



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Central Asia Team
Eastern Europe and Central Asia Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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5 June 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0258-15

Thank you for your email of 06 March 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

Since January 2010, information concerning communications between, on the one hand, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and, on the other hand, Tony Blair or Tony Blair Associates or the Office of Tony Blair, about Kazakhstan.

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. However, some information is being withheld under the following exemptions: *section 40 (personal information)*; and *section 41 (information provided in confidence)*. Please find attached the information that the FCO can release to you.

We also considered whether to withhold the information under Section 27 (international relations). However, after further consideration of the public interest we have decided that this exemption no longer applies in this case.

Some information has been withheld under section 40 – personal information. Some of the information you have requested contains 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 section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

In addition, some of the information you requested is exempt under section 41 (1) (b), as it is information that was provided in confidence. It is our view that disclosure of this information would constitute an actionable breach of confidence and so disclosure would be unlawful

under the Act. The successful working of British diplomacy depends upon sources being able to provide information in confidence without fear that this will be made public. In these circumstances, section 41 of the FOIA confers an absolute exemption on disclosure and there is no public interest test to 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 in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

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Yours sincerely,

Eastern Europe and Central Asia Directorate



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