WGAD: 3 February, 2014**

Under section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. Some of the information relevant to your request can be found at the following website:

- a. [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Detention/A.HRC.WGAD.2015.docx](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Detention/A.HRC.WGAD.2015.docx)

This is the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's (WGAD) opinion on the Assange case.

The latter part of your request “ **... and any letters, documents etc regarding this matter**” as presently formulated is widely-framed and we estimate that it will take more than 3 ½ working days to locate, retrieve and extract this information. In these circumstances we are not obliged under the Act to comply with your request. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. For central government the appropriate limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3 ½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it. You may therefore wish to refine your request to narrow its scope to bring it within the appropriate limit. You may wish to specify a timeframe, we will then consider whether we can provide the information requested within the appropriate cost limit. This would of course be subject to the consideration of whether any of the other exemptions under the FOI Act apply.

Once an FOI request is answered, it is considered to be in the public domain. To promote transparency, we may now publish the response and any material released on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

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Yours sincerely,

South America Department

