



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Bangladesh, Sri Lanka & the Maldives Team

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

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

19 October 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0927-15

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 21 September 2015. In your request you asked for:

'copies of all communications between Cherie Blair (also known as Cherie Booth) or any other representatives of her firm Omnia Strategy and:

- a) Ministerial offices*
- b) British High Commission Maldives*

Please restrict your searches to communications that have taken place since Jan 1 2015.

Please include any electronic or written correspondence as well as records of oral conversations. Please list any oral conversations that have taken place, with dates provided for each one.'

I am writing to confirm that 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.

There have been no Ministerial meetings with Cherie Blair QC or any other representative or employee of Omnia Strategy since 1 January 2015.

FCO officials have met on three occasions with representatives of Omnia Strategy to discuss the Maldives, including once with Cherie Blair QC. The dates and senior representatives at these meetings are listed below:

- 13 July 2015 Giles Thomson, Head of South Asia Dept, FCO, London
Toby Cadman, Partner, Omnia Strategy
- 31 July 2015 James Dauris, High Commissioner, British High Commission, Colombo
Toby Cadman, Partner, Omnia Strategy
- 25 Aug 2015 James Dauris, High Commissioner, British High Commission, Colombo
Cherie Blair QC, Chair, Omnia Strategy

The only correspondence between Omnia Strategy and Ministerial offices or the High Commission, Colombo, were two requests for meetings to discuss the Maldives (attached). The names and contact details of junior officials and junior representatives of Omnia

Strategy have been withheld as this information is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances, Section 40 (2) and (3) of the FOIA applies. 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.

Meeting arrangements were made through officials in London or verbally. No minutes were taken of the meetings. There has been no other correspondence or other communications between Ministerial offices or the High Commission and Cherie Blair QC or any other representative of Omnia Strategy.

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Yours sincerely,

South Asia Department



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