



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Pakistan and Afghanistan Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

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

12 February 2016

Dear

Your Freedom of Information Request: FOI 1010-15

Thank you for your email of 20 October asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

All archived documents related to communications and meetings between special representative of the UK Foreign Minister to Afghanistan and Pakistan Sherard Cowper-Coles and US Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke. Specifically, detailed notes that Cowper-Coles took regarding his meetings with Holbrooke from the beginning of Cowper-Coles's time as Ambassador to Afghanistan in April 2007 until Richard Holbrooke's death in December 2010.

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 attached the information that the FCO can release to you. Some of the information has been withheld using section 27 – international relations. Section 27 is a qualified exemption and is subject to a public interest test. The application of s.27 (1) (a) requires us to consider the public interest test arguments in favour of releasing and withholding the information. We acknowledge that releasing information on this issue would increase public knowledge about our relations with the US. However, s.27 (1) (a) recognises that the effective conduct of international relations depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between governments. If the United Kingdom 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 detailing our relationship with the US Government could potentially damage the bilateral relationship between the UK and the US. This would reduce the UK government's ability to protect and promote UK interests through its relations with the US, 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 disclosing it.

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Yours sincerely,

Pakistan and Afghanistan Department



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