



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Somalia Unit
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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27 September 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0826-16

Thank you for your emails of 29 August and 13 September asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

In order bring about amicable resolution to the subject the FCO Diplomats in Addis Ababa and subsequent UK African Ministers including Former HE Minister Mark Simmonds and HE Ambassador Greg Dorey in Addis Ababa have exhausted all the diplomatic channels to bring the above rental payments issue to a resolution from African union - to no avail unfortunately, raising serious concerns among the community and the owner of the above property that Accountability Mechanism for African Union Mission is practically weak and counterproductive to the Mission objectives - if as a donor country to the Mission the FCO cannot even find a resolution for this matter to satisfactory settlement under the AU Mission Mandate on Settlement Disputes arising from the mandated international mission.

Under the above context, there is a probably been various written communications between FCO and AU officials as well as FCO officials back and forth to help find a resolution to the above matter. I would like to formally request all the communication on this matter, excluding the letters and emails that have already been to sent to me on this issue so far by relevant Ministers and FCO officials at the Somali Desk.

Your continued cooperation on this matter would be greatly appreciated.

In response to our request for clarification, you asked, on 13 September:

The Somali Desk is aware of the Indian Ocean case.

The information I am looking for relates to any formal written correspondence between AU and FCO in relation to this matter .

As the FCO diplomats in Addis and former Minister Mark Simmonds constantly raised the case with AU there must at least have been a formal response to the FCO by AU on this matter. Otherwise such attempts or efforts has been to no avail.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested. We have searched for documents dating from 2012 onwards, to correspond with the start of former Minister Mark Simmond's tenure.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

Please find attached the three pieces of written correspondence between the FCO and AU since 2012, held by the FCO. Some of the information contained within these documents is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. It has therefore been redacted. 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,

Somalia Unit



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.